

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, September 25, 1974

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

RACING INDUSTRY

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Can the Chief Secretary say when the Government intends introducing legislation to implement the recommendations in the report on the racing industry?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I know that people are anxious about this matter. We are negotiating with various people and discussing the matter with them. I would hope that we would be able to bring down a final decision on the matter in the next few days.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Has Cabinet deferred discussion on it?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Cabinet has placed the matter in the hands of a Cabinet subcommittee, which is due to report back to Cabinet; I think the subcommittee would do that next Monday. I hope that, following that report, decisions on matters needing legislative changes will be proceeded with as fast as possible, so that any necessary amendments can be made.

LIBYA

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a short explanation before asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: An announcement in today's *News* states that an order for \$1 000 000 worth of machinery from Horwood Bagshaw by the Libyan Government has been cancelled. I believe that 120 men were dismissed with one week's notice from the company last night as a direct result of the cancellation of the order. Further, I believe that in the middle of June the Government stated that it had signed an agreement with the Libyan Government for the provision of advice from South Australia on the spending of \$1 000 000 000 on development. According to a report, the Government is sending people from the Agriculture Department to assist the Libyan Government with advice. In view of the abrupt cancellation of the machinery order without prior notice and in contravention of international commercial law, first, does the Government still intend to continue with the agreement to provide information and advice to the Libyan Government; secondly, who is to pay the salaries and costs of the people concerned in the provision of the advice; and, thirdly, will the Government table the agreement that was supposedly signed with the Libyan Government?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: That is a pretty comprehensive question for the honourable member to ask at this stage. In the first place, I have not seen the report to which the honourable member referred. He is probably referring to an article in today's *News*, which I have not had a chance to scrutinise. However, I understand that a contract with Horwood Bagshaw has been cancelled. I did get this information, but I did not get it from the newspaper. I remind the honourable member, who should know this as a business man, that there is nothing binding anyone in respect of contracts, and that contracts can be broken at any time, provided they contain the necessary escape clauses. Although I do not know whether any really binding contract has been signed between Horwood Bagshaw and the Libyan Government, I remind him also that South Australia is

involved in giving certain advice to that Government. Further, we are not the only State involved in this matter. I think that the New South Wales Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Crawford), when he heard that South Australia was doing such a good job in Libya, decided as a matter of urgency to fly to that country with his agricultural advisers to try to cash in on some of this money being spent on agriculture by the Libyan Government.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: He would have been better off staying home.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I believe that the sum being spent by the Libyan Government on agriculture over three years (and I want to correct the honourable member here) is about \$212 000 000.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: That's not what the report says.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: That was the figure given to me by the Libyan agricultural people when they were in South Australia earlier this year. Nevertheless, I think that in the interests of agriculture generally, if we can help an underdeveloped country such as Libya, which experiences similar conditions to those experienced in South Australia involving a dry method of farming, to develop its agricultural industry we should do so. Because a contract was not signed with a South Australian company, I should be reluctant automatically to stop departmental officers going to Libya: I would want much more information, and would want to know the reasons why, before I took such a step. However, I am sorry to hear that the contract with Horwood Bagshaw, of South Australia, has been lost, but I think that in future we will be able to make deals in other directions; I hope so, anyway.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I do not believe the Minister has replied to two parts of my question: who will be paying the salaries of the people going to Libya (the State Government or the Libyan Government), and will the Minister table the agreement signed between the Libyan Government and the South Australian Government?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: In the past, when the Libyan Government has asked for expertise in the form of officers from the Agriculture Department to go to Libya as advisers, the Libyan Government has paid all the expenses. No doubt if the Libyan Government asks for expertise in future the same conditions will apply. I must apologise for not answering the question fully; it was such a long drawn-out question that I am sure the honourable member—

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: I am not criticising.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: —will realise that I cannot keep all the details in my head at one time. I shall certainly get a reply and bring it down as soon as possible.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister of Agriculture a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I listened with much interest to the reply the Minister gave to the Hon. Mr. Cameron's question regarding the agreement between the South Australian Government and the Libyan Government. I refer the Minister to a report that appeared in the June 16 issue of the *Sunday Mail*, part of which states:

The South Australian Government has signed an agreement to help Libya spend \$1 000 000 000 on agricultural development.

The report later continues:

The premier, Mr. Dunstan, and the Libyan Arab Republic Agriculture and Development Minister, His Excellency Engineer, Abdul Mageed Al Gaoud, have signed, in Adelaide, the agreement making it possible.

Although the Minister has given the Council some information regarding this matter, some of it seems to conflict

with the Government's press release. I ask the Minister to make a report to the Council on the agreement between Libya and the Government, and to report on the future of the agreement in the light of today's announcement of the cancellation of the contract with South Australian manufacturers.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I shall be happy to do that.

MURRAY RIVER FLOODING

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Repeating a question asked of me yesterday by a resident of Mypolonga, I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether it is correct that the Government intends to resume control of the swamps above the pump house in Mypolonga. If it does not, can he explain what is planned in the event of flooding?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I think that this question, if it involves the problem of flooding, should be directed to my colleague the Minister of Works in another place, who I know has stated that certain sections along the river will be flooded prematurely in anticipation of approaching floods. This has certain advantages, and it will prevent scouring of the areas concerned. However, I will refer the question to my colleague to see what exactly is the situation.

The Hon. V. G. Springett: What about control of the swamps?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: As I know nothing about that matter, I will also refer it to my colleague and see whether he knows any more than I know at present.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to my recent question about assistance to the Pyap Irrigation Trust in the event of Murray River flooding?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I referred the honourable member's question and the letter that he handed to me regarding the Pyap Irrigation Trust to the Minister of Works and have now received his report. The Minister points out that the Pyap Irrigation Trust, which operates under a private Act, namely, the Pyap Irrigation Trust Act, 1923-1926, is similar in function to trusts and boards under the Irrigation on Private Property Act or other private Acts.

After the flood of last November, some of the private divertees spent considerable sums of money in relocating their plants at their own cost and without seeking financial assistance from the Government. The Minister of Works considers that responsibility for shifting the pumping plant to higher ground rests with the Pyap Irrigation Trust and, therefore, he is unable to offer any financial assistance. However, he has approved of the services of the Engineering and Water Supply Department's resident engineer at Berri being made available for any technical assistance required.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I seek leave to make a short explanation prior to asking a question of the Minister of Lands.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: My question arises from the reply I received in connection with the Pyap Irrigation Trust. Last week I asked the Minister to ascertain from his colleague what assistance would be made available to the Pyap Irrigation Trust, because large sums of money had been allocated to district councils in the Riverland area. Some of the money is earmarked for flood protection works, for sandbagging, and the topping of banks on low-lying levels. I do not understand exactly what the Minister's reply means, but an inference is contained in it that Government irrigation schemes will be protected, naturally at the expense of taxpayers, but that private irrigators have to provide protection at their own expense. Certainly, that position is clear, although that position did

not apply during the 1956 floods, when everyone was treated alike. I ask the Minister to consider this matter as a Lands Department project, rather than referring it to his colleague, the Minister of Works.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I must point out that because of the position in respect of private areas, Government areas, and the relationship of the Minister of Works with his position as Minister of Marine, an inter-departmental committee has been established, comprising members of the Lands Department and officers under the Minister of Works. It is this body which makes recommendations to the two Ministers concerned. The Minister of Works has the final responsibility in respect of river areas, and this is why the matter was referred to him. The Minister of Works made this decision as a result of discussing the matter with the interdepartmental committee. If the honourable member wants me to have another look at it and discuss it with the Minister of Works, I will do so, but it is important for me to explain to the honourable member how these matters are dealt with.

LAND COMMISSION

The Hon. C. M. HILL: As the Land Commission Act was assented to on November 1, 1973, and as there was considerable Government publicity at the time acclaiming its merits, I ask the Minister of Lands when he expects the Land Commission to have building blocks available for sale to the public in metropolitan Adelaide.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will discuss this matter with the Chairman of the Land Commission and bring down a report for the honourable member as soon as it is available.

MEMBERS' TELEPHONE CALLS

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: On July 24, I asked the Acting Leader of the Government in this place whether he would present a case, which I outlined at that time, for members of the Legislative Council to be allowed the privilege of reversing charges on telephone calls to Parliament House; House of Assembly members already have this privilege. As I have not yet received a reply, perhaps that is a good omen, indicating that the answer is in the affirmative, as it has taken so long to eventuate. Will the Leader again take up the matter of what I consider would be a just right for members in this place?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Apparently, this question was asked while I was overseas. I shall chase it up and see what the answer is on this occasion.

AGRICULTURE GRADUATES

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I wish to ask a question of the Minister of Agriculture, and before doing so may I receive permission to make a short statement?

Leave granted.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Last evening a programme was screened on television emphasising the difficulties some people will encounter when they finish their courses at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. Many of those people will have no opportunities of jobs in South Australia, or even in Australia. Is consideration being given to encourage them to go to the more needy parts of the world, bearing in mind that agricultural knowledge is one of the most desperately needed commodities in those areas?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I have in my office brochures from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, illustrating how application can be made through an office in Melbourne, or by writing direct to Rome, by

people who have graduated in certain degrees such as those applicable at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute and who perhaps can be found positions in some of the under-developed countries in the world. I shall be happy to make them available to the honourable member if he wishes.

HOUSING FOR ABORIGINES

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Chief Secretary, representing the Attorney-General.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: A number of constituents, residents of the town of Murray Bridge, have approached me saying they understand the Housing Trust is in the process of purchasing houses for the Community Welfare Department. I am told these are to be used as residences for Aborigines. It has been suggested that up to 65 such houses are scattered throughout the town. So that I can reply to the questions my constituents have asked me, can the Minister say whether such houses are to be acquired for the purpose of providing houses for Aborigines in Murray Bridge; if so, how many, and what is their distribution throughout the town?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall be pleased to convey the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply.

ALCOHOLICS

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: On Monday of this week in the Supreme Court His Honour Mr. Justice Wells deferred passing sentence in a particular case because, apparently, no-one could tell him what the latest facilities were in South Australia for treating alcoholic criminals. Apparently, no such facilities exist here at the present moment. The Minister was reported to have said that a clinic was to be opened in November in Osmond Terrace, Norwood. First, is there any particular reason why this important aspect in the treatment of alcoholics has not been given higher priority? Secondly, when the Norwood clinic opens, will the facilities there be sufficient for current needs; if not, has the Minister any further plans to extend those facilities?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Approaches have been made by my officers for the judges to discuss with them the question of the treatment of alcoholics, but it has been found that the judges are not available to have discussions until some time in 1975. If His Honour said he knew nothing about it, I do not know whether he was aware of the approaches that have been made to judges so that they could get some information from the department. My officers will be happy to discuss with Their Honours what treatment can be given to alcoholics. As regards the case that His Honour referred to, there have always been assessment clinics to which His Honour could refer offenders to find out whether or not they were alcoholics. In the hearing last Monday the solicitor suggested that the offender did have alcoholic problems. However, they had never been assessed to see whether he was an alcoholic or was only acting under the influence of alcohol before committing the offences.

The clinic at Osmond Terrace will, of course, be a treatment centre, and it is assumed that, if alcoholics are picked up, they will be taken to that centre where they will be given treatment and be calmed down before they get into court, so that they are no longer under the

influence of alcohol when they are brought to court. In addition to that, there will be facilities at Osmond Terrace to enable people to receive therapy for their problem, provided they are alcoholics. We think that is a good step forward. I do not know what the honourable member means by "higher priority". The position is that we are well aware of this problem. It was reported in the newspaper that the clinic would be opened in November; I did say that the official opening of the clinic would take place in November. In actual fact, the Osmond Terrace clinic will be accepting patients within two or three weeks from now. We believe this clinic will be sufficient for some time to come to cope with alcoholics.

WARDANG ISLAND

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Chief Secretary, representing the Minister of Community Welfare, a reply to the question I asked recently regarding Wardang Island?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: My colleague reports that the Aboriginal Lands Trust is discussing the future management of Wardang Island with the Point Pearce Community Council. The trust is endeavouring to make the best possible arrangements. The Government has indicated its willingness to make available any advice that may be sought, but Government intervention by way of investigation or otherwise is neither necessary nor desirable.

BUS SERVICES

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Recently, I asked the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport, how the Minister of Transport could reconcile the fact that, on the one hand, the Municipal Tramways Trust was involved in interstate bus services while, on the other hand, the Minister complained from time to time that a shortage of buses in the metropolitan area was preventing an extension of bus services, including cross-suburb services. Has the Minister now received a reply from his colleague?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have, and it would appear that the Minister of Transport had no problem in reconciling these matters. He reports that the coaches used on interstate tourist and charter services have a number of features that make them unsuitable for use on metropolitan bus services. They include high floors and steps (brought about by the provision of under-floor luggage lockers); a single doorway at the front that is used for both entry and exit; narrow aisles; seat arm rests; and overhead racks for hand luggage.

These features, which are normally associated with tourist coaches, create problems for boarding and alighting passengers on city services, particularly in the case of elderly and handicapped people. In addition to interstate services, these vehicles also cater for a significant volume of intrastate tourist traffic and, if withdrawn from this field, tourism within the State could be adversely affected. In the circumstances, it is considered that it would be impracticable to divert these vehicles to city services.

BOWDEN CROSSING

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I seek leave to make a brief statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Last Friday morning a fatal accident occurred at the Gibson Street, Bowden, level crossing, involving a collision between an express train and a motor vehicle, the driver of the vehicle being killed in the accident. I understand that this is the second fatal accident at the crossing this year. Therefore, can

the Minister say whether it is intended to erect boom gates at this crossing and, if this is the case, when will these gates be installed?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I will obtain a reply for the honourable member as soon as possible.

PETROL TAX

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Can the Chief Secretary, as Leader of the Government in this Council, say whether the Government intends introducing a tax on the consumption of petrol in South Australia and, if it does, what amount will be inflicted on the public?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The matter of raising additional finance is under consideration by the Government, which has not yet made any final decision. When a decision is made, the Premier will make an announcement at the appropriate time.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Chief Secretary, as Leader of the Government in this Council.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: We seem to be galloping ahead toward economic disaster. One wonders for how long the State and Commonwealth Governments will continue to increase taxes so that they can spend money that it appears they cannot afford to spend. When the question of a petrol tax and other taxes is being considered, could the Government not consider, just for once, cutting a bit of expenditure in appropriate places? This seems to be entirely overlooked these days. It seems to be a matter of raising more and more money to spend more and more for the unpredictable future.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: This Government has taken action to see that the costs of all departments are kept within the bounds of the Budget. In my own departments I have had to restrict development where it is not absolutely essential. We have taken all sorts of steps to stop expense other than that which has been provided for. The honourable member would know from the time when his Party was in Government that there are many occasions when excess warrants are sought for over-spending in departments; as far as possible, this has been cut out, and we are doing everything we can to reduce expenditure. The expenditure provided for in the Budget is for essential items that cannot be reduced. It is all very well for the honourable member to say that this Government and the Commonwealth Government are spending unnecessarily. When we have had to introduce taxes, it has been to cover the provision of services that have been promised. We do not want to cause excessive unemployment within our own areas. The expenditure in the Budget is for essential items, and we are carrying out our promises. We do not want to spend more money than we have to spend. I do not know to which areas the honourable member is referring. What specific areas does he mean? It is all very well to make general statements about the Government's cutting down expenditure, but no-one points to an area where that could be done.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: We will oblige.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: It is all very well to make general statements for Party-political purposes.

GOVERNMENT STAFFING

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I have been informed from a reliable source that, in the staff of the Minister of Health, people who resign or die are not being replaced. Can the Minister say whether my information is correct?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I do not think that that is entirely correct. The Government is not going to increase the number of people employed at present, and we have asked departments to watch the position when making appointments.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I understood from what the Minister said that he has zero population growth in his department. Can the Chief Secretary, as Leader of the Government, say whether it is the general policy of the Government not to expand the Public Service, and are people who resign to be replaced?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Increases in the Public Service have been cut to a minimum, and all departments have been informed that the creation of positions will not be approved unless they are absolutely essential. I have 12 vacancies in my own department that have not been filled.

CRASH REPAIRS

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Will the Minister of Health ascertain from the Minister of Transport, first, whether the Government intends to register crash repair shops in accordance with the wishes of the Vehicle Builders Union, as expressed in the spring, 1974, edition of *Road Alert*, the official journal of the Road Safety Council of South Australia; secondly, if the Government intends to register such shops, will special protection be given to the small crash repair operator, so that the controls will not be restrictive, thereby adversely affecting his business results?

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

WRONGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON (Southern): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to increase by three times the maximum amount that may be awarded for solatium. Solatium is a sum of money payable by a person who has wrongfully killed another, either to the surviving spouse or parent or parents of the deceased. As the word implies, it is a payment to serve as some sort of solace to the feelings of the bereaved spouse or parents, because of the death. Solatium is not payable at common law but only by Statute.

At present the maximum amounts payable are \$1 000 for the death of a child and \$1 400 for the death of a spouse (sections 23a and 23b respectively). There has been no increase since 1958, and it is thought that, because of the steady and drastic decline in the value of money since then, the increases proposed in the Bill are amply justified. I point out that the amount awarded is in the discretion of the court, and the sums set out in the Act are maxima.

Clauses 3 and 4 give effect to what I have said. Clause 3 substitutes \$3 000 for \$1 000 in section 23a of the Act, and clause 4 substitutes \$4 200 for \$1 400 in section 23b. The amendments will affect payments of solatium in the case of persons dying on or after the Bill's coming into effect. I commend it to the Council.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Chief Secretary): I rise briefly to support the Bill. This matter was introduced in another place and received the support of the Government there, the Attorney-General saying that he approved of the move. I believe the amounts have not been

increased for some considerable time, and the Government, in supporting the move, thought it was time increases were effected.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT (Southern): I support the second reading. As the Hon. Mr. Cameron has said in explaining the Bill, this simply multiplies by three times the amount of solatium, which has not been increased since 1958. It seems a reasonable sort of multiplication to cover changes in that period. As the honourable member has said, solatium is supposed to be a solace for the loss of the company of the deceased person, be it child or spouse; it is not meant to be any kind of compensation, and that is not excluded. Supposing the breadwinner is wrongfully killed, the dependants (if it is a man, the widow and the children) can claim an amount calculated to be the actual financial loss they have suffered. This is by way of compensation and is in addition to solatium. If a non-working wife and mother is wrongfully killed there is no compensation of that kind, because she is not producing anything to the family fund; in such cases, solatium can be claimed.

Solatium is meant only to be a solace, some token payment to try to make up to some extent for the loss of the company of the deceased person. Even the amounts now proposed seem little enough. It has never been intended that this be a real compensation; it is just something as solace. As the Hon. Mr. Cameron has said, these are maximum figures; the amounts in question can vary according to the circumstances. It could be said that the loss of a sharp-tongued wife or a drunken husband is not much of a loss, and indeed these matters can be taken into account. The maximum is not awarded in every case.

The Hon. Jessie Cooper: It could be the other way around!

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: Yes, although I do not think we will see money being paid back the other way! These are realistic increases. It may be worth while for the Government to investigate the possibility of trying to set up a procedure (it would not be easy) to review periodically all legislation in which fixed sums of money are stipulated. We have galloping inflation at present, largely through the policies of the Commonwealth Government, and this situation will continue for some time. We will be faced over a period with legislation that provides for fixed sums of money, and these will become quite unrealistic in future. I realise it would be difficult to do this, but perhaps the Government could investigate the possibility of trying to effect not proportionate increases from time to time but a procedure for reviewing not just one but all Acts in which fixed sums of money are provided.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): I support the second reading. I think just about everything has been said that needs to be said, but I should like to take up the point made by the Hon. Mr. Burdett in closing his remarks. He suggested that some sort of procedure should be set up to enable reviews to be made from time to time of statutory amounts. I agree that it would not be easy. However, it occurs to me that perhaps the Law Society, if its services were sought, may be as good a body as any to recommend from time to time changes that could be made in statutory amounts. I can think of one immediately: in 1956, we fixed the amount to be paid to a spouse where there was an intestate estate. The first amount payable out of the estate was fixed in 1956 at \$5 000; if this Bill is a yardstick, the amount on today's money should be \$15 000, so that, in the case of an intestate estate, the spouse should get the first \$15 000. Prob-

ably many other examples could be cited, and I think legal practitioners, who encounter these problems in their daily work, are probably in a position to draw the attention of the Government to these discrepancies that arise. I suggest that the Government should give some attention to setting up machinery to review the statutory amounts occurring in various Acts, to see whether or not they should be brought into line with the current value of money.

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

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

IMPOUNDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

EVIDENCE (AFFIDAVITS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

The House of Assembly intimated that it had agreed to the Legislative Council's amendments Nos. 1 to 4 and had disagreed to amendment No. 5.

ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

JUDGES' PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

BUILDERS LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS BILL

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the registration of occupational therapists, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 24. Page 1077.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): The Budget proposes an expenditure of \$774 600 000, with estimated receipts of \$762 600 000, leaving a deficit of \$12 000 000. On pure mathematics, that is the position, but, soon after presenting the Budget to Parliament, the Treasurer announced the need for severe tax increases in this State. Coming only a matter of days after the introduction of the Budget in another place, this makes a complete mockery of the process of providing Parliament with annual documents dealing with proposed receipts and proposed expenditures.

I refer honourable members to the comments I made during the debate on the Public Purposes Loan Bill, when attention was drawn to the large variation in certain Loan expenditures that had occurred during the year. The question I raised then was whether Parliament should be

examining some new procedures in the presentation to Parliament of the Government's financial proposals. The comments I made in that debate apply equally to the Budget. In the past two months, we have seen huge increases in certain State taxes and in charges, including pay-roll tax, water rates, and licence and registration fees, yet the Treasurer in his press statements on the introduction of the Budget said the Budget contained no increase in taxation. One cannot say that that is a reasonable statement.

As I shall point out later, the increase in this State's taxation, apart from all the other charges the State makes, has doubled in the past two years. A few days after the Budget was introduced, we were told that, because our Canberra friends were not looking realistically at the needs of the States, further taxation increases would be necessary in South Australia, even though, after two Budgets, there had been a doubling of taxation in South Australia. The presentation to Parliament of the Financial Statement and the Estimates, this year in particular, is no more than a political exercise, because papers presented to us as documents of information of the future financial plans of the Government are assuming less and less importance.

For this very reason, I suggest to the Government that this matter be referred to the Public Accounts Committee for examination and for a report to be made to this Parliament on the matters I have raised both in the Loan Estimates debate and in this debate. The Treasurer of South Australia has always been an expert at putting the blame on to someone else. No matter what problems arise in this State, he says the blame rests on someone else's shoulders. Over the past few years, how often have we seen this Council blamed for certain things in South Australia? How often lately have we seen the Senate blamed for the high rate of inflation in Australia? This fits into a similar pattern. Example after example could be given. One could start with the Aboriginal Lands Trust Bill and all the emotion engendered about that; yet, since that Bill has passed, no amendments have been introduced to it. Then one could look at the transport legislation, death duties, and the attitude that this Council adopted on tort action and price control.

One can go through these matters and see the tremendous emotion that has been involved and the blame and accusations that have been levelled at this Council. This time, Budget difficulties are blamed almost wholly on the Commonwealth Government: no-one is to blame but it. At this point of the argument, I suppose I must agree somewhat with the Treasurer's allegations. However, it is completely unfair to blame the Commonwealth Government only, as that Government's financial policies, which most people in this country know are catastrophic, have for some time been mirrored in intent by the State Government's Budgets.

In this issue, we are dealing not with a Commonwealth Government *versus* State Government confrontation, as the Treasurer would have us believe, but primarily with a political and financial policy that belongs to a political Party, with people who hold that philosophy framing the economic policies not only for this State but also for Australia generally. As much blame for the budgetary problems being experienced in this State rests on this Government as it does on the Commonwealth Government.

Before the last Commonwealth Budget, this State's Treasurer, in a press release, which no doubt all honourable members saw, called for a radical Commonwealth Budget. I should like to ask what the Treasurer meant when he called for a radical Budget. Did he want a radical conservative Budget or did he want a radical

socialistic Budget? Both these terms can be applied, as "radical" is an adjective that applies either to the extreme left or to the extreme right of financial thinking. I ask the Treasurer what he meant when he demanded a radical Commonwealth Budget. He did not say what he meant but, judging from his reaction since the Commonwealth Budget was introduced, I can assume only that he wanted a radical conservative Budget which would have recognised the problems of inflation in Australia and the needs of the States and which would at least have assisted in the concept of federalism. If one looks back through Commonwealth Budgets for the past two or three years, one can see the concept of federalism slipping farther and farther into the distance.

Although the Commonwealth Budget does nothing to help solve the economic problems facing South Australians, it provides, however, a further well-planned attack on the federal system. Not long ago, I think in the Address in Reply debate, the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill delivered a short speech in which he tried to answer a question that his wife had previously asked him. That sort of question is usually the most difficult for one to answer. His wife had asked him how, if one wanted to, one would go about altering a capitalistic system to a socialistic system. Most honourable members can remember that speech, and what the honourable member said in it was absolutely correct.

Also, it applies equally to the concept of federalism. If one wanted quickly to destroy the federal system, as we know it, and to destroy the concept of decentralisation of power and authority, one would follow the policies that are at present being followed by the Australian Labor Party. Indeed, one can see that the policies that that Government is following will lead to a transfer not only from a capitalistic to a socialistic system but also from a federation system to a unified system.

How right the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill was, because, only about three weeks after he spoke, prominent Commonwealth politicians and Ministers said on radio, television and in the press that there was nothing wrong with the Government or its philosophy but that the system was wrong. However, there is nothing wrong with the system: it is the philosophy that is at fault. The system is being blamed, and we will have exactly the same argument being advanced that the system of Federation is not working and, therefore, we must move to a total bureaucratic control, not only financially but also in every other way, from Canberra.

On this point, from the comments made by the Treasurer to the press and the supplementary comments made by the Chief Secretary in the second reading explanation, I can say with confidence that on this matter the Treasurer and I agree with each other. However, must not the Treasurer's present attitude, in being critical of his Commonwealth colleagues, deny the A.L.P. policy and platform? Is the Treasurer really genuine in his protest, because the principles of his Party demand a certain type of budgetary attitude from his Canberra colleagues? Therefore, in placing all the blame on his Commonwealth colleagues, in what sort of circular talk is the Treasurer indulging?

It is obviously a fake war dance against his Commonwealth colleagues, as this State's Treasurer has already been responsible for six State Budgets that have introduced exactly the same influence as that for which his Commonwealth colleagues are at present responsible. Do you, Mr. President, remember when the Treasurer, in a fit of glee, said that, now that his friend Mr. Whitlam was Prime

Minister, the great co-operation between South Australia and the Commonwealth authorities would begin, and South Australia would be the pilot State for socialist philosophy? That statement was made, and the current position certainly does not provide a nice bed in which the Treasurer can lie. We have had six Budgets in South Australia of which the Treasurer has been the main planner, and we have adopted the theme of keeping up with our neighbours. We became the pace-setters, the promisers, and the Government itself became the pace-setter and took pride in promoting itself as such until in South Australia now, as with the rest of Australia in respect of international markets, we have lost our trading position in relation to the Eastern States. In Budget after Budget we have seen a turning away from the fostering of the productive side of the community's enterprise, and a turning away from the fostering of the productive side of governmental enterprise. We have also seen an increase in expenditure which adds nothing to the well-being of the community.

Of the long list of items to which I could refer, I now turn to just a few examples. Year after year in speaking in this debate I have drawn attention to the fact that, if one examines the various rises in expenditure in this State, one can see that the non-productive, the emotional and the promotional side of the Government's activities has been increased considerably, while the departments dealing with development and the means of production have not received the same consideration. Much publicity has been given to the employment of highly paid press officers and publicists by the Government. Is this purely for the Government? I wonder! Much publicity has been given recently to expenditure on Government communications and listening posts. Is this a Victoria Square U2? Is this necessary expenditure? What was the cost? I have already referred to the appointment of press secretaries and other public relations personnel.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: I think you were given the cost of that.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Perhaps so, but I am asking whether this expenditure is justified. Indeed, the Chief Secretary challenged us to say where we would reduce expenditure, and those appointments I would cut immediately, with no trouble at all, because they represent purely a propaganda measure for the Government in office. These appointments do not provide any sinews to assist to obtain any economic advantage for this State. I refer to the proliferation in South Australia of the number of paid boards. The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill inquired into this matter and found that in one year there had been an additional 356 people placed on the Government pay-roll in positions on advisory boards and boards of inquiry covering the whole range of Administration. I could continue to point out such matters. I refer to the passage of legislation that has substantially increased the cost to the community, to the Government, and to the consumer, without producing any increase in efficiency. I even find myself agreeing with my friend Max Harris, and, when that happens, we must be right. I refer to the Land and Business Agents Act.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: Is he a good mate of yours?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am not saying he is a mate of mine; I am simply saying that lately he has written some good articles, with which I agree. Do honourable members remember the emotion attached to the Land and Business Agents Bill when it entered this Council? The public was convinced by an emotional Treasurer that all land agents were crooks.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: Some have been evading income taxes.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do not care about that, but so have lawyers, farmers and Ministers of the Crown at times. The point is that we were faced with an emotional Treasurer dealing with the matter of land agents. This Council did a good job on the Bill the first time. On the second occasion we were in a difficult situation, and in argument we convinced the Government that there were stupidities in the legislation. However, because of the Constitution, we believed that the Bill would have to go through. What now is the cost to the community of all this stupidity, the unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy associated with the regulations and requirements of the Land and Business Agents Act? It would be hard to compute. I believe we have destroyed the most efficient conveyancing system in Australia, if not the most efficient and cheapest conveyancing system that the world has had in respect of land transactions.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: It has been adopted in many other countries.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: True, it has been adopted in many other countries. Let us look at the consumer and credit transaction legislation, and the emotion associated with it. The more one considers this matter the more one realises that it will add a tremendous burden in bureaucratic weight to the South Australian consumer. I could continue in this vein and deal with many such matters, and add to the list of where money could be saved. I refer to the Treasurer's flight overseas, his race back to assist Mr. Whitlam in his campaign, and to his trip overseas once again. Was that justified expenditure? The Chief Secretary has asked me to point out where I could reduce expenditure, and that is certainly one area in which a reduction could be achieved.

Does the Treasurer now believe that the taxpayers' expense of bringing him back to add weight to the Whitlam campaign was worth while? The Treasurer has tried to transfer all the blame to his Commonwealth colleagues. First, he gave his absolute support to the return of his colleagues to office, at some expense to the taxpayer. Secondly, his Commonwealth colleagues in Canberra are only interpreting a budgetary philosophy that we have seen evident in South Australia for many years. Thirdly, his political colleagues in Canberra are only interpreting the monetary policies of central bureaucratic control, which the Treasurer himself is bound to support. I believe that the Treasurer's attitude on the Commonwealth Budget is only play-acting as an excuse to hide the problems facing South Australia. This does not impress me at all.

The Treasurer called for a radical Commonwealth Budget. The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill in his question earlier today called for a similar attitude in regard to South Australia's Budget. He sought a radical Budget that would preserve South Australia's trading position; a radical Budget that looked at the efficiency of Government expenditure, which would be quite a change; a radical Budget that would cut drastically Government expenditure for a non-useful and non-productive purpose; and a radical Budget that sought to prevent the ridiculous expenditure of public moneys, as evidenced even from the renovation work currently taking place on Parliament House. In saying that, I am not criticising in any way those people who have worked on the job: I am, like Dr. Cairns and Mr. Cameron, merely complaining about the system.

I now refer to the extraordinary procedure adopted by the Government in delivering a further second reading explanation of this Bill in the Council. I cannot recall

such a situation occurring previously, where the Government delivers a Budget speech in another place and then includes an addendum here with three explanations; perhaps some honourable members can recall a previous occurrence of this kind. The first part of the added piece in the Chief Secretary's explanation in this Council is as follows:

The first factor to emerge is that the further grant of \$6 000 000, which, after discussion with the Prime Minister, the Treasurer was very confident would be received, was not forthcoming. Let there be no doubt about this matter. The Treasurer believed sincerely, on the basis of his discussions with the Prime Minister, that this would be forthcoming. Indeed, the Prime Minister's statements during the most recent Premiers' Conference supported that belief to the extent that the Treasurer took the unprecedented step of including in the Revenue Estimates a figure of \$6 000 000 under the description "Grants and/or taxes and charges not yet determined". However, as we know now, no provision for such a grant was made in the recent Australian Government Budget.

From those words of the Chief Secretary, a limited number of conclusions can be drawn, the first being that the Prime Minister is not to be trusted. Secondly, the Treasurer, relying on the verbal promise of the Prime Minister, took the "unprecedented step", in the words of the Chief Secretary, of including moneys not yet certain, so that he could avoid announcing further heavy increases in taxes and charges following the introduction, before the State Budget, of heavy increases in State taxes. It is a remarkable statement by the Chief Secretary, and it reminds me a little of the epitaph on a tombstone in Sussex, as follows:

Here lies the body of Mary Louder
Who burst while drinking Seidlitz powder
Called from this world to her heavenly rest
She should have waited 'till it effervesced.

That is like the Treasurer with his Budget: if only he had waited for the Commonwealth Budget, we might have had a different document.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: We have already had a supplementary Budget.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: A supplementary Budget of the original Budget: it is a mini Budget inside a major Budget. In his second reading explanation the Chief Secretary says:

The second factor relates to the calculation of financial assistance grants. Based on information given by the Australian Treasury, the figure included in the Revenue Estimates for the financial assistance grant was based on a 20 per cent escalation in the level of average wages, and the complementary estimates of pay-roll tax receipts and the provision necessary to meet increased salary and wage costs were based on the same percentage. The Prime Minister has now stated that, for the purpose of the formula that escalates these financial assistance grants, a figure of 25 per cent increase in the level of average wages has been adopted in lieu of the previous 20 per cent.

This has been done in a matter of almost a few days. The Chief Secretary continues:

However, this will not assist our Budget.

Of course not! A wage escalation of 25 per cent in one year! How could it assist the Budget? So, three weeks after the Budget was introduced we have an admission that the Budget is \$18 500 000 out in relation to wages and salaries. Then we come to the third factor. We have had a supplementary speech made in this Council on the same Bill introduced in the other place only three weeks ago. In his explanation the Chief Secretary says:

The third factor to emerge is concerned with the revenue results for the two months to the end of August which show a current deficit of \$19 000 000. Whilst the Government will take all action possible to hold expenditure within the constraints of the Budget, there are certain areas of

revenue over which it has no control. In forming its Budget proposals, the Government was aware of the down-turn of land transactions which occurred some months ago in other States but, up to the time the Budget was drawn together, a similar down-turn had not occurred here, and there were indications that something of a plateau had been reached. However, in the month of August, there was a sharp fall in the number of conveyances submitted for stamping and the fall has continued into September.

It is remarkable that the Government should have presented the Budget only three weeks ago in the House of Assembly and now admit that the Budget estimates for stamp duties on land transactions are hopelessly wrong.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: Having done its best to curb those transactions.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes. On my estimation, within three weeks of its introduction the Budget is \$40 000 000 out. It is not a predicted deficit of \$12 000 000, nor is it a predicted deficit of \$22 000 000 (the only figure mentioned in the Chief Secretary's explanation): the present Budget will show a deficit of \$40 000 000 or more.

The Hon. V. G. Springett: Not \$14 000 000?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: No—\$40 000 000. Yet the Treasurer claimed only three weeks ago that there were no tax increases in the Budget. It would be perfectly obvious to a first-year high school student studying book-keeping that there must be savage tax increases in South Australia; alternatively, the Government has to frame a Budget that pays more attention to expenditure, and that is exactly where the Government should turn its attention, but it is not doing it. I wonder exactly where the Commonwealth Government and the State Government want to take us with their financial management. I have my strong suspicions in this regard; the Treasurer's fake war dances while blaming the Commonwealth Government for all the economic ills of this State should not impress anyone.

Regarding the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill's interjection that the Government had done its best to curb land transactions, I think there would have been a down-turn in the level of activity anyway; when I contacted Victoria and other States I found a similar situation there, although the down-turn there has not been as dramatic as it has been in South Australia. This Government's own legislation has had an escalating effect; not to have foreseen it in a Budget framed only three weeks ago is incredible. As is my usual way, I like to look at the comparisons between the Estimates for last year and those for this year. Once again, the same pattern emerges, the pattern to which I have drawn attention in this Chamber over the past half a dozen Budgets. There is no change in the approach of this Government to financial allocations.

Let me start first of all with receipts. The total of estimated receipts in 1973-74 was \$137 700 000, and estimated receipts for 1974-75 were \$208 900 000, an increase in State taxation of \$71 200 000 or 51.7 per cent. The State taxation in the Estimates has risen from \$107 800 000 in 1972-73 to an estimated \$208 900 000 in 1974-75, an increase of almost 100 per cent. The figure for public undertakings was estimated in 1973-74 at \$125 900 000, in 1974-75 at \$154 300 000, an increase of \$28 400 000 or 22.6 per cent. The figure for recovery of debt services was estimated at \$40 400 000 in 1973-74 and \$47 300 000 in 1974-75, an increase of \$6 900 000 or 17.1 per cent. Departmental fees decreased from an estimated \$81 700 000 in 1973-74 to an estimated \$74 600 000 in 1974-75, a decrease in income of \$7 100 000 or a decline of 8.7 per cent. I ask the Chief Secretary to provide me with information on why departmental fees are declining by 8.7 per cent. I would hazard

a guess that it is due to education fees, but I should like some information.

The Territorial line was estimated at \$3 400 000 last year and the figure remains the same this year. The figure for Commonwealth reimbursement in 1973-74 was estimated at \$222 000 000; for 1974-75 it is estimated at \$268 100 000, an increase of \$46 100 000 or 21 per cent. Total receipts in this Budget rise from \$611 000 000 in 1973-74 to \$756 600 000 this year, an increase of \$145 000 000. I raise once again the point that State taxation has increased in two Budgets by 100 per cent. I turn now to the estimated expenditure, and here again I emphasise that the same pattern emerges as has emerged in every Budget in the past five years. In 1973-74 estimated expenditure for the Premier and Treasurer was \$59 600 000, while in 1974-75 it is estimated at \$79 300 000, an increase of \$19 700 000 or 33 per cent. If one wants to look at an area in which we could save some money, let us look at that department first of all: an increased expenditure of \$19 700 000 in the Premier's Department at the moment is the first place to look to cut expenditure. If one could not save \$10 000 000 in that department I should be greatly surprised. I refer now to the line for the Chief Secretary and the Minister of Health. I know that at present the two departments are split, but if one rings on the telephone a girl answers and says, "Chief Secretary and Minister of Health Department", so I am not sure exactly what happens there.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: She says "departments".

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I suppose it is a saving to have one girl looking after different departments. The line for the Chief Secretary and Minister of Health in 1973-74 was \$104 800 000, and in 1974-75 it is \$147 000 000, an increase of \$42 200 000 or 40.3 per cent. The line for Lands, Repatriation and Irrigation showed \$6 700 000 last year and shows this year \$7 200 000, an increase of \$500 000 or 7.4 per cent. In these departments the actual work being undertaken is going to decline, because the increases will not even cater for inflation. Over the past four or five years less work has been done in the productive departments of this State than was done probably seven or eight years ago.

The line for Agriculture showed \$7 500 000 last year and this year shows \$7 900 000, an increase of \$400 000 or 5.3 per cent. The figure for Works and Marine was \$48 800 000 in 1973-74 but is \$57 900 000 for the current year, an increase of \$9 100 000 or 18.7 per cent, the largest percentage increase this department has received in many years. The figure for Education last year was \$178 100 000 and for this year has increased to \$187 000 000, an increase of \$8 900 000 or 5 per cent. For Labour and Industry the figure last year was \$1 290 000, and this year it has been increased to \$2 300 000, an increase of about \$1 000 000 or 77.5 per cent. The line for Roads and Transport last year was \$67 000 000 and this year is \$88 200 000, an increase of \$21 200 000 or 31.5 per cent, while the line for the Attorney-General and Community Welfare last year showed \$19 200 000, and this year shows \$26 900 000, an increase of \$7 700 000 or 40.1 per cent. The Environment and Conservation line last year was \$2 700 000 and this year is \$4 600 000, an increase of \$1 900 000 or 70 per cent. I like to incorporate these figures in *Hansard* because it gives some indication of the general trend of the Budget.

I have already mentioned the budgetary variations in the Loan Estimates this year, and I draw attention to page 19 of Parliamentary Paper No. 18, in which increases in receipts are included to the tune of about \$30 000 000 over

the last Budget. I have noticed one thing in the financial measures coming before the Council: the Government does not give this Council accurate information in relation to the increases it expects to receive into the Treasury from legislation. I refer to Bills we have had before us on many occasions, including the succession duties legislation, in which the Government made emotional claims that widows and children would be far better off under the Government provision, although indeed they were not, and to the stamp duties legislation, in which the Government claimed it wanted \$4 150 000 and which returned about \$6 000 000 or \$7 000 000. I remember the fight we had in this place regarding that provision. I turn now to the matter of payroll tax. When that legislation came before the Council not long ago, the Chief Secretary said:

The effect of this increase—

that is, the increase in the percentage of pay-roll tax—will be an estimated additional \$5 000 000 of revenue accruing to this State for the remainder of this financial year and an additional \$7 000 000 of revenue in a full year.

In speaking to the debate, I said:

The increase will be more than that. Indeed, owing to the rise in pay-roll tax and the increase in wages paid, it is possible that the figures in the 1974-75 receipts will be about 30 per cent above the \$54 000 000 collected last year. I predict that this Bill as it now stands will raise a total revenue next year of \$80 000 000—

or an increase of \$26 000 000, not an increase of \$5 000 000—

and the following year of over \$100 000 000.

I draw the attention of the Council to this matter, because it is important. There is no question that we shall soon have before this Council again legislation to increase substantially the level of taxation in this State; and we shall be faced once again with exactly the same problem: the Government will claim it wants a certain amount of revenue, the Bill will be examined, and we shall find that the figures are not accurate, so we shall come to a confrontation.

I refer the Council again to that speech about pay-roll tax, where the Government, in its second reading explanation, claims that the effect of the increase will be an estimated additional \$5 000 000 of revenue. I draw the attention of the Council to both papers before us where last year's collection of pay-roll tax amounted to \$54 000 000 and the estimate for the collection this year is \$94 000 000; yet, only a few weeks ago in this Council, the Government was claiming a \$5 000 000 increase. I claimed that the increase would be far more than that, that it would go to at least \$80 000 000. The Government's estimate in these papers is \$94 000 000. I draw that matter to the attention of the Council because it is an important point to stress at this stage, as we shall be faced, by what the Chief Secretary has said in reply to a question, with vicious taxation increases. If the Government does not listen to what this Council is saying now (and we have been saying it for the last five years, stressing the stupidity of levying increasing taxes on the people of South Australia) it is up to this Council to make certain that what the Government requires in that taxation measure it gets—that and no more. I believe that is fair enough comment. When the Government claims that the Bill will raise \$5 000 000, and a few days later in the Budget paper we see that the increase will be about \$40 000 000, it is right that this matter should be aired strongly in this Council.

I had intended going through the Budget and asking questions on the various lines of expenditure, but I am having trouble in finding what I want in my papers. However, I think I have said enough on the whole matter,

except for one further point I should like to make on this Bill. As has been pointed out in the additional second reading speech, we have a change in certain parts of the Bill from the Bill presented in previous years. I draw to the attention of the Council the changed wording. In clause 3 (2) (a), we have the inclusion in this year's Bill of the words "or in relation to any prescribed establishment". Then, in paragraph (b), the new words included are "together with increases in pay-roll tax arising therefrom" and "salaries, wages and pay-roll tax and". Sub-clause (4) of clause 3 deals with prescribed establishments. Another change is in clause 7, where the sum of \$3 000 000 is used, a larger figure than was used last year. I draw the attention of the Council to what I believe is happening here, and I should like the Government to reply on this matter.

The real position is that the Public Finance Act allows the Government to expend, under Governor's Warrant, a figure that is 1 per cent of the total Budget, but what we are doing here is extending that provision to 1 per cent plus the escalation in wages and salaries in relation to any "prescribed establishment", which means "any establishment in respect of which a grant towards its operation or maintenance has been included in the estimates of expenditure for the financial year ending on June 30, 1975".

I believe that, if the Government wants to increase the amount it thinks is desirable for it to use under Governor's Warrant, it should amend the Public Finance Act, not come at the question by virtually having an open-ended amount for any prescribed establishment. Perhaps I could quote once again the additional material supplied to this Council. As I understand it, this may not have been given to the other place. It is as follows:

Since 1970 the automatic appropriation authority given by section 32a (2) of the Public Finance Act has stood at 1 per cent of the totals contained in Appropriation Acts each year. The intention behind this section is to give Governments some flexibility in budgeting while retaining for Parliament close control over total effective appropriations. Lately, however, large increases in grants to institutions subsidised by the Government, consequent on large award increases affecting their employees, have pre-empted much of this extra authority and left the Government with very little flexibility in its own sphere of direct control. Because of the close comparability between the situation of these institutions and of Government departments faced with award increases, it was decided that the most appropriate way to overcome this difficulty would be to provide the same appropriation authority for the costs of wage and salary increases in subsidised institutions as currently applies for the costs of similar increases affecting Government departments. In accordance with this decision, the Bill before the Council provides for Governor's Warrants to be issued in respect of wage and salary increases payable either by the State or in relation to any "prescribed establishment" as defined.

This may be all right (I am not saying it is not all right) but I believe the Council should have a further explanation of this matter. My question is: do Governor's Warrants have to be used to cater for increases in departmental wages and salaries? If that is so, it is reasonable that certain prescribed establishments should be in the same position. But what does one mean by "prescribed establishment"? Clause 3 (4) defines it as meaning any establishment in respect of which a grant towards its operation or maintenance has been included in the Estimates of Expenditure. That includes such a tremendous number of things in the Budget that it leaves the matter open-ended. I raise this point for honourable members' information. At this stage I am not making any critical comment on it, except to say that I believe the matter should be more fully investigated. Perhaps in the intervening period between now and when the Bill goes into

Committee, I may be able to do more research on it and comment further later.

There are a number of other matters that I could raise, such as the Revenue Estimates in relation to stamp duties, for example. The Government expects to receive an additional \$8 000 000 in this respect. I have already referred to the \$40 000 000 increase in pay-roll tax, and to the Railways Department's deficit, which is expected to increase from \$30 000 000 last year to \$40 000 000 this year. The Government should certainly be examining the efficiency of this department's operation.

One could also ask questions regarding the statutory corporations, the Savings Bank of South Australia, the State Bank, and so on, who will be contributing \$7 000 000 in taxation to the Government. Other questions could be asked regarding the Municipal Tramways Trust, the recovery of interest from which is increasing from \$470 000 to \$867 000 this year. I refer also to the State Bank of South Australia advances under recovery of interest, which recoveries are increasing from \$1 000 000 last year to \$1 350 000 this year. Although many questions could be asked, no doubt other honourable members will be examining some of these matters in detail.

I support the second reading, although in Committee I may ask further questions regarding some of the matters I have raised. I emphasise once more that an unprecedented action has been taken in the presentation of this Budget as, within a period of three weeks, three separate changes have been made in the explanation of it. It appears to me, on the figures I have got, that this State's budgetary position has altered by, in my opinion, about \$40 000 000.

The Treasurer in his second reading explanation placed part of the blame for this on the Commonwealth Government. However, as I have pointed out, particularly in relation to the budgetary estimates of conveyancing, no-one but the Government itself can be blamed for this. Finally, I stress to the Government as strongly as I can that, instead of racing headlong into raising more taxation, which will only increase costs to the community, it should get down and have a hard look at its own management.

The Hon. C. M. HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

ROYAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Interpretation."

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: This provision relates to the institution's change of name to "society". Any such change can be important in relation to the public relations of an organisation. No-one would pay other than a great tribute to the Royal Institution for the Blind and the work it has done. The institution started in this State in 1884, and has been active ever since. Some people are not really aware that, in some parts of the world, this institution deals with blind, deaf and dumb people.

Some years ago I stayed for a few weeks at an institution in Surrey, England, all the patients at which were blind, deaf and dumb. It took, on average, 10 years to make persons with those triple afflictions self-able and self-manageable. Most people have heard of Helen Keller and how, at the age of only 19 months, she became ill, as a result of which she became deaf and blind. However, she obtained a degree and spent her life trying to better the lot of blind people. In England, a man named Ian Fraser lost his sight in the First World War, became a member of Parliament and gave much help to those who were

totally blind. I refer also to John Milton, a famous man of poetry, who was also blind.

I refer also to Braille. Before 1771, a man named Valentine Haüy saw a group of blind people being mocked at a fair. This disturbed him, and he became determined that he would do all he could to alleviate their condition. He took a blind boy home and tried to educate him. He soon learnt that the first thing to do was to teach the child to read. The boy showed an interest in a piece of cardboard that had heavy print on it; he could feel the print, and this gave Haüy the idea of raising letters on thick sheets of cardboard so that blind people could recognise them by touch, and this has since developed. He founded a school and, within a few years, proved that blind children could be taught to read and write, and to play musical instruments.

One of his pupils, Louis Braille, worked on a system of dots instead of raised letters and so, in 1829, published the Braille alphabet. Today, only Braille is taught in Great Britain and America. In this State, only one person is now using the alternative system of Moon type, which has a similar principle and which was introduced by William Moon in 1847. It was used almost entirely for those people who had become blind after birth and who, as a result of their memory, could interpret the simpler and different form of raised lettering more easily.

The first Braille Bible was published in the nineteenth century, in 39 volumes. Nowadays, there are talking books and records that can be used by the blind. Since 1893, it has been made law in some parts of the world that blind people must be educated. In this respect, one thinks of the blind and their guide dogs, sonic sticks, self-management, and their ability to work. The world is taking big strides in the care of the blind and others disadvantaged by similar afflictions. It is only right that the name "Royal Institution" should be changed to "Royal Society" to ensure that those involved get the best public relations possible in their efforts to raise money and treat the people for whom they care.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: The purpose of this clause is to change the name of the organisation. Normally one would expect that an organisation such as this would be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, as it would then be free to change its name, and Parliament would have nothing to do with it. However, the reason for this Bill's having to be introduced to Parliament is that, when the principal Act was enacted, there were certain doubts concerning the title of the land occupied by the institution. Therefore, the matter was brought under a private Act of Parliament. The institution, instead of having been incorporated, as one would have expected, under the old Companies Act or the Associations Incorporation Act, was incorporated by special private Act of Parliament. That is why it is necessary for this Bill to come before this Council to enable the institution to change its name. The matter of a change of name is really a matter for the society itself, as it is a society's own prerogative to order its own affairs, and we should certainly give effect to the changes requested by the society.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: I am moved by the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Springett concerning Ian Fraser, a blind member of the House of Commons. The New South Wales Parliament, too, has been served by a blind Liberal member, Mr. David Hunter, the member for Ashfield for between 20 and 30 years. He has given magnificent service and made a great contribution to the work of that State.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (4 to 7) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CENTRES

Adjourned debate on motion of the Hon. D. H. L. Banfield:

That this Council resolve that the providing of hospitals and medical centres by the Government of this State shall be a public purpose within the meaning of the Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act, 1914-1972; and that a message be sent to the House of Assembly transmitting the foregoing resolution and requesting its concurrence therein.

(Continued from September 24. Page 1076.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): The Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act, which was introduced in 1914, contains various definitions, including those of "land", "owner" and "public purpose". Section 3 provides:

This Act does not apply to any lands which—

- (a) are, or are situated within, a public park or park lands or a place reserved or dedicated for the use or enjoyment of the inhabitants of the State, or any part thereof, and
- (b) are vested in, or under the control of, any municipal corporation or municipal or district council.

Section 4 deals with the Governor's declaring any purpose to be a public purpose, and paragraph iii. provides:

any purpose which both Houses of Parliament, during the same or different sessions of any Parliament, resolve shall be a public purpose within the meaning of this Act;

and thereupon such purpose shall be deemed to be an undertaking within the meaning of the Compulsory Acquisition of Land Act, 1925, and the Acts amending that Act, as if it were an undertaking authorised by Act of Parliament.

This motion is a blanket motion, which gives the Government power to use the Lands for Public Purposes Acquisition Act, 1914-1972, and the Compulsory Acquisition of Land Act, 1925, for the compulsory acquisition of any land to provide hospitals and medical centres. I believe that this is not the purpose for which this subsection was designed.

I believe that the resolution of both Houses declaring a matter to be a public purpose for compulsory acquisition should be a specific reference for the Government to act on. In his explanation, the Minister dealt specifically with the need to acquire land for the establishment of a hospital and medical centre in the Salisbury-Elizabeth area. I believe that this motion should be specifically designed for that purpose, rather than being a blanket motion dealing with compulsory acquisition by the Government of this State for providing hospitals and medical centres. If the Compulsory Acquisition of Land Act, 1925, needs to be amended to allow the Government to acquire land for those purposes, that Act should be amended, and we should not have a resolution of both Houses of Parliament for a blanket acquisition power.

In making that point, I realise that during this speech I should put my amendment on file, as I will move that the motion be amended to make it a specific reference in relation to the acquisition for the purpose mentioned in the explanation by the Minister. As I will not have a chance of speaking again on the motion and as I would like to place this amendment on file, I seek permission to conclude my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

NATURAL GAS PIPELINES AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 19. Page 1055.)

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Lands): I thank the Minister of Agriculture for handling this matter in my absence. Since my return to this Council, I have not had much opportunity to study all the matters raised on this Bill. I have asked my colleague in another place to supply me with information, which I hope effectively

answers at least some of the points raised by honourable members.

In reply to the Leader, I point out that the proposed new agreement between the producers and the authority has not yet been signed and, in all probability, will not be signed for several months. It is a complex document, as it requires the authority to take over the responsibility for all gas sales contracts which had previously been negotiated by the producer companies with the Electricity Trust of South Australia, the South Australian Gas Company, and a number of industrial gas consumers. Before the agreement can be signed it will be necessary for the authority to have all existing sales contracts assigned to it and to negotiate new sales contracts with the Electricity Trust and South Australian Gas Company.

In a practical sense, the new arrangements have been operating since May 1, 1974, in that the authority has paid the producers for the value of the gas in the line at that date and for all gas subsequently received into the line since that date, at the newly agreed price of 24c per million British thermal units. All revenue from the sale of gas since May 1 has been received by the authority. No dissatisfaction with these arrangements has been expressed by the producers, the authority, or users of gas, but all accept that, in formalising contractual relationships over an extended period, care must be taken to provide for the interests of all parties to be protected and, of course, the proper legal requirements must be pursued.

The Hon. Mr. DeGaris referred directly to the pipeline from Birkenhead to Port Adelaide. I believe he meant from Birkenhead to Port Stanvac. This line is owned and operated by Petroleum Refineries (Aust.) Proprietary Limited and was constructed, and is administered, under the Inflammable Liquids Act. The Natural Gas Pipelines Authority has no interest in this line. Lines carrying gas in the Adelaide metropolitan area and in Port Pirie and Whyalla are owned and operated by the South Australian Gas Company. The function of the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority is simply to deliver gas at high pressure to city gate meter stations to be handed over to the gas company for distribution throughout its franchise area, to the Electricity Trust for electricity generation at the Torrens Island and Dry Creek power stations, and to several smaller industrial consumers.

On the question of the carriage of liquid hydrocarbons, the intent is that these will be transported in a separate line between Moomba and Red Cliff Point. One of the purposes of the Bill is to provide the authority with power to transport liquid hydrocarbons, which power it does not enjoy under the principal Act. The prime purpose in constructing such a liquids line would be to transport liquids for the producer companies to the proposed petrochemical complex at Red Cliff Point. The question not resolved, at this stage, is whether the authority should purchase the liquids at the field or should transport them on behalf of the producers. This, in any event, would be the subject of agreement between the producers and the authority.

The Hon. Mr. Gilfillan made two points in his remarks dealing with the Bill. First, he is concerned that membership of the authority may not include a representative of the producers. There is a very good reason for this, and it is simply that the principal agreement the authority will make will be a contract to purchase all natural gas to be used in South Australia from the producers. This would

place any member appointed as a representative of the producers in a very difficult position, as he would be a member of a semi-government authority contracting with his own company for the major item the authority would purchase. There is no lack of confidence in the Chairman of the pipelines authority, Sir Norman Young; the Government has every confidence in Sir Norman.

Secondly, the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan is concerned at the wide powers he claims the amendments confer on the authority. In fact, the only real change in the section which defines the powers the authority has already enjoyed for over seven years is to substitute the word "petroleum" for the words "natural gas". The Act gives no power to the authority to acquire, otherwise than by agreement, anything other than land in the terms of the Compulsory Acquisition of Land Act. The principal Act specifically states that the authority may "purchase, take on lease or otherwise by agreement acquire any existing pipeline and sell or otherwise dispose of any pipeline owned by the authority". This clearly limits its powers to purchase under "agreement" and could not, therefore, as the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan has stated, "put at risk the pipelines, installations and the contents thereof, thereby jeopardising the whole of the State's fuel supplies".

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN (Northern) moved:

That this Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

The Council divided on the motion:

Ayes (10)—The Hons. J. C. Burdett, M. B. Cameron, Jessie Cooper, R. C. DeGaris, R. A. Geddes, G. J. Gilfillan (teller), C. M. Hill, Sir Arthur Rymill, V. G. Springett, and C. R. Story.

Noes (5)—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield, T. M. Casey, B. A. Chatterton, C. W. Creedon, and A. F. Kneebone (teller).

Pair—Aye—The Hon. M. B. Dawkins. No—The Hon. A. J. Shard.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Motion thus carried.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN moved:

That the Select Committee consist of the Hons. J. C. Burdett, T. M. Casey, B. A. Chatterton, R. C. DeGaris, G. J. Gilfillan, and A. F. Kneebone.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: When equal representation has been granted on these committees in the past, it has been customary to provide that there shall be no casting vote by the Chairman. I suggest that should be part of the motion.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: That will be part of a subsequent motion.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN moved:

That the Select Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to adjourn from place to place; the committee to report on Tuesday, October 22, 1974.

Motion carried.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN moved:

That Standing Order No. 389 be suspended to enable the Chairman to have a deliberative vote only.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.42 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, September 26, at 2.15 p.m.