

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 3 October 1985

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairman:

Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:

The Hon. B.C. Eastick
 Mr S.G. Evans
 Mr T.R. Groom
 Mr G.A. Ingerson
 Ms S.M. Lenehan
 Mr M.K. Mayes

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask the Minister for Housing and Construction whether he wishes to make an opening statement, and the same request will be made to the lead speaker for the Opposition. When questioning opens there will be three questions allowed from the Opposition side, to be followed by three questions from the Government side. When questions are asked they will be directed to the Minister at all times, and the Minister may then refer them to one of his officers, if he so wishes. During the answers to questions, the Minister may state that he will obtain information at a later date for the Committee. I ask that the information be in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard*, and there is a deadline for those questions and answers to be delivered to the clerk, which is 18 October.

Housing and Construction, \$44 302 000

Witness:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings, Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr Paul Edwards, General Manager, South Australian Housing Trust.

Mr Dean Lambert, Director, Industry Policy, Department of Housing and Construction.

Mr Gregory Black, Manager, Office of Housing.

Ms Margaret Hill, Senior Project Officer, Office of Housing.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: By the arrangement which has been entered into with the members of the Committee and the Minister, those matters directly relating to housing will occupy the questioning from now until about a quarter to 4 this afternoon, when a break will be taken, and thereafter, the Public Buildings Department will be the area of involvement.

I am hopeful that the arrangement that has existed in the past will prevail today, that questions directly relating to the South Australian Housing Trust, which is basically involved with the capital account (which is another vote) will intertwine with discussions on the Minister of Housing's office, although no vote will be taken on the capital account until the completion of the debate on housing and construction. That will allow debate to continue, encapsulated between the two areas of the Minister's responsibility. There will be no further debate by the Opposition on the

capital line at the conclusion of questioning on the construction sector. I believe that is the best way to approach the matter, and I indicate our willingness to proceed in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: Works and services under the Department of Housing and Construction amounts to \$238 043 000. If we discuss that in the morning session, it will obviate questioning later.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I concur with the member for Light that agreement has been reached on exactly how much time we spend, first on housing and then on construction. We overcame the problem of the capital side quite successfully during last year's Estimates Committee. It worked then, and I am sure that it will work today. I have an opening statement, but, first, I have a few comments about you, Mr Chairman. This is the first time during my three years in the Ministry that I have had the pleasure of appearing before this Committee with you as Chairman. As you are retiring at the next election, Mr Chairman, I am very pleased that I have this chance to appear before you in your capacity as Chairman. I understand that you are very firm but also very fair. I am sure that the rules that you lay down when dealing with the questions and answers will be up to your usual standard.

I think the Government can be very proud of its housing achievements over its three years in office. We have overseen the greatest expansion of public housing in the State's history, while providing assistance to home buyers, private tenants, and those in need of emergency services. We have renegotiated the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement with the Federal Labor Government and made it a just and worthwhile document. The Commonwealth-State housing Agreement now has socially proper objectives and provides meaningful forms of assistance to the housing sector.

The Bannon Government has rejuvenated the housing sector, eliminating unemployment in the industry and providing high levels of work for private builders. This in turn has provided a continuous stimulus to the State's broader economy over the past three years. We estimate that 10 400 jobs in South Australia's building industry have been created since 1982, and it needs to be noted that CSIRO estimates that every \$1 million spent on housing creates about 63 jobs, of which 50 are in the local economy. Despite all these important achievements, which represent a life-saving turnaround for the housing industry from the period 1979-82, the Government is not resting on its laurels.

We recognize that the housing needs of many South Australians are still unfulfilled and that others, even though they may have obtained suitable accommodation—including home ownership—are still facing hardship because of high interest rates and increased property values. This is why the Bannon Government has recently announced a series of measures that are essentially short-term in nature but which will enable many families to remain in their own homes without undue hardship.

While the Government's long-term housing strategy has been outstandingly successful, we have acted to provide additional relief as a bridging process during this period of rising interest rates. This Government has committed unprecedented levels of funding to housing programs and consequently helped record numbers of people into low-rent public housing and into home ownership. We have provided the most effective rent relief program for those renting in the high-cost private rental market and dramatically expanded emergency housing services. We have also initiated innovative housing concepts, such as co-operative housing and rental-purchase, to provide additional options and attract other sources of funds into the housing sector.

But even still, this Government is working to develop another means for home buyers to counter the ravages of

high interest rates, and we will continue to expand the real assistance provided to those who are in need of decent rental accommodation. Through the course of this Committee's work I am sure the relevant statistics will be aired highlighting the accuracy of what I have said today, and I look forward to expanding on the remarkable housing achievements of the Bannon Government.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I would have to say that that is the first occasion on the Committees on which I have sat this year that we have had a political speech to start an Estimates Committee.

Mr Groom: It is common practice for a statement to be made.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I just advise the honourable member and the Committee that this is the third Committee that I have sat on—one dealt with Mr Bannon's portfolios, one dealt with Miss Wiese's portfolios, and it has not been a feature of any of those previous Committees.

Mr Groom interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will not have interjections from one side to the other. Interjections are out of order and answers to interjections are also out of order.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Page 4 of the yellow document states the issues generally and relates to the activities of the Minister's portfolio. The second of the issues is the deterioration of ageing Government assets. I seek information from the Minister whether that is inclusive of the ageing of the Housing Trust assets, because I do not want to transgress into another area of activity although, by virtue of the agency overview as is identified in this document, the Housing Trust assets would be looked upon *de facto* anyhow as a Government asset.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In relation to page 4 of the yellow book, when we are talking about ageing Government assets (that is, buildings which are under my control through the Department of Housing and Construction) we are not dealing with assets owned by the South Australian Housing Trust. If the member for Light has any questions dealing with the asset maintenance of Housing Trust properties, I would be perfectly willing to answer those. The comments on page 4 of the yellow book do not cover the South Australian Housing Trust.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That leads into the basic question relative to the Housing Trust stock, which is directly under the guidance of the Minister. What specific programs are in place for the maintenance of Housing Trust stock at the present moment? I ask that question against the background of increasing numbers of questions which I am led to believe members of Parliament are receiving in their electorate offices about there being some difficulty in having maintenance carried out on the basis that either the line has run out and there are no more funds for that month or quarter, or alternatively that there has been an oversupply of maintenance benefit. That is the claim of some clients—I am not asserting it myself—in their relationship with some trust officers, that there is a denial of urgent repairs or urgent action taken. I am fully appreciative that programs have been put in place which seek to restore an area on a contract basis so that the greatest cost benefit for painting or other purposes is achieved, but I am talking about the individuals.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: From my experience, after travelling interstate and overseas just recently, I think that the standard of maintenance of South Australian Housing Trust homes compares more than favourably with what I have seen elsewhere. One can always argue in this tight fiscal period in which we live (and in which I think we will be living for many years to come) that there will always be some Housing Trust tenants who will either approach the

Housing Trust or their local member of Parliament claiming that maintenance is due and that they have been fobbed off by the local trust office.

Adequate money is set aside each financial year to enable routine maintenance of trust properties to be carried out. Funds for the maintenance of trust properties comes from rents that are set by the Government on the recommendation of the Housing Trust. We also take into account the fact that close to 62 per cent of Housing Trust tenants have rent reductions. The Housing Trust also has to carry the full cost of E&WS charges, local government rates, and so on. All in all, I think that the Housing Trust does a very good job.

However, there are recognised needs in certain areas. For example, as a result of a visit that I made to the South-East I found some problems with mould on older properties. I asked for a report on the most effective way to solve that problem, and additional money will be allocated. We do this where a certain region's maintenance costs are slightly less. We will transfer money—we are a very flexible organisation in that regard. In relation to complaints by tenants to either the trust or members of Parliament—and you, Mr Chairman, share with me a very large proportion of Housing Trust tenants in your electorate—we sometimes find, after investigation, that those claims for maintenance have to a certain extent been exaggerated.

I have often compared the demands that we receive for maintenance from Housing Trust tenants to those made by people living in private accommodation. When one looks at the total amount that the trust spends on maintenance and compares that to what the average person in a private home would spend, one finds that the trust comes out pretty well in front. Would the General Manager care to elaborate further on that matter?

Mr Edwards: The trust has a policy whereby it sets standards for such matters as the frequency of painting properties, which is done on a cyclical basis, and those cycles are maintained. Each year there are programs for upgrading roofs, the provision of concrete paths, and so on. All these are carried out on a pan basis to achieve certain standards. In the year just completed, the trust spent about \$36 million on its maintenance programs, which is an increase of about 14 per cent over the previous year, as I recall.

While there is always a steady volume of queries about maintenance works, it has not been my experience that the pressure has become any more severe during the past 12 months than it was previously.

Membership:

Mr M.J. Evans substituted for Mr Mayes and Mr Plunkett substituted for Ms Lenehan.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister said that the majority of funds for maintenance come from rental. What sum will be available from rental this year for maintenance, given that against the income from rental is levelled the cost of local government rates and water and sewerage rates and the cost of excess water, some \$1 million of which will not be levied against those occupying Housing Trust accommodation?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Is the honourable member asking how much will be spent on maintenance in this financial year?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Local government rates and water and sewerage charges have been increased from 1 July, whereas rentals, in the main, although not totally, have been fixed or frozen, thus the sum remaining that can be used for maintenance or other purposes is reduced. It has been publicly stated that there will be an increase in local government charges of 8.5 per cent across the State,

and we know that water and sewerage rates have increased. The increased costs must be offset against the fixed rental income.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There will certainly be increased costs. As members would be well aware, a rent freeze is in operation and a rent review is currently taking place. I am not able to say what the recommendations of the review committee will be in relation to rent: it is an unknown factor at present. In the current economic situation we do not know how many people will be paying reduced rents in this financial year. We are well aware of the increased charges and the known facts, but I assure the honourable member that the trust will be able to meet its maintenance commitments in this financial year despite all the known and unknown factors.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: At the expense of what programs?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As the member for Light is well aware, in the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement this State Government was at the forefront of, in effect, saying that Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement moneys could be spent at the State's discretion. If it is necessary as a result of increased known charges such as E&WS, council rates, excess water, etc., and as a result of a marked deterioration in some of our older properties and, at the same time, the rent review coming up with a series of recommendations that hopefully the Government will adopt, bearing in mind the comments that I made in the House of Assembly that rent increases will be within the CPI, and if it means that as a result of that rent review and increased local government charges we have to draw on Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money to pick up some of the maintenance charges, we will do so.

I will enlarge on this, but I hope that the member for Light will not think that I am trying to answer every question over 20 minutes. One of the gains that we negotiated with the Hawke Labor Government was in using Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money as the State sees fit. If one looks at the expenditure papers and the yellow book, the remarkable programs that we have embarked on over the past year have mainly been because we have been able to generate Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money into certain areas. It will always be a juggling exercise of where we put Commonwealth-State housing money. Whether we use the bulk of it for capital works programs to increase our Housing Trust stock, whether we decide that the demand for emergency housing, say, or rent relief is increasing, or whether we find as a result of the rising interest charges that we need to put more money into mortgage relief, we have the ability to do so under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money.

How we allocate that money is always an ongoing process. It is a hard decision to make in some respects: do we continue a capital works program or do we decrease the capital works program so that we can give much needed assistance to those people in the private rental sector or home purchase area. It will always be a problem, but, with the approach and advice that I have received from the Housing Trust and from my advisers, until now we have always managed to do it fairly successfully.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I understand that the Housing Trust administers a private rental subsidy scheme for the benefit of people who are perhaps waiting to come into Housing Trust accommodation and find themselves out in the private rental market in the interim and paying rents that they cannot afford. Accordingly, the department and the Government make available a subsidy in the way of private rental assistance to help those people in that interim period. Will the Minister confirm what the current maximum level of that assistance is and whether it has decreased or increased

recently? There has been some indication to me that it may have recently been cut, and I would like to hear the Minister's comments on that.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The maximum payable to these people used to be \$30 a week, but as a result of Federal Government changes in its assistance to aged people we have had to adjust our own figure. That decision was made because, as the member for Elizabeth would be well aware, we are far in excess of our commitment under the mortgage and rent relief program, which should be based on a dollar for dollar subsidy, as we get from the Federal Government.

We have always paid more than the other States in rent relief. This is the only State Government left in the Commonwealth that would be still actively processing rent relief applications. In the Eastern States only those who are recipients will continue to receive rent and mortgage relief. This State considers it has an obligation to those people who are renting privately—it used to be 30 but is now down to 25, because the Federal Government will be picking it up. The member will be aware that as from next year the Federal Government will be providing a rent relief subsidy for unemployed people. This State Government will then make an adjustment, as we can then widen the net to those people in need in our own State. I think that the members of the Committee will agree that that is a right and proper decision.

Mr M.J. EVANS: It might increase next year?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As I said, we are always reviewing: if there was a massive increase in the cost of private rents, this Government would possibly have to study the situation. I have always consistently maintained that rent relief is a Federal Government responsibility, because it is income related, and in no way the responsibility of the State.

In the first housing Ministers' meeting I argued strongly, and the Federal Government eventually conceded, that it was its responsibility and was income related, but that is all we got from it. Thankfully, as a result of the previous housing Ministers' meeting in Perth, we had a commitment from the Federal Government that it would include those who were unemployed for some form of subsidy, and that takes place from the start of the next financial year. We will then look at our own payments to those seeking rent relief. If rents have not increased significantly, we will adjust our maximum payment in line with what they receive from the Federal Government; if there is a massive increase in rents in the private rental market, we will have to face that situation.

However, it might be of some interest to the honourable member and to the Committee that those recipients of rent relief have increased quite considerably. As at June 1984 there were 5 682 recipients; as at 30 June 1985 there were 7 062, an increase of 24 per cent. Payments for 1983-84 were \$4.6 million; for 1984-85 payments were \$6.6 million, up 43 per cent, which reinforces the Government's commitment to the dispossessed in the private rental market—those people being forced to pay astronomical rents whilst they are seeking public sector accommodation.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I agree with the Minister when he says it is a Commonwealth responsibility because it is income related, but we have also seen an introduction by the State Government of a new program in this area by the subsidy of interest rates for one sector of the market. Does the Minister see this in the same context? One could draw a direct comparison between private rental market subsidies and interest rate subsidies. Is there any parallel between those two programs?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Not really. Rent relief has been an ongoing commitment by State Governments, and I pay a tribute to my predecessor, the Hon. Murray Hill,

who picked up the subsidy when it was first offered by the Fraser Government—the previous Tonkin Government picked it up on a dollar for dollar basis. Whilst I have been critical of those people who received rent relief in the early days, I think one has to be generous and say that in the first few months of the introduction of the rent relief scheme it was not widely known as it was not widely advertised by the previous Administration, and the fact is that rents had not started to rise to any degree.

Rent relief will always be an ongoing program of this Government. The recent announcement by the Premier of relief to borrowers from building societies is only for a six-month period. The Premier made a statement that if interest rates fell, that subsidy would come away. Rent relief is something totally different; it is an ongoing program. Unfortunately, until we can accommodate the 33 000 people on the Housing Trust waiting list and until we can provide access to the home-ownership-made-easier scheme to low and middle income earners, we are always going to have a situation where we need to give rent relief.

Our budget for rent relief in this financial year is \$8.7 million, which is an increase of \$2.2 million. When you compare to the Federal Government's input of only \$2 million, it clearly indicates the priority that this State Government places on those people in the private rental market who seek some form of relief.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I would like to take the Minister back to the question of his recent overseas travel. I understand that was a fairly successful trip undertaken to look at public housing overseas. Last year it was included in the administrative expenses line with a total allocation of \$71 000. This year's budget has been divided up into two halves to reflect the division of expenditure in this area: administration expenses, minor equipment, etc., and overseas visits by the Minister. Last year \$26 999 was actually spent and in the Estimates Committee the Minister referred to the total allocation of \$71 000 and said that \$45 000 of that was a nominal amount that had been set aside for potential overseas travel. However, he went on to say that in all probability the \$45 000 would either not be used at all or very little would be used. It would appear that that is in conflict with the fact that in reality \$22 645 was spent. I do not disagree with the concept of the Minister travelling overseas; however, I am concerned with the conflict in what the Minister said in relation to the probable expenditure and what appears to have been the actual result.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If one looks on page 168, the actual payment was \$22 645. We are in the middle of the financial year, and still some bills have to be paid. The member was correct: \$45 000 was allocated for the overseas trip—perhaps I was being a little generous last year: when I made the point I think it was in line with one of my colleagues in the Cabinet, the Minister of Education, who has advocated that one should use as much of the Parliamentary travel money for overseas trips other than what has been allocated in the line. In that way it is a saving to the taxpayer.

That is the point I made. We are still not completely sure of the exact cost of the trip because of the outstanding bills. I am sure that next year the member for Elizabeth (and I am sure that he will be in the chamber next year) will be able to see the final cost and the savings to the taxpayer. In regard to the success of the trip, I think I have already spoken to the member for Elizabeth about that. It was a very successful trip, and when the report is available I hope that all members of Parliament take the time to read what we found about public housing in other countries in relation to what is happening in South Australia.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I hope the Minister can assure me also that I will be here next year. I refer to page 4 of the yellow

book, 'Objectives, Issues and Strategies', and the research section in particular. Is any work being done by the research section to identify methods to reduce the massive burden to taxpayers in providing shelter for the homeless? In my opinion there is no shortage of housing in this State; there is only a shortage of methods to make it available. In other words, there are many houses in Adelaide that could accommodate people if the laws of the land allowed the owners of those houses to make use of their spare accommodation. For example, many local government by-laws stop people, who may live in a reasonable sized house on their own or with another person, from dividing their house so that more than one family can use the space available. This is particularly so in the R1 zoning area of the city.

Tax laws do not encourage pensioners to make use of the spare shelter in their houses. The latest move by the Federal Government in relation to capital gains tax will place some burden on the rental accommodation available in the private sector. I think it is an ideal opportunity for the research section to come up with a proposition for the Federal Government, that where people have a house that is not being used, with council permission (and this will probably need some negotiation with the Minister and the Department of Local Government) they could make it available to someone without shelter—either an individual or a family—with the Federal Government not charging tax on any money accruing in this way. I am referring to an ordinary private dwelling and not any other form of accommodation. The Federal Government will lose a bit of tax, but it will make a saving in the subsidised money that it makes available to the States for housing, because the taxpayer must guarantee the loan money, anyway.

We could make a provision that the State Housing Authority sets the rent that can be charged, which would eliminate any exorbitant exploitation. It would also be possible to reduce the normal rent paid for this type of accommodation, because no tax would be paid. Pensioners who take the opportunity of renting out part of their houses should not have their benefits affected. This scheme would offer pensioners companionship and they would have assistance around their properties.

Another area that would be affected under this scheme is the law of matrimony, because many people who would like to offer accommodation have a fear of being accused of forming a *de facto* relationship. I believe the research section could look at drawing up a draft contract, if our law allows that. People could enter into a contract for the use of shared accommodation, with the contract clearly stating the conditions of use and the obligations on the parties. Those people who are afraid that further down the track they will be faced with the other party alleging that there was a *de facto* relationship and wanting half the value of the house would have recourse to the contract showing that that was not the case.

I am sure that many lonely people or couples in this State would be quite happy to make their houses available to tenants of their own choice, if there was a method of eliminating this risk. Has the research section looked at this area in its attempt to reduce costs? When I held the position of shadow Minister in the mid 1970s, I put a proposition to the Federal Government. The then Federal Minister, Mr Newman, accepted it and took it back to Cabinet. The proposition was that we should produce a film or films for young people depicting the benefits in saving to buy a house. I am not talking about a tin-pot film costing \$100 000; I am talking about something that will show the different lifestyles—that, if you go to a nightclub and spend money on drinks costing \$2 or \$3, or on motor cars, when you turn 25 the taxpayer will have to supply your shelter. I relate that to the most recent move by the State Government

to make \$3 million available to help people involved in the building societies housing interest crisis.

If we could use an education program to convince 100 people in each State each year for several years not to depend on the State to supply their shelter, we would save \$5 million, if the houses involved were worth about \$50 000. The Government could argue that, if they save 100 people from losing their houses by making the \$3 million available, they will save \$2 million. I accept that that argument can be used, and it is quite logical. Mr Newman accepted my proposition and went back to the Federal Government. I think it is time that we considered this proposition.

If the research section investigates this, it will find that we got into trouble with housing when we lowered the age of majority to 18 and changed the entertainment and liquor laws, because people no longer had to go home as much as they used to. Advertising on television, radio, and in the print media encourages people to spend money on areas other than housing or on housing that they cannot afford. We need a form of advertising that will counter that, and that can only be done by the Government. I believe we must tackle this problem now, because it is cheaper to finance prevention rather than to keep looking for a cure, which is becoming more expensive and the taxpayer is starting to complain. I hope the research section will look at the matters I have raised. This has been on my mind since the 1970s.

Our young people are as intelligent as they ever were, but Parliament has changed the laws so that young people find it easier to spend their money. There is no organisation telling young people what to do. Local government contributed to the problem when it increased the minimum rates for water and sewerage to a high level, because it no longer pays families to buy a block of land for their children. The cost of maintaining that block of land is just too high today.

I ask the Minister: has any work been done in the area I have mentioned and, if not, will he make sure that the research section has a look at it and talks to the Federal Government? I still argue that there is no shortage of accommodation: there is just a shortage of finding a method of making it available.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will attempt to pick up all the points that the member for Fisher made. He said quite flippantly earlier that he hoped I would say the same to him as I said to the member for Elizabeth. His philosophical argument about the activities of those people in the building industry is one with which I totally agree. It has always been a matter of concern to me and to this Government that in the days of increasing demands for housing, whether it be through the public or private sector, young people today are being urged to go into home ownership complete with granny flat, bar, billiard room, sauna, inground swimming pool—you name it, they are offered it. If that is the philosophical attitude on the member for Fisher, I wish him well in the coming election. He has raised a lot of points and I will try to go through them one by one.

First, dealing with the problem of what we are going to offer young people today when they are bombarded at all levels that it is right that they buy a Maserati and drink the latest drink and not put their money into building societies so that they can possibly buy a house—I am being very serious, but I notice the member for Bragg is smiling. I have always felt very seriously about this. There have been a number of undertakings by the trust and some responsible builders. The trust talks about the expandable home where young people or young married couples are offered a chance to get into home ownership at a very reasonable cost and as their income increases they can expand their home. The design was very good and we picked up some degree of

acceptance by building societies and banks that they would finance such ventures, but unfortunately.

I would not say it has been one of the most outstanding successes of the trust or Government promotion. The trust has produced a film which is available for prospective buyers of the types of homes that they can get into. As a result of this being International Youth Year, young officers of the Housing Trust have produced a booklet which deals with the benefits of—I will not say buying cheaply—buying wisely. At the moment they are going around to every school in the State and speaking to senior students about not only the benefits of home ownership but the benefits of buying wisely and not asking for too much in the initial stages. I understand that the Real Estate Institute has upgraded its video because it shares the concern of both the member for Fisher and me that the priorities of the advertising agencies are to buy a big flash motor car rather than a home.

The member for Fisher talked about a greater use of available housing. He touched on the capital gains tax and I am sure he was also dealing with the problems of how the Federal Government's latest reforms (I call them reforms; he may call them something else) would affect those people who want to get into the problem of sharing accommodation. The problem is not so much one of cost but planning restrictions and restrictions by local government in their zoning regulations as to where individual householders can go.

The Committee would well recall that the previous Government made an attempt to have included in legislation the fact that granny flats could be built to get dual occupancy accepted, and the reasoning behind that was very good and I fully supported that move by the previous Government. Unfortunately, it was overwhelmingly rejected by local government, and that was disappointing. When one looks at the trust's and this Government's involvement in our aged accommodation program, our Jubilee 150 program and our joint venture program for accommodation for the aged, one sees that it is very impressive.

At the same time, all members of this Committee would be well aware of the demands that they have through their electorate offices of people seeking accommodation for the aged through the Housing Trust. One of the things that we are doing in consultation with the Department of Environment and Planning is picking up this dual occupancy and housing diversity, where we are in effect trying to sell to local government that there is a role within their planning and zoning regulations where they can pick up all types of housing diversity—in fact, some of the things that the member for Fisher mentioned. It has been a fairly long job. We are always well aware of the sometimes hostile reaction of local government—I am not saying local government generally, but local government in specific areas.

I can say that, as a result of our involvement, the Housing Advisory Council, which is under my portfolio, has established a subcommittee to investigate the issue of dual occupancy and housing diversity. As a result of the reactions from local government, the council and myself have agreed that we should approach it in a more general view rather than just straight in granny flats, to look at ways to increase the variety of housing available, and again picking up some of the points that the member for Fisher made, with a view to meeting the needs and preferences of all the different households.

As part of the exercise, the Minister for Environment and Planning issued to local councils and all other interested parties a working draft of a supplementary development plan incorporating metropolitan-wide objectives and principles of development control for comments. I understand that this exercise is still in the consultation process. We have picked it up ourselves within the office of housing. I

am hopeful that with a lot of consultation with local government and other interested bodies we will eventually be able to get some broad agreement within local government and the Department of Environment and Planning and be able to undertake some of the things that the member for Fisher has talked about.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The Minister may need to check on what I said to cover each point, but would he acknowledge that he will look into it? Is he prepared to approach the Federal Government to look at the form of taxation suggestion that I made first for people who want to share their home—not any other property, just their home—and charge a rental for it, and that there be no penalty on pensioners who wish to make available part of their home at rents that can be set by a particular State Housing Authority, as I believe those areas are important? Will the Government push more strongly to have local government pick up the message?

In other words, if both major Parties and the minor Parties come out at election time saying that that is what they believe in, in the end society will accept it. It is not used as a political point scoring exercise yet, and I hope that it never is, but I believe that local government has to change its attitude to save money, not just for individuals but also the State, so that we do not have to go on spending a lot of money on resource expenses such as services of electricity, water, gas, sewer, roads, garbage collection and so on. Will the Minister have a look at what I said in those areas and take it further, in particular with the Federal Government, because I believe that it is of benefit to them in the long term and of benefit to a lot of people in the community?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will take up that point and obtain comments from the Federal Government. However, when we are looking at rent reductions on Housing Trust properties we take into account an unemployed person with two or three children on a rent reduction seeking permission from the trust to take in a cousin who has come down from the country to work, and then the total income going into that property is assessed. That is a proper thing to do—to talk about the total income of the lodgers in that household. The member for Fisher indicated the case of someone making their home available to be shared and that the Federal Government should take note of that and not charge a capital gains tax yet, at the same time, accepting what we are doing in the Housing Trust.

Mr S.G. EVANS: To clarify my question, in asking the Federal Government to look at the tax area, I am not concerned about capital gains tax. I am asking that where an individual is prepared to make part of their home available for rental accommodation they not be charged income tax on the rent they receive. I am aware of what the trust does with its accommodation. I put this suggestion because the Housing Trust is already spending a lot of taxpayers' money to provide needed shelter for many unsheltered people. If some of that goes back to the private sector through income tax concessions the owner of the property is better off, the person being sheltered is better off (because the Housing Trust has such a long waiting list) and taxpayers overall will be no worse off.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister indicated the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, which was a bipartisan agreement, with suggestions made that were subsequently taken heed of both here and interstate. Page 52 of the Financial Statement of the Premier and Treasurer states:

As has been indicated previously, the whole of the borrowing element of the Loan Council works allocation will be nominated for housing and, hence, will be received at a concessional interest rate. However, the Government is concerned that the Common-

wealth has indicated an intention to reduce the size of the concessional element in future years. The Government is concerned also that the Commonwealth has retained at the 1984-85 level its support for housing under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

Two things arise from that. First, funds made available to the State for 1985-86 are less than was made available during 1984-85 in real terms—in other words, the size of the cake in real terms is smaller. Secondly, the Government is looking at a potential loss at a future time of the concessional interest rates that have applied. Granted, the Premier goes on to say that the Government is looking at this seriously and will seek to persuade the Commonwealth not to do it. However, it sought to persuade the Federal Government not to tax wine, to not have the capital gains tax and a number of other measures, but the Federal Government did not heed this Government's attitude. What information does the Minister have on the likely interest rate change? Have the Minister's advisers indicated the impact that this will have on the opportunity for the Government to benefit the housing program?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: While I cannot comment on the Premier's attempts in relation to taxes on wine or capital gains, because that is not my portfolio, one area where the Premier has been successful is putting pressure on the Federal Government concerning deregulation. All home owners in this State should applaud the Premier for that. In relation to the question, one of the strengths of this Government's housing policy is the fact that for three successive years it has used the whole of the borrowing element of Loan Council and nominated that for housing. We received that at a very attractive 4.5 per cent interest rate over 53 years.

The Federal Government indicated that the allocation to the States would be changed in line with the new formula. The Premier quite successfully argued that it should not take place this year and that it should be brought in gradually to the year 1991. That indicates why we received slightly less. We argued that the time of the year was not correct, and received slightly less than we received last year—in fact, \$100 000 less. We share the Premier's concern, and I am sure the concern of the member for Light, that this State should always receive its fair share of Commonwealth-State housing money. We are also concerned that there are moves in the Federal Government for restrictions on how much Loan Council money we spend on housing. It is talking about next year it being 60 per cent, and then reducing it even further.

We will oppose this bitterly both at the Premiers Conference and the Housing Ministers Conference. We are committed to providing record numbers of homes for people in the public sector and to providing a record number of concessional loans through our home program, as we have done during the three years of this Government. This is a matter of concern, and we will place pressure on the Federal Government to see South Australia's point of view.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister would be aware that part of the district that I represent is heavily populated by Housing Trust tenants, and many people rely heavily on emergency housing. Apparently, my district is different from the District of Fisher: the Housing Trust attempts to acquire quickly every house that becomes vacant in part of the Torrensville area. These houses are then rented out for emergency housing. I am very pleased that the trust has taken that action. The Estimates of Payments (page 169) indicate that the State Government has allocated \$794 000 in 1985-86 for emergency housing and rent control, an increase of only 5 per cent over last year's allocation. What other funds are being provided for these activities?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This year the proposed allocation is \$794 000 as compared with \$756 000 actually spent

last year, an increase of about 5 per cent. Given those figures, one could say that we are not fair dinkum in what we are doing in that area, but, as I said in reply to the member for Elizabeth in relation to rent relief, other Commonwealth/State funds are directed to this area. The figures in the Estimates of Payments represent the State Government's commitment from its own funds, but \$4.2 million will be provided for emergency housing and rent control in 1985-86 from untied grants from the Commonwealth and State Governments.

The honourable member would be well aware that emergency housing is a mainstay for many people who are in a kind of no-man's land. Some people who approach the trust for accommodation are not a priority case, and that is unfortunate. I recall that, when I first became a member (and I am sure that the member for Light would have experienced the same, because he has been here for longer than I have), when people came to my office because they could not find accommodation it was relatively easy to place them in Housing Trust accommodation. However, that is a thing of the past, and we must use other agencies now. Emergency housing is one area on which we place a great amount of emphasis.

Those people are in no-man's land: they cannot obtain trust rental accommodation and they cannot rent privately because they are unable to pay a bond or they are suffering from a fair degree of trauma and stress. They really do not know how to go about it. The Emergency Housing Office provides bond money and in some cases removal expenses. In effect, it makes representations to individual real estate agents in an attempt to house these people. When I was at the Real Estate Institute dinner last Friday I was pleased to talk to members of the institute who told me that they are working quite closely with the Emergency Housing Office in an attempt to make available low cost accommodation to those people.

The honourable member would be well aware that the Emergency Housing Office now operates on a State-wide basis, so no person in South Australia seeking emergency housing assistance cannot get it. We made a commitment last year after a meeting at Mount Gambier to set up emergency housing offices throughout the State. The Housing Trust, the Community Welfare Department and the central office in Adelaide administered this scheme. There is a toll free number for those seeking assistance.

A total of 5 475 clients were provided with bond assistance in 1984-85, and that represented a 42 per cent increase over 1983-84; a further 3 547 clients received other financial assistance, such as rent in advance and removal fees, an increase of 105 per cent over 1983-84. I do not cite those figures with any degree of satisfaction in one respect, because they indicate that there is a real need in the community for emergency housing and rent relief; however, I have some pride in the fact that this Government has picked up in a very compassionate and caring way the needs of people who, through no fault of their own, are in that situation.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister has answered the question that I intended to ask about emergency housing in country areas.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It is the same answer.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, it is not.

Mr PLUNKETT: I need no assistance from the honourable member. He can ask his questions and I will ask mine. My district is different from the District of Light. At least five or six people come to my office every week desperate for accommodation, and I can direct them only to the Emergency Housing Office. The waiting time for Housing Trust accommodation in my area is four years. Those people would be sleeping in the streets. I am talking about a working class city district, not about the areas to which

members opposite refer. Why did the trust not meet its 1984-85 target of 3 100 additions to the rental stock?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I say this in a very facetious manner (and I hope that the member for Light will not take offence) but I thought that that question would have been asked by the member for Light. Perhaps he intended to ask me?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: We know the answer—you failed.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is a very good question. On the one hand, the Premier and I on many occasions say that there will be 9 000 additions to the Housing Trust stock in our first term of government. We have also stated categorically that our minimum number for our next term of government will be 9 000: we hope to make it more. Yet, when one looks at the figures it seems that in some cases we fell short, and people can say cynically, 'You are saying one thing and not producing it.'

As those of us who have been either in the building trade or taken a real interest in it are all aware, one is dependent on weather, delays in planning and attitudes from some householders that they have no wish to have Housing Trust development in their little necks of the woods because they see themselves as the up and coming blue rinse set. There are many reasons why we cannot meet those targets.

For example, in 1983-84 the target was 3,100 units. Enough money was given to the trust, which in its usual efficient and competent way put within the pipeline the number of applications to meet that deadline. Unfortunately, we achieved only 2 900 additions by 30 June 1984, although the target of 3 100 was achieved in the third week of July. I made a point when I was criticised in the House about why I was saying 3 100 and produced only 2 900 on 30 June that those people who were desperately seeking accommodation at that time would not condemn this Government because it was three weeks late.

We set a target of 3 100 again in 1984, plus the 200 unit shortfall from the previous year, which we picked up. Again, in setting this target we fully understood not only the weather delays but the marked upturn in housing activity. If members of the Committee recall, in 1984-85 virtually no person in the building industry has been unemployed, as a result of this Government's actions, the Federal Government's first home owner scheme and the increased confidence by the community in the economy of this State such that they would want to go into the home purchase market. Also, we were very conscious that we had to avoid at all costs any overheating. As a result of those things, completion times have tended to lengthen during this year, so we have not achieved the 3 300 but only 3 012.

In light of this experience, my advisers, both in the Office of Housing and in the Housing Trust, have advised that we should set a target for this financial year of 2 900 plus the 300 carryover from 1984-85. If one totals all that, at the end of 1985-86, 9 112 units will be completed by the South Australian Housing Trust to meet the growing demand of these people seeking rental accommodation.

Mr PLUNKETT: What is the Housing Trust doing to encourage tenant participation in the management of its housing?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The trust has been very conscious of this and has wanted to encourage it for many years. It has been tried in other States, but not very successfully because how does one involve tenants, especially with an organisation such as the Housing Trust where we have something like 53 000 stock? Those on this side of the House, and I am sure even the member for Elizabeth, are aware that the policy of the Australian Labor Party is that we involve tenants in running their own affairs within the

South Australian Housing Trust. There is no conflict between the trust and the Government, but how do we do it?

I speak purely and simply as a member in this Government, not as the Minister: it may be relevant in some areas such as where aged people are living, but in areas where people have just moved in to new subdivisions and their sole concern is to provide carpets on the floor, blinds for the windows and to get their garden maintained that situation produces an introverted attitude. Their sole concern is to get their own little patch ready rather than to have an outward approach as one might find in aged accommodation. We have looked at the situation. Perhaps the General Manager can give the trust's point of view.

Mr Edwards: The trust is certainly committed to promotion of tenant participation in its housing for a variety of reasons: one is to give the tenants the opportunity of dignity that comes with being responsible, at least in part, for the management of their own environment. A practical consideration is that the more tenants that are involved in the determination of the way in which things happen around them, not only are they happier but fewer letters are sent to the trust by way of complaint and fewer to members of Parliament.

We have encouraged this program extensively. I have a list of a whole range of trust centres where there have been initiatives to promote tenant participation. We have had mixed experience: generally speaking, we find that tenant participation can be got off the ground in medium density forms of accommodation where there is a close physical relationship between one tenant and another and where there is a need for codes of conduct of behaviour between tenants.

It has not been possible, although we have tried to establish it in the streets of double units where people are more self-contained, and in some cases where we have established tenant participation there has been considerable success by the tenants in getting to know their neighbours, in establishing community endeavours that have led them to obtain such things as improved bus services and improved provision of footpaths by councils, as well as enabling them to communicate to the trust how they would like the properties in which they live to be maintained, changes in common garden spaces, and so on.

It is an ongoing exercise, with a full commitment from the trust. The Australian Housing Research Council is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments, and South Australia, through the trust at the executive level and at the Minister's level, proposed a research project on tenant participation in South Australia. That proposal was approved, funding has been given for it, and work is proceeding. The processes of tenant participation being developed in this State will be recorded and offered to other States as a model that they may be able to apply in their own circumstances.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister disagreeing with the results of the Auditor-General's assessment of the South Australian Housing Trust activities for the year 1984-85, when he mentions the statistical record of the number of houses?

For example, at page 388 of the Auditor-General's Report he refers to capital expenditure on rental housing, including work in progress, finished houses and joint ventures and the figure is \$173 million. Dwellings completed totalled 2 286. I know there have been houses bought as well. If we look at page 398 of the same document, we find that dwellings allocated to rental stock went from 50 914 in 1984 to 53 281 in 1985, which shows a difference of 2 367.

I have not worked through the number of houses that have been sold in the interim, because that is a program which has been ongoing and which is supported by both political persuasions. There is no argument about that: it is

a fact of life. However, the figures the Minister quoted a few minutes ago are entirely different to the figures in the Auditor-General's Report. I would like the Minister to provide the information that refutes the Auditor-General's view or fortifies the claims the Minister made. At the end of 1984 and in the discussion before the Estimates Committee last year we were advised by the Minister that we did not get to 3 100, but within three or six weeks, as the case may be, we took on board another 300; therefore, we had our 3 100.

Does the Minister want me to believe that the claim for 1984 was the full 3 100, which is inclusive of those that finished shortly into the 1984-85 year? Likewise, when we look at it from opposite sides—the 1985-86 results—he would want to take into account the 300 that he claims have come on stream in the first three weeks of this financial year. The figures are not compatible between what the Minister is claiming and what the Auditor-General says is on the books.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There is no duplicity (and perhaps that is too strong a word) in the figures I quoted and those in the Auditor-General's Report. I am not sure whether the figures in the Auditor General's Report take into account acquisitions. As part of the finetuning of the building industry, we have two programs going. When we talk about additions to stock—

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Allocated to rental stock?

The Hon. T.C. Hemmings: Yes—we talk about those houses that are built and those that are acquired. The figures I quoted are obtained from the Housing Trust Annual Report and, in effect, they are the correct figures. I thought I made the point when I quoted those figures that one does not talk in terms of, 'We achieved 3 100 last year. We get criticised because we only had 2 800 but 300 came on stream.' What we are really talking about is a commitment of more than 9 000 over the term of the Government.

Perhaps Mr Edwards will explain the apparent discrepancy between the Auditor-General's Report and the information I gave to the Committee a few minutes ago. I have not attempted to confuse the issue. I am sure the General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust will be able to clarify the matter.

Mr Edwards: I can only speak with authority on the basis on which the trust provides its figures. The basic reason why—from an operational point of view—the target the Minister set for the trust last year was not achieved was (although we had let building contracts which, if they had been completed on time, would have produced that figure—indeed, we had built in a margin to give us some cover) the fact that at 30 June there were about 650 units that have been contracted for completion by 30 June but had not been handed over.

We were able to compensate for that shortfall, when it became apparent it was going to happen during the course of the year, by stepping up our purchase program; however, that program still fell short. I also have a lot of confidence in the achievement of the catch-up that the Minister has required of the trust this year and the maintenance of the programs, which is illustrated by the fact that at the end of August there were 2 123 units under construction, compared to 1 561 12 months previously. That construction at this stage in the year gives us a very high degree of confidence that it will be carried through to completion during the course of the year.

For the trust figures (and there may be some difference in measurements), we determine a commencement from the date when a builder takes possession of the site, which is the thing that we can determine, and he may do a variety of work thereafter. For example, the Bureau of Statistics calculates a start from the time the concrete foundation is

laid, but there may be a lot of work done before that happens; so there can be differences in figures.

From the trust's data, we commenced 2 687 units last year; we completed 2 100 and we purchased 912. Those are the figures by our measurements. If necessary, I will have a detailed comparison made of those figures with the Auditor-General's figures to identify any difference.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: How many of the 912 would be somewhere between 200 and 300 under-delivered houses for 1983-84?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Are you talking about houses that we acquire?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: At the time of the last examination before the Committee there was an under supply that the Minister claimed had been delivered into stock within five or six weeks. The general manager has just said that there were 912 taken in—I think the other figure he gave of 2 100 was completed houses. How many of the 912 or the 2 100 were the 200-odd that had not been completed at 30 June 1984? Obviously, all of them.

Mr Edwards: Yes.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Therefore, they were claimed as a win in 1983-84; now they are being claimed as a win in 1984-85.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I have had quite a few discussions with the honourable member for Light either during Question Time or during the Estimates Committee about the 'Yes I did, no you didn't' kind of syndrome of producing houses for people. In my explanation, the total figure for our three-year term of office will be 9 112.

I gave my reasons when you, Mr Acting Chairman, asked that question, in relation to what we achieved as at 30 June 1983 and what came on stream. I am not claiming any credit that we achieved this in three weeks or six weeks or that in our three years of office a certain percentage came on stream three weeks later and some of it was acquired and some was built. I accept that the mood of the electorate could mean that the member for Light is sitting in this chair next year. I am a realist. However, I sincerely hope that, when one looks at housing for disadvantaged people and when one talks about trying to meet the needs of these people after setting a yearly target, the success or failure is not decided simply because a certain amount is not achieved in a certain time.

As I said to the member for Light last year, building houses is not like going to the supermarket and buying six tins of cat food. When building houses, consideration must be given to planning delays, industrial disputes, and the availability of labour in relation to particular projects. The important thing is that we tell the electorate that in our three year term of government we will provide, say, 9 000 houses—either built or acquired—for the disadvantaged. I am not really worried about whether that is achieved one week ahead of schedule or three weeks behind schedule; I am just proud to say that the Government will have made 9 000 houses available to disadvantaged people at a reasonable rent. That is it in a nutshell. I do not claim to be a winner or a loser each year: I refer to what we have achieved during our term of government—and that is important.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I congratulate the Minister for acknowledging at long last that he has not achieved what he has been publicly claiming to have achieved. That is the argument that has persisted. Press releases by the Minister claim to have put on the ground a certain number of houses, when that is not the case. The press releases are cheap political capitalising on a very sensitive public issue. The fact that the houses—whether acquired or built—are now on the ground is a win for both sides. However, the fact that it was misrepresented to the public in the Minister's press releases has always been the contention.

What was the average value of the units delivered during 1984-85 in terms of the trust's arithmetic, and what was the average value of the units delivered in the previous 12 months? I refer to an article in this morning's *Advertiser* that indicates that it costs more to build a house in South Australia. The article states that in Adelaide the increase is 8.9 per cent as against 5.8 per cent across the rest of Australia. The position is rather higher in South Australia than in some of the other States. The last part of the article states:

Since the price index of materials used in house building was set at the base 100 about 20 years ago, Adelaide costs have soared by six times the original figure.

This compares with a more modest five-times rise for all the other capital cities. Perth building materials costs now show in the index at 479.1 against Adelaide's startling 594.2.

In other words, while Adelaide costs have risen nearly six times, Perth's have only increased by 4.79 times.

I appreciate that the commodities involved in building a house contribute only partly to the total cost. However, they are playing a part, as is the increasing cost of land. I would like a comparison between the average costs per unit in 1984-85 and 1983-84. I will not do the arithmetic from the document provided by the Auditor-General: I would prefer the Minister's material.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The average cost per trust unit in 1984-85 was \$39 937. The General Manager of the trust will supply the figure for 1983-84 this afternoon. I am sure that when I table the Housing Trust report it will make interesting reading, because for the first time it makes a comparison between the cost of Housing Trust houses and the cost of equivalent private housing. During the Pryke inquiry, the Government was accused of bowing to the trade union movement and that, because of a memorandum of agreement signed between the Master Builders Association and the appropriate building trade unions, the cost of Housing Trust houses would rise astronomically. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also said that costs would rise by 20 per cent and that the cost of Housing Trust houses would fast outstrip the cost of equivalent houses in the private sector. I think I also recall Mr Cummings from the Housing Industry Association saying that it would be the death knell for builders who wanted to build houses for the Housing Trust. It is rather interesting to see that, after all that criticism and the signing of that memorandum of agreement (which is working well), or the Housing Trust produces its units much cheaper than equivalent housing in the private sector.

I now turn to the article in the *Advertiser*. One should not place too much store on ABS building cost statistics, and I say that quite seriously, because each State is in a different position. Of course, the member for Light will say that I use those statistics when they suit me and that I do not use them when do not suit me. Costs vary in each individual State. In some States discounting of building materials occurs, and in other States discounting does not occur. One reason for the increased cost of houses early in 1984-85 was the cessation of discounting in this State.

If the member for Henley Beach wanted to build his own house and went down to the local builder and said that he wanted to buy so many superfeet of wood to build his home, he would pay full market price. However, if the member for Light, who was a professional builder, went down to the same store and said that he wanted the equivalent amount of wood, he would get it at a discounted price but no-one would publicly acknowledge that discounting was there. During the slump of 1979-82 when the building industry was on its knees, the only way that building suppliers were able to make a living was to heavily discount, and they discounted in effect to get the stock moving.

As a result of our injection of money into the home building area through the Housing Trust through the first home owners scheme, and as a result of our home ownership made easier scheme, suddenly building took off and discounting ceased, but it has never been put into figures that that is the reason why the costs went up.

The other area where costs increased is associated with certain builders anticipating the results of the Pryke inquiry and consequently putting their prices up. It is not something that I am saying in this Committee because I have protection—the member for Light knows that I do not use this place as Coward's Castle—but we have a fair idea. It is something that could never be proved. Some of the increases in costs in this State moved slightly ahead of other States because we had a Pryke inquiry looking at maximum rates payable to building workers. The costs in 1984-85 of building a trust home as opposed to a private sector home (and we will get the equivalent figures for 1983-84 this afternoon) in effect indicate that it is not costing more to build here than anywhere else. In fact, I would say that we are a more efficient building industry. Certainly the HIA tells us that, under the subcontracting system, they are the most efficient building sector in the whole of Australia. It was certainly justified at the Housing Trust where checks and balances of individual builders ensure that they get the best value for money.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister would be aware that I have the Phoenix Society in my electorate and many disabled people are housed in my electorate. Referring to the yellow book again, is the Minister doing any policy development in the area of disabled persons, and accommodation needs for the physically disabled, intellectually disabled and psychiatrically disabled? I would appreciate it if the Minister would inform me of anything in this area.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Perhaps I could answer this in two parts. In the Year of the Disabled, the Housing Trust led the field in the types of homes that it designed and essentially built to meet the needs of disabled people. I believe that the trust received some awards and commendations from the Committee for the Year of the Disabled. That is always an ongoing affair with what we build in the public sector. I think what the member for Peake is getting at is what are we doing as a matter of policy for disabled persons generally throughout the State. That is a very good question. The Committee is well aware that the Housing Advisory Council, which I set up, is split into two—the industry committee and the community committee. I read in one of the 'Yes, Minister' books that, if you want to kill an idea, you create a committee, and the bigger committee you create, the quicker you kill it. That was not the case in this Government's attitude to the Housing Advisory Council. We felt that there were two areas of advice that I should receive: one from the industry side and one from the community side. The community committee recommended to me that I carry out a consultant study on disabled persons throughout the State.

We have taken on an officer on a part-time basis to carry out this study. I have just recently increased the time that that officer will spend on the project because one of the things that concerned the office of housing and me was that there was an equivalent study carried out by the New South Wales Government which has been (it is almost universally agreed) a total disaster. So, we set up the project and it will be divided into three stages. Stage one is a discussion paper outlining current programs which are in train and summarising those areas where there is need for assistance which have been identified in recent reports or Government papers. That will be circulated as widely as possible. I signed some 300 letters to individual groups throughout South Australia asking them to get involved in this project. The general

response to the fact that we are spreading the net as wide as possible has been very good. That has gone out for consultation.

The officer who has been seconded to my department will then go out and talk with these groups, in some areas on a regional basis and in other areas, as in the case of Port Lincoln, to talk about the needs of the area and most importantly the needs as perceived in the country as are perceived in the city. One tends to often get criticism from those people living in the country saying, 'Yes, Mr Minister, it is all very well for you to build homes for the disabled in the city. What about us in the country?' There will be a lot of emphasis placed on that. On the information received in the two previous stages, the community committee will recommend a process that ensures effective identification of needs and preferences for people with all disabilities. On receiving those recommendations, I will put a submission to Cabinet as to where we need to go, where we need to involve other agencies such as the Department for Community Welfare or the Department of Environment and Planning, and that will be part of our ongoing program for the next four years.

Mr PLUNKETT: I would like to reserve my right to have two questions when we return after lunch.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: If I might interpose, the Minister indicated that we would be able to get some information on relative values after lunch. To be effective, that would need to be on a square metreage basis. That might not be possible in that period of time. Even the average in the first instance, but subsequently on a per square metre basis, because of different mixes of purchasers, would greatly affect the actual comparison of the two average costs.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

Mr PLUNKETT: What programs have been implemented to meet the housing needs of young people in International Youth Year? What measures have been taken to meet the housing needs of single people?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: At the moment the General Manager is obtaining information about youth for the member for Light. He will give that information to the Committee when he returns. Youth housing has become an important aspect for this Government and the South Australian Housing Trust over the past two to three years. Members of the Committee will be aware of the imbalance that has faced this Government, the trust, and the community generally, with people seeking accommodation from the public rental sector. Many solutions had been put out by individual Governments in Australia. The New South Wales Government in 1984 set aside 5 per cent of new homes for youth. The opinion of this Government, and I think the opinion of the Housing Trust, is that that has not really been a successful experiment inasmuch as it receives a lot of hostility from the community, especially those people seeking family accommodation.

We are looking at accommodation in areas where there has been a dropping off of requests for family accommodation, notably, in the Iron Triangle. The previous Federal Government, in effect, abandoned certain industries (for example, ship building) in this area and created this imbalance whereby single people—and I include youth in that category—are living in family accommodation. This is not good for the State, the trust and those individuals.

There is a pilot program in the Iron Triangle to convert family accommodation (that is, two double unit homes) to three or possibly more accommodation units for singles, using the extra space of the back garden. That has proved to be very successful. I pay a tribute to the trust because it is using the expertise of its staff in this area to design

different types of accommodation for singles, so that we can get away from the dreary aspect of rows on rows of very much the same type of accommodation.

Members of the Committee will be aware of changes in the Commonwealth-State funding programs, such as the crisis accommodation program (which provides capital assistance funding) and the supportive accommodation program (which provides the recurrent costs). CAP is under my portfolio and SAAP is under the auspices of the Minister of Community Welfare. I have an input on both those committees, in that CAP is serviced by the Office of Housing, and I have representation on the SAAP Committee. Those committees, with consultation with individual agencies and with my ministerial colleague (Hon. G.J. Crafter) have been able to develop a youth housing strategy.

I have recently provided \$72 000 I think for funding of Tracea Place, which provides youth housing information and a referral service. Individual groups providing accommodation for single young people can use this agency to make it easier for homeless young people to find accommodation. We have appointed a youth housing officer to the Emergency Housing Office. All the steps we have taken in this area have been met with a fair degree of approval by those individual voluntary agencies that are playing their part in providing accommodation for homeless youth.

Mr Edwards: The Housing Trust and everyone in it (from the members of the board, through management and down to young people) have placed a high degree of importance on this being International Youth Year. A youth committee was established in the trust and worked out responses for the needs of young people and a program of activity for the year. That group of young people had an opportunity of coming into the board room on a number of occasions and discussing their plans with members of the board. Consequently, a significant program has been mounted.

A major feature was the preparation of a booklet that identified the options available to young people in the area of housing. That booklet has been made widely available to all agencies concerned in the provision of assistance to youth in this State. In addition, those young people took up a campaign, which they carried through very successfully, of going out to schools and meeting and talking to young people informally.

The feedback indicates that it has been an enormous success. Young people have attended youth expos and there have been special presentations at a range of locations so that young people and those concerned with young people can obtain advice on housing. That advice was provided by young people who understood and related to the needs of youth. In addition, the trust has continued its practice of making available properties under community tenancies to agencies concerned with the provision of housing to youth. As the Minister said, the trust is embarking on a program of progressively modifying some of the existing housing stock so that it is suitable for young people and we are introducing new designs and increasing the proportion of housing that is suitable for single people.

In addition, the Emergency Housing Office and the rent relief program together have provided very substantial amounts of direct financial assistance to young people. Young people in the trust have attended various conferences, one of those being in New South Wales. They came back and reported that South Australia had again shown a lead to the rest of Australia in the provision of assistance for housing to young people.

Mr PLUNKETT: What activities were achieved under the Housing Improvement Act in 1984-85, and will the Minister provide an estimate of the value of work generated in the private sector in 1984-85 under that Act?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I understand that this subject is very dear to the heart of the member for Peake, as I think it is mainly in his district and in other western districts more than anywhere else that the Housing Improvement Act serves the needs of the community. I have said on many occasions that the previous Administration gave no real reason for transferring the control of the Housing Improvement Act from the Housing Trust to local government. I am on record many times as saying that that was a gross disservice to the people who are living in substandard accommodation and who had no other protection from a Government agency. We must bear in mind that the Housing Improvement Act has been on the Statute Book since the early 1940s, and to my knowledge we could count on the fingers of one hand the number of times there has been an appeal against the Housing Trust regarding its placing an order on a substandard home. The Act was working well for the benefit of tenants, especially those in the western suburbs and particularly in the district of Peake.

I have talked to members of the previous Administration who were in Cabinet at that time, but they could give me no reason for that action and no reason was cited on dockets. But one could be unkind and say that the decision was made by the previous Minister in defence of landlords who were ripping off tenants by charging exorbitant rents for substandard accommodation. One of my first actions as Minister was to transfer control of that Act back to the Housing Trust, and that gave me great pleasure. The member for Peake referred to benefits for tenants, but there are also benefits for builders in the fact that the Housing Improvement Act is now under the control of the Housing Trust.

There are two aspects involved. First, tenants who are living in substandard accommodation now have the right to go to the trust, which can place an order on the property. The landlord is then forced to renovate the house and rent is set; the Act also provides that while major renovations take place the tenant must be housed in the interim by the South Australian Housing Trust.

The honourable member asked me to cite figures—those figures are quite startling. The number of houses considered for classification in accordance to standard so that rents can be set were: 1981-82 (just as we were coming into government), 1 956; in 1982-83, 2 182; in 1983-84, 3 568; and in 1984-85, 4 403. From those figures, one can see that more tenants are making use of the Housing Improvement Act. The number of houses declared substandard were: 61 in 1981-82; 56 in 1982-83 (when people were still unsure whether they had rights in that respect, but the numbers started to pick up); 144 in 1983-84; and 174 in 1984-85. Basically, figures for the maximum rent fixed follow the figures I have just cited. In 1981-82, 107 houses were demolished or converted to other uses. That occurred under the Local Government Act whereby a house could be declared substandard or fit for demolition only if there were, say, cockroaches. There was a completely different approach.

Mr PLUNKETT: No department was set up.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, but the Department of Local Government under its Act considered whether a house should be demolished. The number of houses in 1982-3 that were demolished or converted to other uses was 77; in 1983-84, 299; in 1984-85, 461. The number of houses under control of the Act as at June were: 5 084 in 1981-82; 5 017 in 1982-83; 4 712 in 1983-84; and 4 223 in 1984-85. Those figures indicate that the Act is working: houses have been renovated and orders have been revoked.

In 1984-85, \$3.381 million was spent for work by private builders carrying out renovations, and the estimate for the previous year was \$2.9 million. When one considers the total work carried out under the Housing Improvement Act

since the Housing Trust resumed control of that Act, one sees that more than \$8 million worth of work has been generated in the private sector in providing decent and habitable houses for ordinary, working-class people.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Minister have the information that he advised the member for Light he would provide after the luncheon adjournment?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That material is being prepared.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer to funds made available to the Government under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and the loan funds for housing. The Minister has already said that council rates and water and sewerage rates have been increased.

The Minister has indicated in answer to other members that an increased amount of funds is being made available for rent relief and subsidy of rentals: that is an unfortunate facet of the current economic situation. He has indicated that the Federal Government provided only the equivalent sum of money for 1985-86 as was made available in 1984-85 and that before long it is possible that the concessional interest rate that has applied to loan funds will no longer apply. Can he indicate to the Committee precisely how the Housing Trust, with a similar sum of available funds, will be able to meet an increased building program?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is a very good question and there is a very good story to tell in relation to that point. Yes, if one looks at the cold figures that are being made available—the fact that we received \$100 000 less from the Commonwealth Government through the loan funds, etc.—basically the figure that we had last year is identical to the figure that we got this year. We confidently predict that we will be able to achieve the same number of homes, whether built or acquired, because of more efficient programming, more internal funds being generated within the system, and, an increase of 14 per cent of State funds in the year 1985-86 to the Housing Trust. One must bear in mind that in some of the programs that we will carry out in 1985-86 we will be on land that is owned by the Housing Trust, whereas in the previous year a lot of our programs were carried out under the design and construct concept, where we paid in some cases slightly more for the land or the buildings, but, all in all, with an increased efficiency within the Housing Trust, we are confident that we will be able to meet that program.

I will ask the General Manager to comment on the more efficient ways in which the trust will carry out this program. Although one is sure that the sun rises in the morning and sets at night, one is never sure of the way in which the finances of the world will affect us. If there is a need at some later date—and we can be sure there will be—we will have to perhaps use SAFA to meet our program. At present, all indications are that under the allocation of funding by the Treasury and under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement we will be able to meet those targets.

Mr Edwards: A large number of units were under construction at 30 June and are still under construction, where much work has been done and paid for. In a sense, part of the product of this year's annual activities will reflect substantial payments made earlier. Again, as the Minister mentioned, where we in the trust are providing for new developments by redevelopment of existing trust estates, there is not a land component to be acquired. Where an existing unit is being converted, it provides additional housing units but there is no land component to be paid for. While on the question of the land, there is a substantial amount of subdivisional work on which houses will be built this year, which will reflect work done last year.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Material that is forthcoming from the indicative council and in information contained

in the budget documents from the Federal Government, suggests that there is to be a downturn in house production during 1985-86. It is anticipated that it will be fairly significant and, indeed, the same body predicts for South Australia a 20 per cent decrease in house commencements for 1985-86, which is the highest anywhere in Australia. Because the material is purely statistical, I ask that the detail of dwelling commencements, a comparison between 1984-85 and 1985-86 showing the percentage change for the whole of Australia, be inserted in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

DWELLING COMMENCEMENTS

	1984-85	1985-86	Per cent change
NSW	39 500	39 500	0
VIC	39 200	35 500	- 9.4
QLD	30 600	28 100	- 8.2
WA	17 500	15 700	- 10.3
SA	14 000	11 200	- 20.0
TAS	4 050	3 600	- 11.1
NT	2 700	2 700	0
ACT	3 300	3 700	12.1
AUST	151 000	140 000	- 7.3

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It shows, for example, that there is a 7.3 per cent expected decrease in housing commitments across Australia. I have indicated the 20 per cent decrease for South Australia: the nearest is Tasmania with 11.1 per cent decrease. Does the Minister, both as Minister of Housing and as the Minister responsible for the activities of the Housing Trust, anticipate that this predicted decrease, determined by the indicative council of Australia, will impact evenly on the private and public sectors? If so, how does the Minister lay claim to being able to complete the housing package, which he has previously outlined?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I would not for a minute accuse the member for Light of quoting selectively, but one has to go back to when this Government came into office, when we placed great emphasis, along with the Hawke Labor Government, in promoting not only public sector building activity, on which this State per capita spent more money, but we honed in along with the first home owners scheme in 1983 with our own home ownership made easier scheme for those people in the lower middle income groups. Those Government decisions were in place to encourage building activity.

Certain things also were going in our favour: the low price of land and housing at that time, stabilisation and improvement in the national economic situation and, as I said previously, the introduction of the first home owner scheme and the home ownership made easier scheme. As a result of those schemes, more and more people who were hesitant to get into the home purchase arena suddenly decided to do so.

They were the reasons for the boom in activity. Because of those reasons, we, in effect, soaked up the need that was there. In fact, in those early years of our Government we came close to a situation of overheating. Where the honourable member for Light talks about the 20 per cent decline, that is because we have soaked up that backlog. Adjustments have been made by the Federal Government to the first Homeowners Scheme, which excluded a certain section of the community from taking full advantage of the benefits of that scheme.

As a Government, we recognise that there are certain changes that should be made to our own home-ownership-made-easier scheme. We introduced a scheme in 1983, revamped it in 1984 to meet the needs of people such as

singles and people on fixed incomes, we widened the criteria, increased the size of the loan, and increased the price of those houses that were available. With all those things happening, yes, there was a lessening of demand.

However, when one looks at the figures for last year, which were around \$13 400, or \$14 000, which were the figures quoted by the Indicative Planning Council, the 20 per cent reduction will still come within the required figure that is accepted, not only by the Indicative Planning Council but also the Master Builders Association, the Housing Industry Association, and all those bodies associated with housing, such as the Housing Trust. My own advice is that we will maintain a figure of 11 000 commencement during the coming financial year. The figure of 11 000 is considered in this State to be the happy medium, in which we will not have a situation where there is going to be a shortage of workers and people are going to be priced out of the market. Therefore, whilst we are talking about a reduction, which the Indicative Planning Council has mentioned, we have now reached a figure that is satisfactory to all people who are concerned with building.

I make the point that whether we either build or buy we can adjust our activity in as much as how many we buy and how many we build, and we can adjust our activity to concentrate commencements early in 1986. We are playing our part in creating a kind of even building program throughout the coming financial year. Whilst the Indicative Planning Council talks about a 20 per cent reduction, this is a reduction that has been welcomed by all sections of the industry, because we can no longer be in a situation where we are coming close to overheating.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the backlog of applicants for housing from the Housing Trust, the Auditor-General's Report (and other reports the Minister has given from time to time) indicates that that backlog is increasing, and did increase to about 35 000 as opposed to about 32 000 during 1983-84. The Minister has indicated that building opportunities in South Australia were at mammoth levels—14 000—in 1984-85, reducing to 11 500 or thereabouts for 1985-86; therefore, the opportunity for housing people privately is going to decrease by the decrease in the number of houses coming on to the market, at a time when the numbers wanting Housing Trust accommodation are increasing. What is the prediction for the overrun of applicants at the end of 1985-86, having regard to the disappearing benefit that is obvious from the figures I have just quoted?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I accept the logic that has been put forward that, if there is a decrease and we have only 11 000 commencements in the coming financial year (and I have already explained that for the industry that is not a bad thing)—the member for Light should be fully aware of the benefits of those people moving into the 'home-ownership-made-easier scheme', which covers people seeking loans at a concessional and attractive rate and which also covers the rental purchase area. People on low and middle incomes, who are the people who would be seeking public sector accommodation, are the people who would purchase a house that has already been built. In fact, that is what the rental purchase scheme is all about. In effect, you go out there, make your application to the State Bank under the rental purchase scheme with as little as \$500 deposit and you then buy a house. As long as that house meets the criteria of the rental purchase scheme and the trust is satisfied that it is structurally sound and worth the money, you can then purchase that house—the same as the concessional loans scheme.

I do not know the actual percentages of people who buy newly built houses or existing houses, but you are moving into an area where a house does not have to be built. People

who were living in those houses have improved circumstances, they are perhaps buying another house that has already been built and is perhaps worth a little more and located in a better area. Most of our schemes for the low and middle income earners are based around existing houses: the ones that we were talking about, the 13 500 and now the 11 000, are new houses. To what degree we pull back to a level that is acceptable to all levels of the building industry and what effect that will have on those people seeking public sector housing, I am sure the general manager will be able to provide precise figures.

Mr Edwards: Dealing with the question of where the trust anticipates the waiting list will be at the end of this year, we have an assumption in our planning that it will be a figure of around 37 000 persons compared to 35 000 at 30 June this year.

I must emphasise that that forecast is based on all sorts of assumptions, not so much about the volume of housing that will be supplied (we are fairly precise about the numbers) but the volume of demand. Yesterday, I completed seven years as chief executive of the Housing Trust, and I noted with some dismay that every year since I became General Manager the waiting list for the Housing Trust has grown. Last year it rose at a slower rate than for any previous year when it increased by 6.7 per cent, but in previous years it had risen in double figures.

There has been a modest improvement in the rate of growth, but the list is still increasing. This has come about largely because of factors in the economy and in society over which we have no control. The major factor contributing to the growth of the waiting list has been the number of unemployed applicants. In 1978-79 there were about 1 200 applications from unemployed people; last year there was nearly 4 200. It has risen from 12.5 per cent to 25 per cent of all applications. There are other changes amongst the aged, and so on.

Mr GROOM: First, I congratulate the Minister for presiding over the greatest housing boom South Australia has seen in the post-war years. I note from the Premier's financial statement attached to the budget papers that the proposed expenditure support for housing programs in 1985-86 is \$227.6 million. Can the Minister explain the impact of that housing expenditure on employment in South Australia?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Is the member for Hartley asking whether this unprecedented building boom (and I thank him for his comments) is impacting on people working in the building industry in South Australia?

Mr GROOM: I am asking about the impact on employment at this time.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I have already said that for every \$1 million spent in the building industry a further 63 jobs are created. That is not our figure (it is a figure provided by the CSIRO), and 50 of those jobs will be provided in the area in which the building occurs. I acknowledge that political advertisements should not be mentioned in this forum, but I recall a most striking advertisement released by my Party's agency during the 1982 election campaign. It showed a number of houses being built and a crowd of people delivering furniture. I think that advertisement really pinpointed the impact of the building industry on the economy of this State.

As I said earlier, as a result of the Government's contribution to the building industry 25 300 jobs have been created, compared to 14 900 jobs in the last year of the Tonkin Liberal Administration in 1982. We were told that in our first six months of government all those involved in the building industry, including the tradesmen, would move up to Queensland. When I visit different functions put on by the building industry I receive a great deal of pleasure when I am told that they must advertise in Queensland to bring

these tradesmen back. When I visited Mt Gambier I was told by the local Commonwealth Employment Service officer that all jobs for building tradesmen in Mount Gambier had been filled. In the Iron Triangle there is not one vacancy in the building trades. Unfortunately, this has caused a problem for community employment programs.

I am not making a gibe at the member for Elizabeth, but as a result of the shortage of skilled building tradesmen in his district, certain projects have run overtime resulting in cost over-runs, and the State Government has been asked to make further allocations. Unfortunately, because of Commonwealth Government guidelines we cannot do that. The building boom and the Government's use of housing to prime the economy has generated long-term employment. As a result, the white goods and furniture industries are starting to pick up. In fact, companies employed in those industries have exhausted their stockpiles, and employment in the metal trades and the furniture industry or has been considerably increased to meet the growing demand.

Mr GROOM: I refer to page 11 of the yellow book and '1985-86 Specific Targets/Objectives', as follows:

Participation in maintaining the Housing Trust's program of additions to the public rental stock at a high level.

In England the Thatcher Government is in the process of selling off council homes to the private sector, which is analogous to the Housing Trust. What are the consequences, both financial and otherwise, of privatising the Housing Trust?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: First, I think that most members would be well aware of my country of origin, and I am quite proud of that. On a recent trip when I looked at public housing throughout the world what I saw in the United Kingdom caused me considerable dismay. Privatisation reigns supreme in the United Kingdom, especially in public housing. In fact, it has reached the stage where even conservative councils that no longer wish to sell off their public housing stock have been forced in the past year through legislation to sell off properties that are in prime condition with a remaining life span of about 80 years. They are being sold at ridiculously low prices, at 60 per cent of their true market value, if the tenant has been in residence for as little as five years.

What the tenant is not told is that all the maintenance costs such as rates have now to be borne by that tenant. What has happened in, I think, the last five years is that over one million homes have been taken off the public sector list. Local government is no longer by legislation allowed to rebuild, and that is the difference from the program that we run here. For every home that we sell, we immediately replace it with another home so that we maintain our existing stock. I think that the people over there are being cajoled not only by legislation but by misleading advertising. In the Burrough of Wandsworth, which we visited, every council vehicle has the slogan 'Buy your own castle in the sky'. They are selling off high rise at a ridiculous price. The poor tenant, when sucked in by privatisation, is then forced to pay caretaker fees such as fees for the maintenance of the lifts. Privatisation has gone mad.

The end result is that it is projected that by 1995 there will not be one home of the Housing Trust type left in the United Kingdom. It is a deliberate policy of the Thatcher Government.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We have an interjection. I do not know what your ruling is on interjections by those on the Committee. The member for Bragg said, 'Yes, all proud owners.' I suggest that the member for Bragg saves up his Parliamentary travel allowance and goes over to the United Kingdom to see what privatisation of the public sector

housing area has produced. I do not think he would come back and say, 'Yes, all proud owners.'

Mr GROOM: I want to briefly deal with the mortgage relief scheme. Can the Minister explain what funds have been provided through the mortgage relief scheme? As part of that explanation, can he say how many people have benefited from it and whether there has been any increase in the number of people seeking benefits in recent times?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I can certainly talk about the mortgage relief scheme. As members are well aware, it was part of the mortgage relief and rent relief schemes first put forward in August 1982 by the then Fraser Government. As I said earlier, I pay a tribute yet again to my predecessor inasmuch as he picks up the dollar for dollar subsidy.

Unfortunately, I think we were the first Government, when we took office in November of that year, to actually allocate the mortgage relief because it was one of those things that were kept very carefully under wraps. People in financial difficulties can make application for relief in this area. In the first instance, because there was a downturn, demands in the mortgage relief area were not too heavy. They started to increase a bit during recent months, and I am sure they will increase even more so as a result of the increase in pressure on interest rates. We have made an allocation in the current budget to cater for that need. We have talked to the banks and asked them to suggest, before they advise anyone to come to the South Australian Housing Trust and seek mortgage relief, that they exercise every right that they have through the banking system such as extending the period of their loan to overcome that problem.

For the information of the honourable member, during the year ending 30 June 1985, 495 families applied for mortgage relief, and assistance was provided to 326 families. A total of \$471 000 was paid to families receiving assistance and at the end of June 1985 a total of 550 households were in receipt of mortgage relief. As I said, we have made additional allocations in the budget for this financial year to meet the needs of those people who, as a result of rising interest rates, will be able to receive mortgage relief. If this State Government had not been so strong in advocating that no deregulation take place and if the Federal Government had not had the pressure put on it by this Government and had perhaps adopted the demands of the private banks, then the demand for mortgage relief would have gone through the roof. Thankfully this Government correctly saw the implications of deregulation and hopefully the Federal Government will heed the request that we have made to it. May I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition in belatedly supporting our stand on this matter.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the Housing Trust activities and the sale of property—not the privatisation scheme which the honourable member for Hartley has been referring to, although of course it is privatisation—the profit of property sales to the Housing Trust in 1984-85 as indicated in the Auditor-General's Report was about \$13.1 million, of which \$6.5 million was a profit from the sale by the Housing Trust of houses. I might add that Mr Kinnock in the United Kingdom said that he wants to give away—not sell—all of the public housing in Great Britain, so there is yet another man out of kilter with the Minister.

In relation to the Housing Trust and the sale of property at Croydon Park (I will not mention names, although I am quite prepared to make available to the Minister, the additional detail) a property purchased in July 1969 for \$595 707 was leased during August 1969 for 14 years at a quarterly rental of \$17 564, with the expiry date 31 December 1985. On 5 February 1985, the lease was surrendered and the property sold by the trust for \$74 170. We find that, when the transfer was put through, the stamp duty which was requested by the Commissioner was \$66 930 which, give or

take a dollar or two, would suggest that the Commissioner of Stamps recognised that the sale value of the property upon which he extracted the stamp duty was \$1.7 million. \$1.7 million worth of property was transferred for a figure of \$74 170.

From the calculations that I have made, it would appear that over 14 years—and let us recognise that the lease did not run its full 14 years—there would have been \$983 584 recovered by way of rental or lease, and when you take the consideration of the \$74 170 which was the sale price, the total return to the trust over that period of time, allowing for the lease sum plus the residual sum, was only \$1.06 million, notwithstanding that the Commissioner of Stamps as I indicated identified the value of the property at \$1.7 million because he extracted \$66 930 by way of stamp duty. What are the ramifications of this sale which would not, on the face of it, have contributed very markedly to the excess that was available to the trust during 1984-85?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Was this property industrial or commercial, say, a neighbourhood shopping centre?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It was an industrial property.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: While the statement in the Auditor-General's Report talks about the sale of properties (all properties), the bulk of money that came in allowed the trust to come out with a surplus, mainly from commercial centres rather than industrial. I will take on notice the details that the honourable member gave and obtain a considered reply. I know that the member gave as much information as he could, but I think there is additional information that he can make known to us privately.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the names of the organisations concerned, that does not move away from the fact there was a sale at \$74 000 of a property valued by the Commissioner of Stamps at \$1.7 million.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The General Manager informs me that that would have been built into the sale in the terms of the lease.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Then we have only recovered \$1.06 million in less than a 14 year period for an asset that was valued at \$1.7 million.

Mr Edwards: I am not familiar with the details of the case. However, it is quite customary in the trust's industrial leases where it engages in support for the industrial development of the State to enter into a lease agreement that provides for a built in pay-out figure throughout the period of the lease with the industrial developer. That has been established practice for many years. I guess the opportunity for taking capital appreciation on the industrial asset is part of the incentive that attracts that industrialist to set up his factory and employment base in the first instance. Without that incentive there would not have been so much industry established throughout the State. I will investigate the particular circumstances and, in particular, the dispute over the stamp duty issue.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It seems that this Government is under considerable criticism presently because it is in the process of selling off—as was the previous Administration—properties to tenants. Quite rightly the trust feels, and as Minister I support them—as did my predecessor in the previous Tonkin Administration—that the trust had a dual role to play in the early development of the State. That is something that my colleagues in the Opposition conveniently forget.

The developments of Salisbury, Elizabeth, Christies Beach and Noarlunga were built under a charter in that the trust had certain roles to play: it had to provide homes for those people; it had to provide commercial premises where the private sector would not move in; and it had to provide industrial facilities so that jobs could be provided for the people living in the areas. Some four or five years ago the

trust decided that it no longer had an obligation to maintain those commercial centres and that those centres were to be sold to the private sector. It then saw its role in those established areas to be that of providing homes only, and maintenance to those homes.

If that is the Liberal Party's view of privatisation, then it is certainly not Mrs Thatcher's view or the view of the Government or members on our side of the Chamber. I will tell members what the trust did—and this has been supported by the Labor Party and the Party of which the member for Light is a member. Where it set up housing developments—because the private sector has the sole goal to extract as much profit as it can without giving community support services—it picked up that responsibility. When the private sector is ready, willing and able to provide a service then the trust is quite happy to sell that particular property.

It did that at the Elizabeth Town Centre, though I still maintain that the people who bought it got a bargain price. The trust has sold other areas. I am criticised by the member for Elizabeth because he says that I—being the Minister in charge of the trust—charge far too much for properties in his electorate, although they are valued at the Valuer-General's prices. I am criticised by the member for Todd, who tells me that we sell properties at ridiculously low prices and that his aunt in Queensland bought one at over a 450 per cent profit. Whatever the trust and this Government does, they will never satisfy everyone.

The member for Light knows what we are referring to when we talk about privatisation. I am sure that he knows exactly what the trust is doing, and that is not privatisation at all. The trust is stepping back from a role that the private sector refused to get involved in in the early days, and is now returning to its rightful role in providing accommodation for those in need.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In the provision of housing at the best possible price and speed, I imagine that the Minister will be seeking from Cabinet adequate communication between all departments so that the trust can get on with its job without being impeded. Earlier this year in Brompton, a program that was about to go ahead was suddenly withdrawn by another Minister (not the Minister of Housing and Construction). In fact, the General Manager, in a memorandum at the time, said:

It is only by accident that the Premier's public statement about which there had been no prior consultation with the trust did not coincide precisely with the very public arrival on site of the trust's engineering staff and equipment to prepare the ground for advance planting of the garden area. I suggest, with respect, that, if a major redirection of policy is contemplated involving commitments to industrial concerns and public statements, it would be common sense, as well as courteous, to consult with or at least advise the trust in advance.

There are other statements in the document, but I use it to highlight the fact that there has not been the element of communication or the degree of consultation between Ministries to allow the trust to fulfil its role adequately. What has the Minister done since then to offset this impediment to the trust's activity in the future?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Perhaps the member for Light held those views from the outset. When the previous Liberal Administration was hell-bent on, first, building a remand centre in that area against the wishes of that local community and, secondly, wished to demolish houses rapidly to provide warehousing facilities for the industries in that area, the member for Light, notwithstanding the fact that he was on the backbench at the time, supported the residents of the Bowden and Brompton area in their desire for housing development. That was refreshing, and I congratulate the member for Light. He believed that there should be adequate housing or a predominance of housing in that area as opposed to the views of his colleagues when they were

in government. I sincerely hope that the honourable member made his views known in the Caucus room.

As to the lack of consultation between Ministries, I assure the honourable member that there is consultation at all levels. One should consider the background of the situation in the Bowden and Brompton area. There has been pressure on the local government body in that area for many years, and there are still zoning problems to be overcome. There are lobby groups from both sides that see that their priority is above all others. I would like to remind the Committee of my role as the Minister of Housing and Construction and the role of the trust. It is my responsibility to utilise to the best possible advantage all suitable land in the metropolitan area and in the rest of the State to provide housing at low cost. I see that as an overall responsibility.

Obviously, the leaked document which was flashed around the TV screens six or seven weeks ago, which purportedly dealt with a situation that is currently being considered by the Government, and which came from the General Manager three or four months earlier, has been conveniently forgotten by the media and now by the member for Light. The Government sees that it has a responsibility to use all land in the inner Adelaide metropolitan area taking into account the views and concerns of all sections of the community, that is, industry, local government and the community (not necessarily in that order of priority). We will continue to do that. There is adequate consultation between all my colleagues in Cabinet and, when decisions are made, everyone will be fully aware of exactly where we are.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: There has been a degree of commentary about the situation, but I have not received a reply. The Minister has still not said whether he has been able to achieve a better understanding for the future. The document to which I referred was dated 11 April 1985 and stated that the trust understood that the Government was fully committed to residential development on the former remand centre site. The critical point is that it referred to 'the former remand centre site'. Therefore, the criteria that the Minister sought to lay down represents an entirely different situation.

What the former Government sought to do with that site was for it to decide. In the event, it did not come off, so we are talking about a former site. The commitment of the Government of which the Minister is a member is that the land will be used for residential development. Three months after that document of 11 April 1985 was written, the General Manager of the trust made a statement (on 12 July) to clarify the matter, as follows:

I would appreciate any action the Minister can take to expedite a decision on this matter so that the trust has a clear understanding on which it can base its development plans.

This begs the following questions. In view of the matters raised in the two memorandums, why did it take the Government so long to clarify its policy for the Housing Trust, if it has yet clarified a policy? What costs has the Housing Trust incurred as a result of the change in policy, having been permitted to go down that track obviously with the Minister's approval to that point? What is the Government's policy in relation to this area and, if it is to incorporate industrial development, why did the Government promise before the last election that it would limit development to housing only and the other consequences that flow therefrom?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: When I explained the situation previously, I congratulated the member for Light for either having a change of heart or reinforcing his original views (which he obviously failed to have Caucus accept). He said that I made a commentary and did not answer the question, and he repeated the question and asked whether I had been able to achieve a better understanding with my

ministerial colleagues. I have always had a good understanding with my ministerial colleagues with regard to the development of the inner Adelaide area—I do not think I could have a better understanding.

Regarding the costs incurred, I am sure that the member for Light would be well aware that there is always ongoing dialogue between the trust, local government and other bodies regarding land for development. If the member for Light thinks that suddenly land is made available and I pick up the phone and say, 'Look here Paul; land has been made available. Get your boys in there and start working on it and produce sketch plans and so on', he is wrong. That is always an ongoing part of the trust's role in developing housing in this State.

Since the Labor Opposition prior to the last election said, 'In no way will the remand centre development take place on that site: we will relocate it' and then won office at the election, I imagine that the trust then considered what it could do with the remand centre site with regard to housing and other possible developments in that area—perhaps the General Manager could either deny or confirm that.

With the abandonment of the north-south corridor the trust did not wait for me to send in a minute or pick up the telephone, but immediately looked at those areas where it could get involved and purchased homes that were originally purchased for demolition to see how it could get involved in that. So, the trust always has an ongoing program of possible development.

As for the cost incurred, the notorious minute that the member for Light is talking about was where the trust was going to get involved in some tree planting, which it does all over the place. One only has to move into an area close to my electorate—

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am talking of those areas where the honourable member and I have many times been on Munno Para joint inspections and looked at the areas where the trust has planted trees. One could look at that tree planting and say that it was for no rhyme or reason, but it was part of this ongoing program of making its contribution to the greening of those areas. One only has to go down to Hallett Cove and look at the subdivisions that we own there, where we have carried out extensive tree planting and where possibly, as a result of development at some later date, about 70 per cent of those trees will be pulled out as part of the site development. Perhaps the General Manager will give the specific details on the cost incurred.

Mr Edwards: In respect of the site on Port Road, the cost that the trust incurred was in terms of design and the time of its officers employed in working out what kind of project might go ahead. As that matter has not been finally resolved, it is not clear whether those costs or any portion of them will have been abortive. Costs are also incurred through the holding and servicing of the land. That happens in a number of instances where, for a variety of reasons, including changes of views by local governments, projects that initially were thought would produce 50 units are modified to produce 40, and there is a degree of reworking, resulting in a necessary wasted effort, which we accept and recognise in our ongoing cost structure.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I bring the Minister's attention to the matter of the present freeze in respect of the maximum level of rentals. We all recognise that it does not apply to those on income-related rents, which still can move up, anyway. Can the Minister clarify the position in relation to subsequent increases? Obviously, the freeze will come to an end during this current financial year. The Minister has previously said on the record in the House of Assembly in response to a question by me that next year's rent increase

would be no more than the CPI increase. What remains unclarified, and perhaps this is a matter that the Minister can easily clear up, is whether or not the subsequent CPI increase will include the period of the current rent freeze. In other words, are we having a rent freeze or a rent increase deferral? If the current period is counted as part of the CPI period to which the Minister has referred, we are having a rent deferral, in effect. If the current period is not to be counted in the CPI period, it is more a true freeze, in that sense.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I well recall the member for Elizabeth's asking that question because I had all the information and, to his annoyance and mine, the Opposition thought that we were working Dorothy Dixers between us, which we were not. When I gave the answer the member for Elizabeth immediately asked, 'Are you talking about the CPI at that time or the collective CPI over the period of the deferral?' I said to the member for Elizabeth, 'You know exactly what I mean, that is, within the CPI at that time.' I maintain that and I place it on the record.

One has to accept the Government's decision to, in effect, have that rent freeze. The member for Elizabeth has clarified well exactly who will have the freeze and who will not. It pleases me that he is well aware of the Government's intentions, although the Opposition seems to be entirely confused. If one accepts that the reason behind the rent freeze is valid, not an election gimmick and not a deferral so that we can have the heat taken off us by our Housing Trust tenants and because we are doing it for genuine reasons—I am sure that the member for Elizabeth understands that we are—I can assure him that any increase will be within the CPI.

It is a conscious decision by this Government. At the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement we managed to abolish the iniquitous Fraser inclusion in that agreement—that we had to move towards full market rents in the private sector. If we still had been in that situation we would have been on an almost 90 per cent rent reduction in the Housing Trust or blown it out of proportion. We managed at that time to abolish the market rent formula.

Whilst we were successful in most areas of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, we lost the argument of rents being set on an equity base. Rents were set on a cost rent formula, which was by far superior to market rents but was still unsatisfactory to this Government.

The subsequent increase that we charged, which was well within the CPI, still fell in with the cost rent formula. I was still unhappy, and convinced my Cabinet colleagues that we should use this time to carry out a review of Housing Trust rents, not only because of how the formula of the cost-rent formula would affect us but also because of the many other problems that had crept into the whole area, such as the number of people on rent reductions and the pressure that was being applied to the trust in those country areas in regard to maintenance.

So it seemed an ideal time to carry out the review. I am pleased to inform the member for Elizabeth and the Committee that we have made great strides in regard to the study. We have received submissions from interested consultants to carry out a study. We have agreed that we should have the widest possible consultation with the general public and with the tenants themselves.

This brings me back to the earlier question of tenant participation. If tenants are to have their rents looked at they should be involved. We are looking at a fair degree of different areas, which I will not read out but make available to the member later: they are not confidential, but I might be accused by the Committee of wasting its time if I read them out. This is a very serious attempt to grapple with the

problem. No other State in the Commonwealth has done that for many years. They have got themselves into a position where they are charging rents that have no regard to the situations of their tenants. I again assure the member for Elizabeth that it will be within the CPI at that time, not within the accumulated CPI.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I would like to take the Minister back to a discussion held previously about Housing Trust encumbrances on industrial, commercial, and residential property. I have the privilege to represent the greater part of the city of Elizabeth (and the Minister represents the other part) where there is a prime example of this problem. The Minister referred earlier to the trust's withdrawing quite properly from—the member for Light refers to it as privatisation and the Minister refers to as withdrawing—areas that the trust has previously been involved but in which it sees no need to be actively involved in and that is, for example, shopping centres and industrial and commercial properties in established suburbs such as Elizabeth, Salisbury, and so on.

The trust has left behind, however, a degree of control that tends to border on intrusion in the actual development of those areas because it still retains an encumbrance on the title of almost all those properties, with some notable exceptions which limit the use to which the property can be put to a specific named use that appears in the encumbrance.

The trust is willing to alter that use on application by the owner but only to some other named use. That policy may have been very desirable in the 50s, 60s and early 70s when there was no proper planning legislation in force in South Australia. In effect, the trust was operating a de facto planning control system which was reasonable at the time, but since then we have had adequate and stringent planning controls operating in this State, and local councils and the State Government between them are able to control land usage very strictly. Therefore, it is not possible for inappropriate uses to occur to the extent that they did when the trust first implemented the encumbrance policy.

Since we first discussed this matter many months ago, has the Minister had the opportunity to give it further thought? Is the Minister willing to review it again with a view to having the trust further review and reduce its degree of control over properties that it has long since sold in communities where it retains a small degree of ownership and control over industrial and commercial properties in the way that it no longer needs to because those communities have since grown beyond that? I do not in any way mean to take away from the trust the many benefits that its previous ownership and assistance have brought to those communities, but I suggest that perhaps it is now time that the trust withdrew even further from its remaining control over some of those properties.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As the member for Elizabeth said, we have had a considerable amount of correspondence on this matter as well as a few friendly words. The member for Elizabeth has a stance, which to a certain extent I accept. True, the Elizabeth council did a remarkable double flip. When I first wrote to the member for Elizabeth concerning a request to have the trust lift its encumbrances I indicated that the council supported fully the trust, but at the next meeting the council passed a motion reversing that decision.

In discussing this matter with the letters in front of me I must be careful not to embarrass anyone, but the member will be aware of the case to which I am referring. I wrote to the member and put the trust's view, and I fully supported that. We then had further information, and I made the point in the first letter that, where there is a recognised need, although the trust would not lift the encumbrance, it would change it to suit the needs of particular usage. In

that case the letter I sent in regard to the Elizabeth Grove situation involved three changes by the proprietors about the use of that facility. The trust agreed three times to change the encumbrance.

One problem that the trust has that I fully support is that there is no degree of control in conjunction with local government controls. True, there is a certain logic in what the member for Elizabeth says: that if one has adequate planning and zoning regulations then one could say the trust should withdraw but, at the same time, the trust has proved that if someone really wants to buy a property (we are usually talking about a service station that is no longer required for that use) the trust is more than willing to change the encumbrance to ensure that the owners can purchase or trade in their chosen area.

The member for Elizabeth has written to the Minister for Environment and Planning and, as I am not sure whether he has received a reply, I do not know what the Minister's view is. I would like to quote another example that would be dear to the heart of the member who will have been confronted by the same situation. This example relates to my own electorate where encumbrances are placed on petrol resellers. The encumbrances are considered harsh, and I have had correspondence with the trust's general manager about this in my capacity as local member and not the Minister. These encumbrances are harsh and have been in force for many years. On the one hand, the lessee of the petrol station has to work within the provisions of the encumbrance while, on the other hand, at the same time he is being ripped off by the petrol company through rent increases to an astronomical level. The only way he can make a living is to diversify into the sale of soft drinks, ice cream, milk, bread and the like, but he is then faced with the encumbrance of the trust over that property. On the one hand I object to the situation, yet I accept that there must be protection for people in the surrounding areas, the deli owner and the small scale supermarket and so on.

It could be argued in that case that, whilst there are adequate planning and zoning regulations provided through the local government area, there is still a need for encumbrance on that site by the trust. I am sure that the Minister of Environment and Planning—I will make sure he reads this *Hansard* report—will eventually come up with his point of view and perhaps we can have consultation with the trust to overcome the problems that the member sees in the electorate.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Is the Minister entirely satisfied with the way in which information on the Housing Trust is discussed by the Estimates Committee because we have far less information on the trust than on, say, the Department of Housing and Construction (the former Public Buildings Department) because there is no yellow book on the trust and no detailed line estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Elizabeth is concerned about the discussion on housing. I advised him earlier that I am being flexible and tolerant. What has been discussed today I will allow until we finish—it covers all the lines because they are interrelated. I am not restricting the member only to the subject of housing.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I am not being critical of what we have been discussing today. I was just raising the point that in respect of the Housing Trust we do not have the same amount of information in terms of documentary material that we have in respect of the Department of Housing and Construction, in the context of the public works role, because there is no yellow book and no detailed line estimate on the Housing Trust.

I do not want to have the wrong interpretation put on my questions, because the Auditor-General's Report is full of details about the Housing Trust, but that is retrospective.

The Housing Trust Annual Report is full of details about what the trust did in the past year. We have very few details about what the trust proposes to do in the forthcoming year and they would be contained in the sort of information provided for other departments in the white pages and in the yellow book. I recognise that the trust is a statutory authority; however, it spends a great deal of public money and the Minister is responsible to this Parliament for what occurs in the Housing Trust.

I simply put to the Minister a general proposition for consideration over the next 12 months as to whether the trust could provide something along the lines of a yellow book discussion paper, or a detailed break down of the trust's proposed budget could be provided to members of Parliament as an attachment that would permit more ready discussion of what the trust proposes to do as distinct from the very detailed information we have on what the trust has done.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I accept the comments of the member for Elizabeth, but I do not agree that there is insufficient information before us. I remember when I was spokesman for the Labor Opposition on health, we would have one line and then a mass of information that was virtually useless. Information is available in the previous Housing Trust Annual Report, *Housing in Focus*, which the trust puts out; and *Don't Stop Now*, a document put out as a joint exercise between the Housing Trust and the Office of Housing, (which was the basis of our submission to the Federal Government in regard to funding). There is information on the sums of money in the Estimates of Payments, and pages 11 and 12 of the yellow book, dealing with the broad objectives and policies of the Government, which entirely reflects the Housing Trust role, refers to rent relief, mortgage relief, and emergency housing outside the metropolitan area that is administered by the trust.

We have the trust's corporate plan, where it puts forward its five year program. Housing Trust officers will at any time discuss trust policy, which has been set down by the Government. Until Parliament decides that, as part of the Estimate Committee procedures, statutory authorities have to prepare documents such as the yellow book, we will always have that situation. However, when one looks at the supplementary papers that have only come out as a result of this Government and particularly at the paper dealing with the 1985-86 budget and its impact on women and looks at where the trust was selected—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want to stop the Minister, but I would remind him that there was a decision taken that we would break at quarter to four. The member for Light has some statistical information.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Will the Minister insert into the record in due course the individual applications for design and construct that have been undertaken since the commencement of that operation; the applicants for each of those design and construct programs; and indicate who the successful tenderers were? I ask that against the background of the trust's most recent letter that suggests there is to be a major downturn in the number that would apply in the immediate future: 200 to 250 to be called in October; 100 to 150 to be called in February; and some selected ones at Golden Grove later in March 1986.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will provide those statistics. The other information requested by the honourable member was the average value of public dwellings in 1983-84 compared to the figure that I quoted in 1984-85: the figure for 1984-85 was 39 937, and the figure for 1983-84 was 32 470.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr R.I. Nichols, Director, Department of Housing and Construction.

Mr G.T. Little, Director, Support Services.

Mr R.R. Alwis, Manager, Management Accounting.

Mr P.C. Hankinson, Director, Maintenance and Construction.

Mr D. Lambert, Director, Industry Policy.

Mr R. Jarrett, Senior Programming Officer.

Mr R. Power, Director, Professional Services.

Mr J. Kent, Manager, Major Projects.

Membership:

The Hon. D.C. Brown substituted for Mr S.G. Evans.

The CHAIRMAN: There appears to be some confusion, because we have been jumping here, there and everywhere. I think it should be agreed that we vote on the three lines just before we finish tonight.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Mr Chairman, are you saying that all areas are open for examination?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but I suggest that the housing sector has already been covered quite extensively.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Mr Chairman, I think your ruling is excellent, because it will simplify the procedure greatly. I understand that we can ask a series of questions about both the capital side and the recurrent side. In the past we have become confused about the line being discussed. I refer to the reorganisation of the department announced earlier this year on the Wednesday before the Easter weekend. What reduction in staff in the Public Service area of the department will occur as a result of that reorganisation?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Mr Chairman, I thought we would be given a chance to make an opening statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I have not usually allowed that in mid afternoon but, being flexible, I will allow it on this occasion.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In view of what the member for Davenport has said and the information before us in the Estimates of Payments and the yellow book, it is necessary for me to make a statement. Members of the Committee will no doubt be aware that there has been a significant reorganisation within the department in the past six months. In view of that, and given that this reorganisation causes some difficulty in comparing previous expenditure with current proposals, I feel that it would be desirable for me to provide some introduction which may be of assistance to the Committee. This Government is determined to ensure that taxpayers are getting value for money from the Public Service. We were therefore concerned about cost effectiveness in the then Public Buildings Department's construction activities and we were also concerned about its project management procedures generally. Issues such as controversy surrounding the State Aquatic Centre give testimony to this.

A further matter of concern was the difficulty in obtaining comprehensive coordinated policy information and advice on the housing and construction industry generally; for the use of Government, of the private sector and for consideration of overseas investment possibilities. During the course of my ministry, options to address these problems have been under extensive consideration. Most significantly, I commissioned a work force planning review to identify appropriate weekly paid staffing levels, efficiency impediments and private sector comparisons. I might add that this latter issue was examined, warts and all, and, in the interest of open government, was tabled in the House. I wonder, on a national basis, how often this analysis has been carried out, given that political criticisms are almost inevitable. Our investigations led to the point where we concluded that the only sensible option was to reorganise the department to ensure that overheads were cut, efficiency procedures implemented and the policy advice issue covered.

Subsequently, in April 1985, the Public Buildings Department was replaced by the Department of Housing and Construction. The new department has an Industry Policy Division which, among other things, has been involved in lifting private sector liaison and feedback. The department has one Support Services Division where previously there were two divisions, and the Client Services Division has been merged with the professional services functions. Substantial savings have already been effected due to reductions in executive officers, improvement in project coordination, reductions in overhead staff and the more efficient use of vehicles. Most importantly, the gap between the tender market and departmental construction costs has narrowed significantly. In a number of cases projects have been completed at less than the best external price received. No doubt some of the issues will be expanded upon during the hearing.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In light of what the Minister has said, would the Minister give some indication of what changes have occurred under the new structure in Public Service Act employees and in what areas of the department have there been reductions or increases or will there be during the coming year?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If I refer to the PBD and Housing and Construction, I am sure that members will understand the difference. The figure under the old PBD of Public Service Act employees was 871.1. The breakdown was 618.1 in operations division; 28.6, client services division; 61.9, management services division; 149.5, administration and finance division; 2, internal audit; 3, communications; 8, Office of Housing. The proposed average full-time equivalents for 1985-86 under the new divisions totals 811.8, a saving of 60. The breakdown is: industry policy division, 21.8; professional services division, 362; maintenance and construction division, 751; support services division, 177. The proposed full-time equivalent as at 30 June 1986 will be 806. That will be the actual at the end of the year. That proves that this Government in its reorganisation of the structure of the old Public Buildings Department into the Department of Housing and Construction carried out the terms of reference of the Premier in the statement he made at that time that we will have a war on waste; we will have efficiency; we will have effectiveness within the new Department of Housing and Construction.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister talked about the Public Service Act employees. What will the weekly paid position be? In fact, can I refer the Minister to page 2 of the yellow book which states that the weekly-paid employees this year will increase by two from 1 280 to 1 282. My understanding is that there has always been a surplus of weekly-paid employees. In fact, the surplus of weekly-paid employees tends to be greater than it is with Public Service employees. This would indicate that there is no intention to run down the weekly-paid work force at all. Does this reflect a policy of the Government in terms of now trying to maximise the amount of work done within Government, at least as far as maintaining weekly-paid work force numbers is concerned?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The figure of 1282 on page 2 of the yellow book is an indication that, prior to setting up the work force planning review, we looked at our blue collar work force and found that there were problems such as a mix of skills, an imbalance in certain areas and certain situations, for instance, the situation at Netley, which was a direct result of the previous Government's attitude of, in effect, using money to pay for people to sit on their backsides and do nothing. As part of that reorganisation, part of that planning review, additional money was funded by the Premier to carry out much needed maintenance. We have therefore employed these people gainfully in our main-

tenance and construction area. The present situation is that the number of weekly-paid employees is slightly below 1 285, with the current figure (including term employees) being 1 235. I think that that shows we are being extremely flexible. As a result of our recent announcement of our Jubilee 150 maintenance program, we will be able to use all of the employees that we have in the blue collar section and at the same time, as part of that program, utilise the private sector to carry out much needed maintenance in schools and other Government buildings.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Am I correct in saying that, despite all that the Minister just said, this is the first time in about eight or nine years that the weekly-paid work force of this department is going to increase?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The figures that we gave last year and the figures that we have given this year, and the explanation that I have just given the member for Davenport, indicate that we are holding steady.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I point out that there is an increase in the Minister's own figures as at 30 June 1985 to 30 June 1986. Is he saying that we have been supplied with wrong figures or is there in fact an increase?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Quoting from the yellow book, at 30 June 1984, the figure is 1 285; at 30 June 1985 it is 1 280, and the proposed 30 June 1986 figure is 1 282. If two is representative of a massive increase in the number of people employed in the Department of Housing and Construction, then I will accept that there is a massive increase. I would have thought that two is a minimal amount.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I did not use the word 'massive'.

Mr PLUNKETT: Referring to page 23 of the yellow book under 'Policy Advice to the Minister of Public Works', there is a reference to the Construction Industry Advisory Council. Could the Minister advise details of the composition of the council and its purpose?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I shall give the member for Peake some background on the Construction Industry Advisory Council. When the member for Davenport was Minister of Public Works, he set up a Construction Industry Conference. The idea of that conference was to look at the whole area of the construction industry to provide some form of liaison between the private sector, the Government sector and the Government of the day. This is no reflection on the member for Davenport but, whilst the idea was very good, and I congratulate him on setting up that industry conference, it tended to get bogged down because it was a six-monthly or nine-monthly event. We picked it up when we came into government. There were a couple of cancellations due to events beyond the control of the Government.

When I took over the portfolio of Minister of Public Works I was charged with the responsibility by the Premier to make that Construction Industry Conference work. The feedback we have had from the private and Government sectors indicates that it has been a very successful exercise. One of the failures of the conference concerns the time lag between conferences. It was obvious that we should have some sort of body that would meet regularly to advise me about the way the industry was going.

At the last conference it was agreed that we would set up a Construction Industry Advisory Council that would work in close liaison with all the sectors associated with the non-residential construction industry, and give me advice. Its wide terms of reference were: to give me advice on the state of the building and construction industry; ways of ensuring adequate investment in private and public sector building and construction activities; the effect of Government policies on the demand for the products and services of the industry and the operation of the firms; proposals for improving the efficiency and utilisation of resources in the

industry; ideas for stimulating the demand for building and construction projects; ways of achieving technology transfer and productivity increases in the industry; ways of achieving better integration of the public and private sector; and, in particular, to ensure maximum use of the available resources in the industry.

The membership of the council indicates the commitment that the private sector gave to it: Mrs Margaret Curry, the State Director of the Australian Federation of Contractors (Chairperson); Mr John Underwood from the Engineering and Water Supply Department; Mr John Cambridge from the Department of State Development; Mr Keith Neighbour from the South Australian Practising Architects Association; Mr Neil Sarah from the Master Builders Association; Mr John Williams from the Electrical Contractors Association of South Australia; Mr Michael Hindle from the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners; Mr Greg Black from the Building Owners and Management Association; Mr van der Pennen from the Local Government Association of South Australia, who is also on the Adelaide City Council; and a Commonwealth representative when appropriate. The council is serviced by officers from the Department of Housing and Construction (Industry Policy Division).

The items discussed at this morning's meeting (3 October) were: Asian opportunities; utilisation of log books; payment of superannuation; value of imported materials; prevocational courses for apprentices based on the Kirby report; rationalisation and consolidation of building regulations; the Heritage Act Amendment Bill; the Grand Prix; the competitiveness of the Australian Building Industry; the uniformity of rise and fall; workers compensation; the Workmens Liens Act; the capital gains tax; youth employment schemes; the State budget with its impact on the building and construction industry; and the Federal budget with its impact on the building and construction industry.

All in all, it has been a very successful advisory council set up from the conference. I am sure that since it has been set up and in the future it will be able to give me valuable advice, from which I will be able to make submissions to the Government to implement Government policy.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Since the Minister has read out the details of the agenda for this morning's meeting, will he send us a copy of the minutes of that meeting?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Where the recommendations to me, as Minister, are not considered confidential, I would be only too pleased to pass on that advice. I am sure that that would create no problem. In fact, I endorse the member for Davenport's interest in this aspect of my portfolio. In certain areas where we get the private sector and the Government sector together for the benefit of South Australia—and that is the whole basis of this industry advisory council and the Construction Industry Conference—the end result means more jobs for South Australians and a further strengthening of the South Australian economy. Since, by asking for the minutes, the member for Davenport indicates his full support of this Government's initiative, I will see that he is kept involved.

Mr PLUNKETT: Page 34 of the yellow book lists the proposed expenditure of \$810 000 for the community and Aboriginal project unit. What are the reasons for forming this unit? How does this arrangement differ from past methods of providing public works services to Aboriginal communities?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: For some time the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and myself were concerned that whilst the outback services group in the Department of Housing and Construction (the old PBD) was carrying out a comprehensive program for Aboriginal communities in the Far North, there was a need to involve Aborigines in the decision making and carrying out of work in those areas. Quite

unfairly the attitude is taken by some people that Aborigines expect the white community to build their houses for them, put their bores in, etc., and they will just sit around doing the occasional bit of work and collecting unemployment money.

I resent that attitude of some people; and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs shares that resentment. A submission was put to Cabinet and agreed on to set up a community and Aboriginal projects unit. Out of \$810 000 for this coming financial year, an amount of \$400 000 was transferred from departmental maintenance to part fund the work. The rest of the money (\$410 000) will come back in client reimbursement. It is a significant step in the improvement of the Aborigines in the Far North. It means that they carry out the work themselves. Presently, it is still based in Wakefield House. At some future date, if necessary, the office will be based in possibly Port Augusta, but that still needs to be considered.

It really means that Aboriginal people will not only have a right to say exactly what is spent and how it is spent but also hopefully in the long term the Aborigines themselves will undertake that work. It is a very commendable project and I am sure that it will meet with the approval of all sections of the South Australian community when it is up and running.

Mr PLUNKETT: The yellow book refers to the work force planning review that was released earlier this year. I understand that considerable effort was to be applied to improve the department's construction, maintenance and support activity. Has there been a noticeable improvement in efficiency resulting from the implementation of the recommendations of the review?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It would be fair to say that when we came to office morale in the Public Buildings Department was at an all time low, and that was one thing that prompted the review. The officers had no idea exactly where they were going. They felt that under the previous Administration funds had been slashed and that they had no future. I saw it as my job to improve morale. Really, the establishment of the work force planning review has, in effect, achieved not only an increase in morale but also a different attitude in the department in that competitiveness with the private sector and efficiency have increased. I am not saying that we have achieved everything; we expect further increases in efficiency and the delivery of services to our client departments. We must remember that that change has taken place within six months, and that the planning review was set up only nine months before that.

The organisation structure of the construction activities have been streamlined with a construction branch being established which will reduce overheads of the operation by approximately \$500 000. Twenty indirect positions will be reduced and action has been taken to achieve this aim by the following: non-replacement of 10 positions due to retirements, resignations and soon; the placement of three officers in alternative vacant positions in the department; the redeployment of five officers for whom suitable employment is sought; and two weekly paid employees on estimating duties are no longer engaged on these functions. Consultants have been engaged to compare departmental operations with the private sector and to assist in cost management.

The joinery workshop is being restructured to effect savings in overheads of \$116 000. Five new Public Service Act positions have been created and will displace weekly paid classified employees performing estimating and cost management duties. Production has been reorganised to enable a more flexible and efficient operation. A management improvement plan has been formulated to review ongoing performance and employment levels. One must bear in mind (and I am sure that the member for Peake would be

well aware of this, given his old occupation as a shearer) that 50 per cent of our employees in the workshop are over 50 years of age. Members may recall that there were problems in the shearing industry when a similar situation occurred. Productivity in the sheds was reduced somewhat dramatically because older people were working there.

The sheetmetal workshop has been restructured to improve performance and accountability. Supervision of the functions has been strengthened by the transfer of a quality officer and a production scheduling and monitoring system has been introduced. In the engineering section, efficiency has been increased significantly by employees starting work on site rather than at depots—productivity has increased by between 10 per cent and 20 per cent in some engineering functions. Resultant increases in the level of works undertaken within prescribed budget have been achieved in mechanical (especially air conditioning), electrical, electronics and lifts areas, with the most significant savings estimated as being: mechanical, \$250 000 and electrical, \$70 000.

I could continue to indicate where there have been significant savings in construction. While at this time the list is very small, we feel that it is an indication of the way in which productivity, efficiency and effectiveness are gradually beginning to work in the department. I refer to five areas of construction—and I assure the Committee that we tried to pick completely different trades. The lowest tender from the private sector for form work under stage 3 for the Aberfoyle Park High School was \$157 533, whereas the final construction and maintenance cost was \$125 000, that work being carried out by the department. The lowest private sector tender for ceiling work at the South Australian Travel Centre was \$7 975, whereas the department carried out that work at a cost of \$4 600. The lowest private sector tender for carpentry work at the Gawler East Primary School was \$78 938, but the department did that work at a cost of \$63 500. Regarding plumbing work for the Mortlock library, the lowest tender from the private sector was \$16 745; the department undertook that work at a cost of \$11 700. The lowest tender from the private sector for ceiling work at the LeFevre High School was \$11 565, but the department undertook that work at a cost of only \$3 500. All of that work was carried out between January and July this year.

I must make a qualification to the above information: while the lower costs may seem to be entirely due to the efficiency of the department and the reorganisation (and I am sure that the member for Davenport would be quick to pick me up on this), in those areas where the commercial sector improved under this Government, tenders were a lot higher than those for the previous year. One must weigh up the increased costs in the private sector with the fact that the department is becoming more efficient. The department was achieving between 8 per cent and 20 per cent increase in productivity by, in effect, treating officers as responsible and honest human beings, and I refer to the fact that officers may take motor vehicles home. We treat them as people who do a job and do it well and not as crooks. Thus, we have been able to achieve an increase in productivity, and I am quite proud of that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am glad that the Minister has raised this subject, because I hoped that we might have discussed it in relation to the earlier three questions: I intend to develop it further. The Auditor-General (page 130 of the Auditor-General's Report) states that a review undertaken by officers in December 1984 showed that basically it was costing the PBD 30 per cent more to do work than the private sector. The Minister has claimed that there has been a variation recently due to the reorganisation, but the Auditor-General also stated:

... a negative variation of \$862 000 (that is the excess cost above the fixed price) had accumulated at 30 June 1984. The

department assessed that this balance would increase by \$3 million in each of the years 1984-85 and 1985-86.

It would appear from what the Auditor-General said (in fact it is quite plain) that activity through the Department of Housing and Construction is far less efficient cost wise than through the private sector using public tender calls.

I was asking the Minister earlier about his staffing levels because even his predecessor (Hon. Mr Jack Wright) stressed the point that there was a surplus of people within the Department of Housing and Construction. In his first year he ran down the numbers in the weekly-paid work force area by about 80. He acknowledged before this Estimates Committee when he was Minister that there was still a surplus. We find now that there has been a change of Government policy, where it has suddenly stopped—the Minister himself highlighted this—the attrition of the weekly-paid work force within the department and has started to do the work itself as a department of construction.

The Auditor-General pointed out the cost inefficiencies of doing it through the department itself. I take the matter further and bring to the Minister's attention, because he made such lengthy play of the fact that there has been a reduction in some of the numbers, that on 18 September 1985 the Public Service Board listing shows that a number of construction people have been significantly elevated in their positions. I refer in particular to seven officers who were promoted from BO4 to BO7—a three step jump to Construction Manager, Housing and Construction. The people involved are Mr Bradbrook, Mr Georgiou, Mr McMillan, Mr Ochota, Mr Richards, Mr Slade and Mr Ursini.

There have been two further promotions within the department: an officer from AO3 to AO4 under Manager, Construction, Housing and Construction, and another to AO2, Manager, Construction Services, Housing and Construction—Mr Amos and Mr Lloyd. I find it interesting that the Minister is boasting about the increased efficiency achieved, but that here we find him promoting a significant number of construction officers, not just to the next position but with a significant jump from BO4 to BO7. I get the clear message from all of this that the Government is now taking on a job of well and truly re-establishing the construction division. It reversed its policy of running it down, and it is obviously now setting up with the full intention of doing as much construction as possible. Will the Minister comment on the various points that I have raised, and does he agree with my analysis that that is now the obvious policy of the department and the Government?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: First, the Auditor-General's Report stated that in December 1984 we were 30 per cent higher than the private sector. Without disputing his report or the findings of his officers—I have already answered that in part—it partly reflected the then lower tender market. If one looks at real market prices from 1979 to 1982, when the private sector both in the cottage industry and in the commercial sector was completely wound down, and in a slump, obviously the prices of the then Public Buildings Department, with all its deficiencies, were far greater than in the private sector.

Things have changed now. Market forces have dictated the difference in the private and public sectors. If the Auditor-General sent out his officers now and did a report as of October 1985 they would find that the figures they put in December 1984 were totally different from those in October 1985. Those examples I read out, where construction and maintenance are coming in lower than the lowest prices in the private sector, prove that. I have not made up the figures that I quoted to the Committee: they came in from my department.

The member for Davenport said that I boasted. I did not boast: I was giving facts. I could have not even qualified

those comments and said that this could be in part due to the fact that within the commercial sector there is plenty of work around and that therefore prices are coming in higher. I qualified that comment: it was not a boast. I am sure that the member for Davenport, when he used the word 'boast', did not really mean it in that way.

Despite all of that, we have accepted that an assessment must be made on our prices and on a continual basis on the construction and maintenance side as opposed to the private sector. We have engaged outside consultants to help us do it so that we cannot be accused in this or any other place of cooking the books, but there has been no build up. I said earlier that there had been reductions. The member cited the promotion from BO4 to BO7: that was done to overcome an anomalous situation as a result of those people being reclassified. We have had increased efficiency and savings.

The member for Davenport will be aware that when he was Minister of Public Works the structure was too top heavy; there was no delegation down below; middle management's hands were tied; in some cases it took as much as two months before a minor decision could be carried out by those people who were on the workface. This is what these promotions or reclassifications are doing: not giving them extra money but giving them a greater delegation. It is the result of the work force's planning and review. I sent the member a copy of that, and he would have understood the reasoning behind the Government's decision.

As for the statement by the member for Davenport, we have increased our work force by a magnificent two. This is an indication that we intend to carry out everything on day labour. That may be his view, but it is not the view of the construction industry, the Master Builders Association, or the Australian Federation of Construction Contractors, who fully appreciate the role of this new department. They appreciate that they have a role to play and that we have a role to play. If one looks at the figures, the bulk of the capital works program carried out by this Government is being carried out by the private sector.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister for that answer. He misquoted me considerably on a number of points, but I will not pursue that. I will pursue this matter further: page 129 of the Auditor-General's Report highlights that due to the use of professional services within the department rather than using consulting services outside, the total figure of \$540 000 (in other words, over \$500 000 extra) had to be paid in providing the cost within the department compared to what the cost would have been outside the department if the standard service fee for those consultants or professionals had been charged.

Seeing that the Minister is now wishing to make some issue of the fact that the department is now able to complete this work more cheaply than by putting it out to public tender, what provision has he made within those estimates for the accommodation of head office and of Netley?

Was any allowance included for property and capital involved in PBD in working out the various costs or were they only the direct costs? How were the cost of the Director, the Deputy Director and all the other service sections amortised? Was superannuation included in those cost estimates? If not, I suggest the comparison is chalk and cheese. Many of the overhead costs have been conveniently omitted from the cost estimates. I would like to see the detailed cost assessment, seeing that a feature of this has been made this afternoon. I would be quite willing to have the information provided later.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We are concerned about that area, which is part of the ongoing program to increase efficiency. When one looks at the Auditor-General's Report, most of the comments he made about the Department of

Housing and Construction were as a direct result of deficiencies that we established as a result of our work force planning review. I will gladly make that information available, but perhaps the Director would like to make some comment.

Mr Nichols: This is a matter for further refinement. It is very difficult for us to compare our cost recovery against a job carried out in the private sector *vis-a-vis* in-house. After all, most of the departmental overheads apply no matter who actually builds the job. All I can say is that we have PA Consultants engaged to look at maintenance costing, including that type of issue; we have cost management services engaged to look at construction costing and to comment on those matters; and we intend to look separately at the professional officers area.

It is often put to me that the type of costs that we have to recover in Government as a result of being part of the Public Service are greater than those that a private firm would have to recover, because we have to deal with parliamentary committees, the parliamentary system and the supply and services system and so on. On the other hand, we do not have to go out into the marketplace and market for work and buy people lunches and do all the things that the private sector has to do. It is our intention to come to an agreement with the Auditor-General and Treasury on what is the appropriate way to recover our project costs.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister has not yet commented on the additional costs for professional services within the department—the \$540 000 referred to by the Auditor-General.

Mr Nichols: That is a matter of real concern to me and to some extent it is covered by what I said earlier, since the figure of \$500 000-odd that the Auditor-General mentions is the figure that has to be somehow recovered against projects, and it is not charged to specific projects. That figure covers things that people have to do to keep themselves fully informed on what is happening in the construction industry, and so on. I believe it is a matter for negotiation within the department, with Treasury and with the Auditor-General, as to what is a reasonable figure and what is a reasonable percentage, for example, of the normal private sector fee that we should be charging in our professional services area.

What we are doing about it is that we are tightening control in our professional services area. We have amalgamated two divisions to make sure that we can get single point responsibility, authority and accountability for each of our projects. We are doing things of that nature to make sure that we bring those costs down. I am not saying for one moment that I think that is a satisfactory situation.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In his opening remarks, the Minister referred specifically to the Aquatic Centre. What has been the total departmental charge for professional and other services provided by the Department of Housing and Construction for the Aquatic Centre? What is the final cost of the Aquatic Centre? Is it, in fact, the final cost? Are there any additional expenses yet to be paid on the Aquatic Centre?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The current estimated cost is \$8.25 million; project completion date was 2 September 1985; the official opening will take place on 30 October 1985. Is the honourable member asking what were the total in-house costs of the \$8.25 million that was incurred by the Department of Housing and Construction?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that consulting, management and other supervision services were provided; what was the total charge against that project of those

services provided from within the Department of Housing and Construction?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We will get that information for you.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Are there any other expenses likely to be incurred?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There are some areas of prolongation which are being vigorously negotiated by my department. A lot of those costs were incurred as a result of the bankruptcy of the air-conditioning firm, P.H.R. That caused delays. There have been prolongation claims placed before the department in some areas and we are vigorously pursuing that. Do not take this as gospel, but I understand that the Adelaide City Council may have to incur costs of car parking. However, that is not my area of responsibility, so I would not be sure. The current estimated cost is \$8.25 million, and I understand from the swimming fraternity that it is money well spent and it will be a credit to the people of Adelaide.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister told Parliament in April or May of this year that he was looking at taking legal action against the private consulting engineer. What was the outcome of that investigation? Has any legal action been taken or is likely to be taken? If not, why not?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is rather enlightening to have the member for Davenport at last publicly acknowledge that there could have been problems caused other than by the Department of Housing and Construction, the old PBD, the Minister of Recreation and Sport, and me. Perhaps it could be that some of the early advice we received in relation to the cost of the project was doubtful.

It is also rather interesting that the member for Davenport has now seen this. When one looks at the cost, the people of Adelaide can see that the money is being well spent indeed. The Director will discuss the legal situation and whether the Government can take any action against the original consultants.

Mr Nichols: It is a very complicated matter, of course, because it involves potential professional negligence. It is very difficult to handle in the legal sphere. When I was first appointed, like everyone else, I was concerned about what appeared to be a case of a building being built with private sector competitive tenders at its true value, it seemed to me. That would seem to be a reasonable assessment of the actual cost of the centre apart from some prolongation claims and other complications that are minor compared to the total value of the asset.

I was concerned that it appeared that the Government had taken action on the basis of an estimate which bore no relationship to the eventual job. In fact, the estimate had been put forward by agencies or bodies that had a real financial interest in the estimate proceeding to the committed stage on site. I was instrumental in asking for a legal investigation. The matter has become even more complicated since being looked into in that the former Public Buildings Department accepted previous work done by outside consultants and took on a degree of shared ownership of estimates and work that had been done; that really complicated the matter.

The issue has now reached a point where it is not a matter of asking whether someone was legally irresponsible by giving a certain estimate; it has reached a point of asking whether the original documents were adequate and reasonable in the light of general professional practice. Crown Law is still looking into the matter. I believe it will be necessary, if it is to go any further, that someone quite independent of my department, and of this State actually, be brought in as a consultant to advise Crown Law. The matter is still under consideration and it is a long way from resolution.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I refer to page 211 of the Estimates of Payments and the capital works allocation for Education Department buildings. Provision is made for preliminary investigations and design, and this year it is quite substantial—\$2.919 million. When I spoke to Mr Don Orchard of the Under Treasurer's office (at the invitation of the Under Treasurer) he explained that a substantial part of the allocation was for the urban Aboriginal school, which it has been suggested will be built at Elizabeth. Can the Minister confirm whether or not an allocation has been made under this line for that school? Is all the money allocated in this line intended for preliminary investigations and design, or will it go somewhat beyond that allocation?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In answering this question I am aware that the member for Elizabeth is vehemently opposed to this matter and that he is using his expertise as a previous employee of the old Public Buildings Department.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That is not a sin, is it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, it is a statement with which I am sure the member for Elizabeth would agree. I am sure the member for Elizabeth is aware of the rather antiquated system that my department must work under with regard to client department expectations in relation to items going into print which have not been before the Public Works Standing Committee, or have only recently been before it and are awaiting full consideration by it. Last year \$749 000 was voted for this line, and the actual expenditure was \$192 864; this year an astronomical \$2.919 million is proposed.

While I was not present in the House, I well recall reading in *Hansard* the member for Elizabeth's comments on this matter. The member for Elizabeth said that the Aboriginal school had been very conveniently buried under this line so that the people of Elizabeth would not know its true cost and the Government would slip it through. I accept that the member for Elizabeth has a certain role to play on behalf of his constituents in regard to this undertaking by the Education Department, but he would be aware of the procedure whereby items are lumped together under this line. The member for Elizabeth would also be well aware of the workings of the Public Works Standing Committee.

In fact, to his credit, I think the member for Elizabeth drafted the original amendments to the Public Works Standing Committee legislation. The member for Davenport, who was the then Minister, took them to Cabinet, but it was decided not to proceed with them. When I think about the time spent on those amendments by the member for Elizabeth and the fact that they eventually went through the shredder, he has my sympathy. I have picked up many of the amendments in my consideration of the Public Works Standing Committee legislation, so at least the member for Elizabeth's name will go down in history in that regard.

The Aboriginal school has not been named in the Estimates of Payments because it has not been inquired into and reported on by the Public Works Standing Committee. The member for Elizabeth would be well aware of section 25 (1) of the Public Works Standing Committee legislation. The proposed expenditure is a preliminary figure so that we can proceed with the design and construction. When the project goes before the Public Works Standing Committee, the actual cost of the project will be announced and tabled in Parliament. I think the member for Elizabeth's comment that it was a deliberate attempt to bury the school under this line was said tongue in cheek.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I take it the Minister agrees that the money is buried in that line. The Minister has not answered my first question as to what amount of money is, shall we say, placed in that line, whatever the intention might be.

The Under Treasurer's office advises me that the sum was quite substantial.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In relation to the \$2.919 million, there are actually 10 projects included for the preliminary design work which in no way reflects the ultimate cost. There is a figure—and my Director tells me that I will not be castigated by Parliament for contravening section 25 (1) of the Public Works Standing Committee Act—of \$700 000 that has been set aside within that overall amount. As the member would be well aware, that would not be the total cost.

Mr M.J. EVANS: However, it would clearly exceed the design cost.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

Mr M.J. EVANS: In which case I put it to the Minister that it could be said to certainly contravene section 25 (1) of the Public Works Standing Committee Act, because quite clearly he is allocating funds in the budget well in excess of the amount required for a preliminary investigation design. Standing Orders provide that we may express opinions in relation to the Estimates before us. Accordingly, I move as an expression of the opinion of the Committee:

That the Committee is of the opinion that the Government should not proceed with construction of the proposed urban Aboriginal school at the Elizabeth site.

I will not take up a great deal of time debating the resolution, because the matter has already been debated extensively and most people are aware of the pros and cons.

I believe that since we are allocating \$700 000 in the budget towards the cost of the school under this line, and since it is going to cost more than that, this is the appropriate point at which I should move the expression of opinion. It is a reasonable move, given that Parliament is being required to allocate some \$700 000 on a public work which has yet to be inquired into by the Public Works Standing Committee. It is quite contrary to the original spirit of the Public Works Standing Committee Act. I appreciate that this practice has gone on for many years; it is not simply a current invention of the Minister but a continuing practice of many years standing.

Nonetheless, I disapprove of this practice in this context because, where a project is contentious, it removes the ability of Parliament to debate the topic before the funding is allocated. That is quite clearly contrary to the original spirit and intent of the Public Works Standing Committee Act. Because we are being required to allocate this funding before the Public Works Standing Committee has reported, I have no alternative but to move for an expression of opinion. Quite clearly, we are being required to vote on a project before Parliament has a chance to consider the report of the Public Works Standing Committee. Because we will be denied that right, I think it is only appropriate that we should express an opinion in this context. It is for that reason that I move this motion to be incorporated, should the Committee see fit, in its final report.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the motion seconded?

An honourable member: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I have no legal opinion on this matter, but I am sure that you, Mr Chairman, obtained an opinion from the officers seated alongside you as to whether or not this Committee can express an opinion on the construction of the proposed urban Aboriginal school at Elizabeth. The member for Elizabeth is violently opposed to the proposed urban Aboriginal school at Elizabeth. However, the department is following a practice which has been the norm ever since the Public Works Standing Committee was created.

We are not allowed to name specific items in the Estimates of Payments. I could name all the schools and projects under this line and, if we wanted to knock off one in

a Liberal held area, I am sure that I have enough support from Government members to do that. However, I think we are talking about commonsense. The member for Elizabeth has used private member's time to advocate whether or not a particular project should go ahead. The Government has decided that a particular project—in this case the urban Aboriginal school—should go before the Public Works Standing Committee along with other projects; and there are also other projects which will eventually go to the Public Works Standing Committee of which the preliminary design and estimates costs are incorporated in this \$2.919 million.

Mr Chairman, perhaps you would like to leave the Chair and in effect instruct the Public Works Standing Committee to come down with a favourable decision on the Alberton Primary School, because I know that that is very dear to your heart. I think that we are going completely against the spirit of, first, the Estimates Committee and, secondly, the common practice of this Parliament in regard to the Public Works Standing Committee Act. With all due respect, I suggest that the member for Elizabeth is trying to get a line in his local paper to the effect that he made every effort to try and stop the urban Aboriginal school. If that is the member for Elizabeth's tactic, then so be it. Of course, one uses every tactic in the book, but one would have thought that the role of the Estimates Committee is to question the Minister about his budget allocation—not to move an expression of opinion.

Bearing in mind that we are a Committee of only four, are we going to in effect reflect the opinion of this Parliament, to assert some pressure on the Government? I maintain that that is not the case. It rather surprises me that the member for Light, with all his experience in this Parliament—and I say that with due respect, because I have a lot of respect for him—has not stated that this is a totally useless and time wasting exercise. The complete project has not been looked at by the Public Works Standing Committee, and it has not agreed to the total cost. I oppose the motion.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I do not want to delay the Committee indefinitely, but the Minister's contribution must be referred to in one or two fairly vital areas. Mr Chairman, the Minister invited you to leave the Chair and cast a vote. Of course, sessional orders would completely offset that.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: You know what I was getting at.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: This Committee has been productive all day. Members on this side have not boycotted the Committee and walked out for some cheap political line, as did the Minister when he was a backbench member of the Opposition.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: One grows up.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: This matter is currently before members in the Lower House. It is one which is being debated and there is a great degree of support for the viewpoint of the member for Elizabeth, who has undertaken to have this matter amended, after in-depth conversation with my colleague, the member for Torrens. It is completely consistent, at a time when this matter is being considered in a financial sense, that the will of this Parliament—not the will of the Government—is given the opportunity for consideration.

It does not matter what the Government has decided: if the Government cannot carry the vote on the floor of the House then the Government does not win—the people win through their representatives. The member for Elizabeth has given this Committee the opportunity to consider that situation. It is completely consistent with the discussions that will take place when the matter is debated in the Lower House on another occasion.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is 'That the expression of opinion be agreed to.'

The Committee voted on the question:

Ayes (3)—Messrs. D.C. Brown, Eastick, and M.J. Evans (teller).

Noes (2)—Messrs Groom and Plunkett (teller).

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

Expression of opinion resolved in the affirmative.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I move, as an expression of the Committee's opinion:

That the Committee draws attention to the apparent conflict between the inclusion in the Appropriation Bill of Funding for the actual construction of certain public works which have yet to be reported upon by the Public Works Standing Committee and the provisions of section 25 (1) of the Public Works Standing Committee Act and calls on the Government to introduce amendments to the relevant Acts and budgetary procedures to ensure that the matter is resolved prior to the introduction of the next budget.

It is my firm belief, as a member of this Parliament, that the present structure of the conflict between the Public Works Standing Committee Act and the allocations in the budget that the Government decides to make is untenable and cannot be allowed to continue in future. The Minister has quite correctly referred to this as a continuing practice over time. It is not one for which this Government alone is responsible. All Governments over the past decades have similarly been responsible for this kind of action.

In the 1980s it is intolerable that Parliament should be presented with the amount of information contained in the program estimates and the Estimates of Payments, yet still, as the Minister himself said, archaic procedures of this Parliament prevent him from naming projects to which allocations of up to \$700 000 are to be made in this budget, because of the provisions of section 25 (1) of the Public Works Standing Committee Act. Clearly this position needs to be regularised. I do not wish to put forward specific propositions on how it should be regularised. That is up to the Government in consultation with the Public Works Standing Committee.

I believe, in deference to the Ctee, which is attempting in good faith to do its work, and in the interests of the broader flow of information to the Parliament, it is essential that this position be regularised before the next budget. I believe that it is an insult to the Public Works Standing Committee of this Parliament to have us sitting here voting on allocations of some \$700 000 for a project which the Public Works Committee has yet to consider. Quite clearly, that is contrary to the spirit of section 25 (1) of the Act.

I realise the reasons why the Government does what it does. This practice has been followed by many Governments in the past. Clearly, the time has come for the Committee to bring this to the attention of Parliament to ensure that proper procedures are developed by the Government over the next 12 months to remove the cumbersome and archaic procedures which prevent the naming of projects, which require them to be buried in larger allocations, which prevent proper discussion of those projects in this forum and which, in effect, are a discourtesy to the Public Works Standing Committee, which is attempting to discharge its obligations in this debate.

The Government can have 12 months to work on the necessary amendments both to the Public Works Standing Committee Act and the budgetary procedures to resolve this difficulty. I remind the Minister that in debate last year he made it quite clear that it was his intention to amend the Public Works Standing Committee Act to resolve this kind of problem. He indicated that those amendments would be put to the Parliament in 1985. However, they were not covered in the first session of this year and not referred to

in the Governor's speech relating to this session. Those amendments have yet to be seen.

I am sure that the Minister has his officers working on this, but those amendments have yet to appear three years into this Government's term. It is about time that we put this formally on the record and attempted to resolve the absurd position.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This motion refers to something that I as Minister and I am sure all members of the Government are concerned about, as is the member for Elizabeth. It is a ridiculous situation. The Public Works Standing Committee Act is so outdated that the member for Elizabeth has had to move this motion. Perhaps it is because of my English background that I can always see the irony in situations: it is ironic that the person who master-minded the previous amendments to the Public Works Standing Committee Act (who was ultimately kicked out with a big flourish by the Tonkin Government), and the member for Davenport will be seconding this motion. The member for Elizabeth made that point when he drafted that legislation. I can see some irony in that.

I know that the member for Elizabeth has a very good legislative mind, and I say that quite seriously, but now we have actually unearthed who was the Minister of Public Works in the Tonkin Government—the member for Elizabeth, and he was not even a member of Parliament at the time. I oppose this motion purely and simply because I have already in train amendments to the Public Works Standing Committee Act, of which you, Mr Chairman, are well aware. It is not right and proper for me at this point to name those parts of the Act that will be amended, because they have only been agreed in principle by my Cabinet colleagues. It would be totally wrong for me to name those parts.

All I can say to the member for Elizabeth is that, if he wants to call for a division so that we waste more time, I am quite sure that Government members will oppose the motion. If the honourable member is prepared to drop the matter, knowing that it will be picked up and will be appearing before the budget session, he has my word on those things. I am sure that the member for Davenport who supported the previous motion and will support this motion will also support a magnificent uplifting of the maximum cost of projects that can be approved by the Government without the matter going before the Public Works Standing Committee. We know that the honourable member got cold feet, or perhaps the amendments were kicked out from under him by his Cabinet colleagues.

I oppose the motion. The matter has been picked up by the Government, and, if a division is called, we will simply be wasting the time of the Committee. I am sure that my colleagues will have something to say. If at the end of the day anyone says that certain matters should have been discussed by this Committee, I will be able to say in full fairness that those matters were not discussed because of ridiculous motions like this, so that members did not have a chance to question the Minister.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It gives me a great deal of pleasure, in seconding this motion (and both the member for Light and I agree wholeheartedly with the motion—we both second it) to point out that last year the Minister promised the Estimates Committee that these amendments would come before the House in 1985.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: 1985 has not finished yet.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: We know darn well that the amendments will not appear before the end of 1985.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Do you want to bet?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know that the Minister tends to bet on anything that moves.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I know that the honourable member needs campaign funds to defend Fisher.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister implied that the amendments were ready last year, and that they were about to be introduced. That was 12 months ago, but we have seen nothing. As the member for Elizabeth said, there was no mention in the Governor's speech of these amendments. I pointed out to the Minister 12 months ago that the amendments had been prepared while I was Minister and he tried to make something of the fact that I had not formally introduced them. I think I am right in saying that they were before Cabinet at the time the election was called. The amendments have been drafted. They cover the specific points raised by the member for Elizabeth. Why has it taken this Government three years to take up those drafts? I believe the drafts had been to Cabinet once or twice: the amendments have physically been drafted. I had sorted out the problems with the then Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I believe that the former Chairman of that committee was present this afternoon. I stress that the problems have been sorted out and it would appear that this Government has been incapable of picking up the amendments that were already drafted and bringing them before the Parliament in three years. This motion is mild. I would have thought it was more appropriate at this stage to specifically criticise or condemn the Government for its inability to bring forward the amendments during the past three years, and most certainly in the last year. The problem alluded to by the member for Elizabeth is very pertinent in that it makes a mockery of these Estimates Committees when we all know that the Government has announced a major project but no funds have been provided for that project because the Government cannot provide funds in the budget until the project has formally been approved by the committee. So the Government buries funds elsewhere in the budget. The previous Government and other Governments were guilty of that procedure because the Act is deficient. We have highlighted time after time that the Act is deficient. The amendments have been prepared, but the Government has not introduced them after three years. The Minister makes excuses, but he promised action 12 months ago—it is not suitable. I wholeheartedly second and support the motion.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I would like to respond to some serious allegations.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. There being no further speakers, the question before the Chair is the motion moved by the member for Elizabeth.

The Committee voted on the motion:

Ayes (3)—Messrs D.C. Brown, Eastick, and M.J. Evans.

Noes (2)—Messrs Groom and Plunkett.

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

Motion thus carried.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I come to the grand special Jubilee 150 maintenance program as announced by the Premier. I find it rather interesting that the Premier has announced \$90 million special funds for maintenance over three years when all it is is the standard budget allocation for maintenance. In fact, it appears that that standard budget allocation, at least in this year, has not kept up with inflation in real terms compared with what the figures were three or four years ago.

I will read some figures that I have taken from the Auditor-General's Reports: in 1980-81, \$22.6 million was spent on maintenance; 1981-82, \$24.1 million; 1982-83, \$24.9 million; in 1983-84 there was a significant drop both in real and actual terms back to \$22.8 million; in 1984-85,

\$24.6 million, still less than it was two years earlier; 1985-86, \$23.1 million; we do not know exactly what the allocation will be in 1985-86 if other moneys are dragged in.

Despite the promise of a so-called special \$90 million maintenance program, it appears that the funds provided this year are \$1.5 million less than for last year, at least as far as the departmental allocation is concerned. That is a reduction in real terms for maintenance of 14 per cent. Under the Labor Government that we have in the State at present, less is being spent on maintenance in 1985-86 than was spent in 1981-82; if inflation is taken into account that means a reduction of 30 per cent in maintenance allocation.

In Parliament last year I moved a motion expressing concern about maintenance. The Minister also expressed concern during the Estimates Committees about the maintenance backlog. His Government's record does not appear to be very rosy at all; in fact, there have been real cuts, as I have already highlighted. It also highlights the fact that \$23 million is being allocated this year in the first year. It does not take much to imagine how much additional money would have to be allocated in subsequent years: in fact, an extra \$21 million would have to be found to make up the \$90 million over the three years.

Does the Minister have a detailed documentation of the backlog of the maintenance work that needs to be carried out across the State and, if so, is he willing to give details—obviously, not now—of the extent of that backlog, and the estimate of the backlog broken down into critical maintenance (almost breakdown maintenance), urgent maintenance and maintenance with a fairly high priority? That was done when I was in Government. I specifically asked for such a detailed listing. From memory, the figure was something like \$27 million or \$29 million backlog work that needed to be done.

On numerous occasions I have made the point that it became a common characteristic of Treasurers back in the 1970s that when money was tight in the State, one cut back on maintenance of Government assets, and I have given the House details of where that occurred. I highlight that under our Government we made some special allocations, using the surplus work force within the then Public Buildings Department. We set up the visiting tradesman schemes. I am disturbed when I go around the schools, particularly, in this State to find asphalt yards in a deplorable state, with holes up to nine inches or 12 inches deep and up to two feet or three feet wide. I have given the House already a list of something like 49 injuries that occurred in one school.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Evanston Primary.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In the school in the electorate of the member for Light—Evanston Primary School—there were 49 injuries in the first six months of last year. I have visited other schools since. I brought to the Minister personally a deputation on the problems at Linden Park School, where there are holes in the asphalt and unpainted woodwork; the floorboards and wooden buildings are unsafe, and some have collapsed completely; there are holes in the floors; there are broken windows, and still there is insufficient money to carry out what I would describe as very urgent maintenance. In fact, the costs of repairing many of these assets will be far greater than the cost of allocating the money to simply carry out the urgent maintenance. Now they are having to remove rotted timbers, with dry rot in them, and replace them with other timbers and still paint them, whereas it would have been far more economical to simply paint the timbers to start with. Is the Minister prepared to give an estimate of the backlog of maintenance and the details of that list?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I have no idea of the backlog at this point in time, but I am sure that we can make that information available. We can certainly get the information

on what is looked at as urgent, as priority or whatever. Also, I will get as much as I can for the member for Davenport. I smiled when the member for Davenport said that he specifically asked for all that information when he was Minister.

He may have specifically asked for the information but he certainly did not do anything about it when he got it because that is why we are picking up this problem. I have made perfectly clear in my press release when we released the first Jubilee 150 project at Warradale Primary School on Monday of this week that the problem does not stem just from 1979-82. It has been a problem of all Governments. In one respect the member for Davenport is right: in the past if Governments have been short of money it goes out of the old hollow logs that were in the Department of Housing and Construction (or PBD).

The member for Davenport said that last year he moved a motion in this House listing cases of break downs in maintenance at schools. We then discovered that it was a member of the Leader of the Opposition's staff who telephoned all the schools in the area and said, 'Look, we are doing an analysis of maintenance in the area, could you please tell us if you have any problems with the schools?' Many of the principals unwittingly gave information and the member for Davenport made an impassioned speech about lack of maintenance, etc. However, that is in the past. This Government, for the first time in the history of any Government, has set aside a base level of funding for the next three years to overcome the backlog of maintenance.

The Hon. D.C. Brown interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I listened quietly to the member for Davenport.

The CHAIRMAN: Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am not saying that this \$90 million over the next three years is going to overcome the backlog; it is going to take eight or nine years before we can say that our schools are in a condition where we are proud to send our children to them—and we are talking about other Government buildings there.

The member for Davenport boasted that when he was Minister he asked for that information and he did something about it—he allocated \$4 million on his FM program. What he has not told this Committee and what he has never told the House when he moved that motion last year was that he was faced with a problem of finding no work for the people down there. This man, who was always threatening to take the unions by the scruff of the neck and tell them exactly who was boss, when faced with the job of getting rid of the surplus labour by sacking people, backed down.

When one looks at the \$4 million that the honourable member put up for the FM program, and takes out the money that was paid to keep people down at Netley sitting on their backsides doing nothing and takes out the Health Commission money, we have a look at the great achievements of the member for Davenport when he was Minister for Public Works. I think it is very appropriate that we place on record, having regard to the exclusion of paying the surplus labour down at Netley and the exclusion of the Health Commission money, exactly what has been spent in maintenance by the previous Government and this Government.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

Membership:

Mrs Appleby substituted for Mr Plunkett.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I was talking about the \$90 million program that the Premier announced in the budget

and comparing the figures in response to a question from the member for Davenport. Before the dinner break I had referred to the additional funds of \$4 million about which the member for Davenport has made much, first, when he was a Minister, secondly, when he moved a motion in the House and, thirdly, this afternoon. If one takes out the funds that were paying for the surplus labour at Netley, the expenditure on maintenance is vastly different.

For 1980-81 it was \$16.673 million; in 1981-82, \$19.261 million; in 1982-83, \$23.829 million; in 1983-84, \$24.845 million; and in 1984-85, \$27.604 million. Those figures prove the situation. Comment was made in relation to the Jubilee 150 maintenance program that not enough has been spent on maintenance. However, the figures show that there has been a steady growth which has picked up considerably in our term of government. I am sure the Committee and the member for Davenport would agree that, in the past, if additional money has been needed, it has been taken away from maintenance.

The Jubilee 150 program is a firm commitment to provide over the next three years base level funding totalling \$90 million. It also takes into account inflationary growth and special needs highlighted as a result of requests from schools and other client departments. I believe we have something to be proud of in this area. Referring to the member for Davenport's \$4 million program, one might ask why he is being somewhat critical on the one hand while paying a backhanded compliment on the other hand. The member realised during his term as Minister of Public Works that there was a need to raise the maintenance funding for our schools.

Perhaps I did not have the problem that he had inasmuch as there was surplus labour sitting around at Netley, but the Committee and Parliament would know that we have a responsibility to the pupils in our schools and that we need to create the environment that we want. We should also understand that, when we moved into new areas (such as open space classrooms), governments were not aware that carpet deteriorated and that airconditioners would break down. This funding represents an attempt by the Government through its Jubilee 150 maintenance program to address those problems. I refer to the opening of the Warradale Primary School. The response received not just from teachers but parents on the school council indicated that they were aware that the Government is making an honest attempt to upgrade facilities in the schools of our State.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister really did not touch on the point I was making. If we divide the \$90 million project by three, it works out to \$30 million a year; yet this year \$23.1 million has been allocated for maintenance. Anyone can come to that conclusion. I hear a comment that that is not true. I would like the Minister to tell me where I have gone wrong if my calculation is not correct.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Davenport quotes \$23.1 million. The figure for 1985-86, including money for our termed employees, is \$28.341 million plus additional money. Money is held in the Education Minister's portfolio that he can allocate for additional work. Either the advice I am receiving from my officers is incorrect, or the member for Davenport is giving incorrect information to the Committee.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is the very point I am making. I have taken the figures from the budget papers, which shows \$23.1 million. The Minister referred to that figure and then jumped to \$28 million, and I thought he used the term 'termed employees'. Where did the additional \$5 million come from? True, there is a line of \$3 million or \$1.5 million that could be used in certain conditions for maintenance, although it is not specific. Where did the extra \$5 million come from?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I think the member for Davenport has hit the nail on the head. There is some genuine confusion here. Mr Little will explain exactly where the figure comes from.

Mr Little: The \$23 million is included as contingency expenditure. It does not include wages and salaries, which appear in the earlier page of the Estimates charged to other accounts. There is another substantial sum of money which is included in there. We have two situations. There is no clear dollar figure in the Estimates which shows the total of maintenance expenditure as such. The contingency sum has to have the wages component added to it. The figure mentioned is the total amount that will be spent on maintenance.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I added up the three figures under school maintenance, hospitals buildings and other Government buildings on page 168 of the Estimates. The total came to \$21.6 million for this year as opposed to \$21.55 million last year. It appears to me that the maintenance figures, at least in terms of general expenditure, are virtually exactly the same. Where is the increase for this year? The Government has said that it is undertaking this massive maintenance program, which implies there are additional funds for maintenance. Where are those additional funds because, on my calculations, they are exactly the same as last year?

Mr Little: I refer the Committee to page 22 of the yellow book, because I think that sets out the picture more clearly as a total program. The total program expenditure is shown as \$32.764 million. That includes a sum of \$5.739 million which is reimbursement work that we carry out in the maintenance area. The actual figure of recurrent expenditure for maintenance based on those figures is \$27.025 million. That does not include money to be spent on the Aboriginal projects unit and money which we anticipate will be spent through the Education Department, again as reimbursement.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister and members of his staff for that information. I still think that it highlights the point I made that we are not even getting to a third of the program under this massive so-called \$90 million Jubilee maintenance program. The truth is that it is no more than the standard allocation of maintenance funds given as a grand total and sold as a PR exercise by this Government just prior to an election. We know that there are no special cookies and no extra millions. If you take the figures that the Minister has quoted this evening, which he himself has highlighted, they do not even match the increase in real terms when inflation is taken into account.

I now turn to workers compensation. Can the Minister provide the details of the workers compensation premiums paid in 1983-84, 1984-85, and the proposed payment for 1985-86? Having been Minister of Public Works and Minister of Industrial Affairs, I know that a premium is set at the beginning of the year based on the previous year's record, so the figure for this year should be available.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That information is not included in the Estimates. We will take that question on notice and provide a report well before 18 October.

Mrs APPLEBY: I refer to the Brighton High School redevelopment project. Given that stage 1 is underway and there is visible evidence of that construction, with the recent \$4.5 million reconstruction announcement of stage 2, can the Minister comment on the design and planning at this time?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am sure that the honourable member is well aware of the importance that the Government places on the Brighton High School because of the state of its transportable classrooms. At this stage the brief has been established and the original master plan, which

was completed in 1982, will have to be recast. In conjunction with the Education Department and the school, priorities are being established between classroom spaces, library facilities and art and music suites. The preliminary estimated total cost is \$4.5 million. Expenditure to date, which has mainly involved siteworks, has been \$15 524. The planned date of completion is February 1988. Stage 2 will commence in October 1986.

Design and documentation really cannot be submitted to the Public Works Standing Committee until certain proposals between the Education Department, the school and officers from my own department have been clarified. I can assure the honourable member that we are moving at full speed to ensure that, when the project is looked at by the Public Works Standing Committee, all design and documentation will be on hand so that the committee can bring down a decision fairly quickly.

Mrs APPLEBY: The transportable classrooms at Brighton High School are in a really shocking condition at the moment: they are minus gutters, and the floor boards actually bounce as you walk across them. What provision will be made to bring the transportable classrooms up to reasonable condition, given that the project will not be finished until 1988?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will ask Mr John Kent, who is the Manager, Major Projects, to reply to that question. The honourable member will be well aware that I have visited the school. I can agree with her that some aspects of those transportables leave a lot to be desired. We are closely looking at the situation in case there are any problems in the development of stage 2, once the Public Works Standing Committee has delivered its recommendations to Parliament.

One thing that gave me heart when I went to visit the school was the attitude of the school council inasmuch that it was not particularly keen to see money wasted on those particular transportables if we could proceed with some degree of priority to stage two. I assure the honourable member, if a situation is created where there are delays which are not caused by this Government, or of any form whatsoever, then those transportables will be upgraded.

Mr Kent: Discussions are in train between the Education Department, the school council, and officers of our department in casting the brief for the redevelopment. Part of that process involves the work that may or may not be done in relation to those classroom units. My most recent understanding is that the school council is more concerned about the expenditure of funds on the new development as opposed to the existing development. The time frame under which the redevelopment will take place will depend on what money is spent on those classroom units. The end result will be an agreement between the school council, the Education Department and our department as to where the priority should be.

Mrs APPLEBY: In relation to transportable building relocation on page 25 of the yellow book, a number of high schools have a decreasing number of students and the trend indicates that this fall will continue. There has been pressure on school councils that have excess portable units on campuses (some very well used) and some councils feel responsible for maintenance. What depreciation is taken into account when addressing stocks of transportable buildings? What is the cost of upgrading such buildings other than just the paint jobs that are carried out?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We will take the specifics on notice.

Mr Nichols: The rationale and the policy behind the use of transportable buildings is well understood by members of the Committee. There is a certain part of the school which is a core, and one does not want to build schools too

big so that one finishes up with wasted space. One should have a flexible surround to that core. We spend about \$1 million a year on maintaining transportables, but we will have to provide the detailed figures later.

The decisions as to where these buildings are moved and to what degree they need to be upgraded when shifted are made in conjunction with the area managers or facility managers in the Education Department. Again, it is not simple and is somewhat beleaguered by costs associated with that work. Our general policy is to phase out the use of these timber transportables in favour of metal clad ones.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Referring again to the Brighton High School, if I remember rightly stage one was the resource centre. I understand that a commitment has been given by the present Government to spend \$4.6 million on stage two. I understood from an earlier answer that the work to be done for that \$4.6 million has not yet been finalised, but that could be the upgrading of existing buildings. What work will be done for that money?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The estimated total cost is \$4.5 million. As I said earlier, discussions are taking place between the Education Department and the school, and priorities are being established about what takes place in stage two, and what would take place in stage three. That is what might be confusing either the member for Davenport or the members of the school council he spoke to.

Mr Kent: The process of consultation is still in train. Precisely what facility will end up in stage two is still the subject of some negotiation. The negotiations have recently commenced, but they are at a fairly early stage. I am not currently aware of the level of renovations of existing accommodation as opposed to brand new construction. We can advise that at an appropriate time. However, I do not believe it would be before 18 October. I do not think that those decisions have been made.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: How is that \$4.5 million arrived at when the work to be carried out is not known? Has that figure been pulled out of a hat? Over what period is it proposed to spend that \$4.5 million? Is it a total figure or a figure based on present day values that will inflate over the next few years?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If the member for Davenport had listened to my earlier reply to the member for Brighton, he would know that I said that the master plan was completed in 1982. Since then, in conjunction with those interested bodies there has been further consultation. The estimated total cost of \$4.5 million is a completion price, which would be the February 1988 price. It is still considered by the department that, whatever decision is made on what will make up stage two, we will still be able to complete the project at \$4.5 million in February 1988 prices. It is just a question of what priorities are seen for stage two, as opposed to what will be done in stage three.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So, \$4.5 million was a figure plucked out of the air, rather than 'We would build a specific building that would cost approximately \$4.5 million.'

Mr Kent: One of the processes we are now engaged in is providing an upper limit as a design target for projects. Based on the preliminary information we have, the identification of \$4.5 million was a reasonable target for which to aim as a preliminary design figure. That is the derivation of the \$4.5 million. It has been escalated to the 1988 figure.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister list all the cases where he has granted exemption from the building regulations in relation to the ASER project? When that legislation went through, certain powers were given to the Minister to allow the project managers to be exempt from the building code and regulations.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I want to make one thing perfectly clear—only one exemption was granted, and the document was tabled by me in the Parliament. Under that exemption I could consider modifications to the Building Act that council would otherwise consider. That exemption was granted and I as the Minister was given that power so that problems relating to time constraints could be resolved. The member for Davenport would be well aware that I made that decision only on the recommendations of a committee of experts. If council disagreed with a project that was technically outside the Building Act, the matter would have had to go to a referee and members would be aware that that procedure creates problems because of the time constraints. That was the only exemption and the document has been tabled in Parliament. I will provide information on the number of modifications that I have granted to the developers on the recommendations of my committee, but the number is not very high. I will provide those figures well before 18 October.

Mr M.J. EVANS: How far has the concept of regionalisation progressed? I always considered that the idea of regionalising offices of the Department of Housing and Construction was very important to match the regionalisation that occurs in other Government departments. Of course, it is important that officers in the field are of equivalent rank and delegated power so that they can make decisions in the field without having to report back to head office every day, thereby delaying matters. To my knowledge, the project has been approved but it has not seemed to be making great headway in recent times. What is the current status of that concept and how far has the Minister been able to implement it with regard to regional offices and the appointment of regional officers?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Elizabeth would be well aware that at the time of the Cabinet reshuffle the Hon. Jack Wright was in the process of signing a letter to set up the regions and that the Public Service Association approved this action. I had a series of meetings with the PSA and it was decided that we would appoint regional managers but that in regionalising we would set up a model region at Port Augusta to cover the Iron Triangle. It was decided that we would proceed with further regionalisation subject to the success or failure of that exercise. The Port Augusta pilot project has been an outstanding success not only in regard to the original concept of regionalisation (which was worked out by my colleague, Jack Wright) but also in regard to the restructuring of the Department of Housing and Construction. Greater powers have been delegated to senior officers.

The two concepts have dovetailed so that decisions can be made on the spot and there is greater liaison between client departments. Work is done more quickly, to the satisfaction of client departments. I will have discussions with the PSA very shortly and I will say, in effect, 'The Port Augusta experiment has been up and running for about 15 months and it has proved to be a success: it is cost effective and more efficient and we will carry out further regionalisation in the State.'

Mr M.J. EVANS: I congratulate the Minister. It has been a long process and I am pleased to hear that it will be finalised. Will the concept of a Minister of Public Works be retained now that there is a Minister of Housing and Construction and a Department of Housing and Construction? The office of Minister of Public Works seems to be superfluous now—will it be retained or will it come under housing and construction?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The title of Minister of Public Works will be retained because that office is referred to in many Acts. For my sins and for better or for worse, I am still referred to as the Minister of Public Works.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: As that office will be retained, does the Minister of Public Works employ staff or do the staff come under the Minister of Housing and Construction?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is like having two bob each way. Both portfolios are referred to in the Estimates of Payments. My ministerial staff and departmental staff come under the joint title—Minister of Public Works and Minister of Housing and Construction.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: There are two separate ministerial portfolios—housing and construction, and public works.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is a joint title.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is not.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: When my Director discusses matters relating to housing and construction with me, he does not say that he spends two-thirds of his day as Director for the Minister of Public Works and one-third as Director for the Minister of Housing and Construction. It is a joint title.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mrs Appleby): Does the member for Davenport wish to ask a further supplementary question?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I wish to ask a supplementary question: we are still on the same subject. When the office of Minister of Works was changed to the office of Minister of Public Works in 1979, properties and so on were transferred to the new ministerial title. What is the point of maintaining the title of Minister of Public Works if that Minister employs no-one and if it is no more than a title? If the Minister suggests that it is appropriate to retain only one title, it would appear that he prefers the title 'Minister of Housing and Construction'. Seriously, I wonder whether it is not a neater ministerial responsibility—eliminating one completely, which is the Minister of Public Works.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Davenport is well aware that the Minister of Public Works is really only a corporate title, but to satisfy his question and his enthusiasm for whether, as Minister of Public Works or Minister of Housing and Construction, I am employing anyone I had a little tick from the member for Elizabeth because that short question has produced a real problem: I will get a Crown Law opinion on it for him.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would have thought that it was more a matter for Cabinet to resolve than getting a Crown Law opinion: it would probably tie up most of the Attorney-General's Department for the rest of the year. I refer to the fees provided for private consultants for the past three years, as outlined by the Auditor-General. They have dropped from \$2.3 million in 1983 to \$1.6 million in 1984 to \$1.2 million, in round figures, for 1985. It is a very substantial decline, of over 50 per cent, from 1983 to 1985. What is the anticipated figure to private consultants for the year ending June 1986, and why has there been such a substantial reduction? Does this reflect the fact that the department is now using in-house services rather than outside private consulting services?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It worries me that throughout the member for Davenport's line of questioning he is convinced that there is some deep socialist plot to build up our day labour force and build up our in-house facilities at the expense of private enterprise. I am sure, with all due respect to the member for Davenport, that he sees a figure and a considerable reduction and says, 'Aha, I've got that socialist Government: it is out to do my friends in the private sector.' That is certainly not the case. I am sure that there is a very good reason why there has been a drop between 1983 and 1985. Mr Kent will give the reason for that.

Mr Kent: The level of private consulting fees bears a direct relationship to the size of projects that have been committed to documentation or advice through consultants.

The honourable member will find that in 1983 a reflection of the level of fees that were paid on some major projects would have been brought to book, such as the law courts, where we had private consultants. In earlier years a number of TAFE projects used private consultants. Recent figures that we have looked at indicate that private consultancies run at between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of the amount of commission that we operate in-house, out-house: it is of that order.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Goes outside?

Mr Kent: Goes outside.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So 80 per cent to 85 per cent stays in-house?

Mr Kent: Currently, yes, but if there was a very significant project which took a major proportion of a program and that was done by a private consultant, that would change the balance significantly for a short time.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the projection for the current financial year?

Mr Kent: It is between 15 per cent and 20 per cent this year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What was it in dollar terms?

Mr Kent: I do not have a precise figure. The year is not yet complete. It will vary as the time approaches, as each project is evaluated.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am delighted to see that redevelopment of the museum is proceeding, although it was delayed for about 12 months. Can the Minister give some indication as to what work will be completed by June 1986? I recently had the opportunity, walking back from the university, to stroll through that area and see some of the redevelopment work being done on the old armoury, barracks, asylum and a few other buildings. Unfortunately, I could not go to the opening, which the Premier held on a holiday Monday—Labour Day—a very inconvenient time.

In particular, I would appreciate knowing the program. I understand that a very large glass window is being constructed as part of that, although I cannot say exactly where. I understand that Canadian glass is being used for that very large glass window. Why is that being used? What is the additional cost in using that imported glass?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: On the Canadian glass, unless one of my officers has that information we will have to take that on notice. The proposed total expenditure in this financial year is \$8.3 million. The completed construction in this financial year will be the superstructure of the trades school, and the destitute asylum. Are you talking about this year or this financial year?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: This financial year.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The collections and special equipment will be relocated. That is coming out to be used in some of the buildings that have been completed. Also, the east and north wings and the Fullarton Road annexe will be completed as part of phase D. I am pleased to hear the member for Davenport have such kind words to say about the museum redevelopment. When he was Minister of Public Works he had some involvement in it and I understand that he took a special interest in that project. It has created a lot of interest and brought a lot of praise to the officers of my department who are involved in it. I recommend that all members of this Committee at some time wander through that development, because it will open up the whole of the museum complex. When it is finished it will be a credit to North Terrace.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: If I remember rightly there were to be three stages, the second to have several sections. How many buildings will be uncompleted, in terms of renovation, at the end of 1986? I ask this question because the project was put together as a 1986 finish project. Under the original proposal the only part not to be completed in 1986

was the third stage, which is the major renovation, if it ever proceeds, of the main museum building on North Terrace, all the other buildings being finished by 1986. Will that target be achieved by the end of next year?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I think that the member for Davenport is getting mixed up between stages and phases. I do not know whether it was when he was Minister of Public Works that we talked about 'slippages'. I think that slippages occurred in the honourable member's time. We were talking of stage 1 and individual phases in stage 1. We are still on stage 1. When I spoke of the east and north wings and the Fullarton Road annexe that is stage 1, phase D.

Stage 1 redevelopment comprises the removal of the existing south wing of the former trades school complex; refurbishing and refitting of the existing east and west wings of the trades school complex including additions to the east wing; removal of the existing two-storey north wing of the trades school complex and its replacement with a new building with part 3 and part 4 floors in the basement. I have talked about some parts of that superstructure being finished in this financial year.

It also consists of the restoration and refitting of the historic destitute asylum complex, which is a great credit to the craftsmen in this State who carried out the renovation work; the removal of the existing art gallery workshop building and demolition of extraneous structures; restoration and refitting of the historic armoury and police barracks complex; and construction of small building of an appropriate contextual character to balance and complete the parade ground courtyard. There, again, I think that the honourable member may have seen some of the work in progress where they are not only redoing the police barracks but also carrying through the courtyard and using the kind of brickwork used when the building was erected.

Stage 1 also includes the construction of the siteworks and landscaping of the entire redevelopment site with the exception of the forecourt area abutting North Terrace. That is the part which, in effect, opens up to the public the chance to pass right through the back of the museum, and I think that is very important. Also, alterations to the museum's east and north wings, and, as I have said, the Fullarton Road annexe and relocation of exhibits to new accommodation and provision of some special equipment. That, in effect, is stage 1. They are individual phases. I think that is where the member for Davenport has become confused.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: When will stage 1 be finished?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In October 1986, and I will make sure that the honourable member is invited to the opening.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Will the Minister indicate the current status of the department's computerised management information system and whether he is now fully satisfied that that system is completely operative and able to provide up-to-date and accurate information to the department's management and to him as Minister in the current context?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will ask Mr Little to answer that question.

Mr Little: Considerable work has been carried out on the department's computerised systems during the past 12 months to improve our management information. These comprise the installation of a new general ledger package, which is provided through the Government Computing Centre. That was installed and came into operation on 1 July. We are already starting to get the benefits from that of information being available very much earlier than it has been in the past.

We are currently installing a new pay system for the weekly-paid payroll as a first step in completely improving

our payroll system. We are using a system through the Government Computing Centre called Austpay. One of the big benefits of that is that it is enabling us to pass through to the costing systems the payroll information of weekly-paid personnel straight into our departmental costs. In the past that has been done about two to four weeks after the payroll has taken place, as the honourable member may be aware.

This is having a big impact and will be completed within about a month. Much work has gone into installing mini-computer systems into district offices. Again, that is having a tremendous impact on the control of our operations in district offices. At the moment we have the system installed in five of those offices. We are extending that to the Hillcrest Hospital's unit and to the engineering services and construction services section at Netley. Again, these are all significant changes and improvements to our computing system. We are also looking at the installation of other computing systems such as computer aided drafting and microcomputers in the professional areas to improve the systems that exist there. All in all, there is a lot going on and a lot has happened in the past 12 months.

Mr M.J. EVANS: That sounds promising; I believe that the department will gain substantial benefits from that. I think that everyone recognises the value of a highly effective and efficient internal audit unit in any organisation, particularly a Government department. I feel that one of the important principles of that is that the people involved in that operation should have immediate access to the highest levels of management in the department.

Does the internal audit unit in the department report directly to the director, or does it report via some other officer, and if the latter is the case is that in fact a desirable situation when the internal audit unit is meant to be keeping a check on the department as a whole and therefore, I think, should report directly to the person at the very top of the organisation? I am not sure where the internal unit fits at the moment, and would like that position clarified because I am not sure what has happened to it since the reorganisation.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Director will answer that question.

Mr Nichols: The internal audit function in the department has been amalgamated into the industry policy division and, although that might sound as if it flies in the face of what the honourable member is suggesting is a good idea, the fact is that the function has been upgraded and incorporated in our management improvement function so that we are, in fact, auditing from the point of view of improvement of management rather than from the point of view of nuts, bolts and minor ledger systems. Of course, if a specific problem comes up and I need direct access to the internal auditor, that happens, too. I am very pleased with the way it is going, and I think the general management improvement process in our department is well ahead of the Public Service at the moment.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I refer to 'Other Government Buildings' on page 212 of the Estimates of Payments, which shows that the annual provision for motor vehicles was actually under spent. This year the same budget allocation has notionally been provided. Clearly, no growth is contemplated in that sense, although it is more than was actually spent last year. However, given the introduction of the Government motor pool and the common usage of motor vehicles in a number of city based departments (which I thought would have led to significant savings in relation to motor vehicles), am I correct in interpreting the figures as meaning that little change is occurring?

I would have thought that, as a result of the pooling situation, we would have had a reduction in the provision

for motor vehicles. However, the allocation for this year is the same as last year. Am I interpreting those figures correctly, or am I missing something?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, it is no big deal. The honourable member would be well aware that the department places great emphasis on housekeeping with regard to motor vehicles. As yet, I do not think we have incurred the wrath of the member of Hanson about misuse or oversupply of vehicles.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Are you condoning it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, and my officers will bear witness that I will not condone any waste or overindulgence in relation to motor vehicles or anything else. The actual expenditure of \$1 089 096 was due to a difficulty in obtaining deliveries of certain vehicles as required, with the resultant carry over into 1985-86. The provision of \$1,290 000 in the vote for 1985-86 is in accordance with Government policy. Strict guidelines are laid down by the Premier's Department as to the vehicles we are allowed to purchase, and a close check is kept on that. The actual reduction in expenditure was one of the problems that we had. However, there was a big reduction from 1983-84 to 1984-85 when the car pool was established. One would have to go back to the figures for 1983-84 to see where we made the savings in relation to the car pool.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Could you provide that step-by-step comparison?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We could, but one only has to go back through the Estimates of Payments for 1983-84 to see it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much cross-fire from the member for Elizabeth.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Are there any more aquatic centres being hidden in the department? In other words, are there any more projects that have blown out the same way as the Aquatic Centre blew out in terms of its cost of construction?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: To the best of my knowledge, no.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can I have an answer to the best of the staff's knowledge as well?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Mr Kent is not aware of any; and Mr Nichols is not aware of any.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So we are assured that there are no other projects which have blown out considerably above the original cost estimate put to the Public Works Standing Committee, and no cases where the Minister feels that there has been any lack of control over the supervision of those projects?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Davenport asked whether any other aquatic centres are in the pipelines, and he then asked whether there were any projects that are likely to blow out. Mr Chairman, wearing your other hat as Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee, you would be aware of the guidelines that were agreed and set up by my colleague, the Minister of Mines and Energy, when he was acting in my position. The agreement was that, if any project exceeded a certain percentage, plus inflation, it would be resubmitted back to the Public Works Standing Committee. The only project in this category was the Hillcrest Security Hospital. That project had already been before the Public Works Standing Committee prior to the guidelines being agreed to with the then Acting Chairman and the Acting Minister.

I put the argument to Cabinet that, in the spirit of the agreement that was reached when the Aquatic Centre was hot news, the Hillcrest Hospital should be referred back to the Public Works Standing Committee. Officers from my department and from the Department of Correctional Services appeared before the Public Works Standing Committee,

which was perfectly satisfied with the increase in cost as a result of changes in Department of Correctional Services requirements. That is the only one I do not think comes into the category that the honourable member is talking about.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the percentage increase plus the CPI increase that has to occur before a project goes back to the Public Works Standing Committee? In other words, what is the unwritten agreement or the gentleman's agreement that has been reached? What was the original cost estimate of the Northfield Security Hospital, and what is the current cost estimate?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The agreement reached between the Acting Minister (on behalf of the Government) and the Acting Chairman (on behalf of the Public Works Standing Committee) was to overcome perhaps another situation such as the Aquatic Centre. The legislation is almost ready to be placed before Cabinet, so it is of a confidential nature until it is agreed by Cabinet and then debated. A certain percentage will be over and above inflation which will then go back before the Public Works Standing Committee.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am not asking about the detail of the legislation. I am asking what about the agreement and the basis for referring the Northfield Security Hospital project to the PWSC. What percentage increase has to occur over and above the rate of inflation before a project is referred to the PWSC?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: To cover the interim period, until the Act was amended and brought before Parliament, the figure was 5 per cent.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the initial cost estimate for the Northfield Security Hospital and the anticipated final cost?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Hillcrest Security Hospital project was originally referred to the PWSC in September 1984 at an estimated cost of \$4 million, with an anticipated completion cost in March 1986 of \$4.5 million. Approval to proceed was subsequently granted in December 1984. The project was delayed during funding approval, and public tenders were called in 1985. Estimated cost of the project on completion in December 1986—bearing in mind that we are talking about it now as a result of the delay, which is the result of so many increases in costs—is \$5.866 million (an increase of \$1.366 million on the PWSC estimated cost).

A detailed analysis of the project has been undertaken by the South Australian Department of Housing and Construction, and the main reason for the increased costs has been identified and reported to the PWSC. An amended construction program due to delays in funding approval—completion will be in December 1986 in lieu of March 1986 as anticipated. Escalation in cost of original estimate—\$400 000; effect of the devaluation of the Australian dollar—this is the reason for the increase—on imported material—\$91 000; buoyant current market conditions not apparent at the time of the PWSC estimate—\$300 000; the complexity of construction techniques not foreseen during cost planning of the project—\$150 000; and increased cost to maintain security within the building shell to maintain the South Australian Health Commission's patient treatment objective—not foreseen at the PWSC estimate. The grand total is \$1.366 million. Further, the building cost per square metre of \$1 324 compares favourably with the average cost of \$1 433 of the self-contained secure institutional building built in Australia.

The building cost per inmate of \$131.660 comes within the upper level and is slightly lower than accommodation at Parklea. Because Hillcrest hospital is designed to accommodate only 30 inmates in a secure self-contained unit without a separate secure perimeter fence, the cost per inmate has to be in the upper level of comparable data. I

am sure the member for Davenport is well aware that, when one is talking about secure conditions in a prison hospital situation—as opposed to a general prison where most of the security can be in outer perimeter wires—the cost is always in the upper limit. That was adequately explained to the PWSC, because we have had no problems from that committee subsequently.

Mrs APPLEBY: Given that the occupational health of workers, students, teachers and particularly workers in office environments is very important, can the Minister say what is planned in relation to ergonomics? When stock is replaced for distribution to the client departments, how much importance and emphasis is placed on the occupational health and safety aspect of the furnishings? I refer to page 29.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Whilst I can really only talk about my own portfolio, perhaps I can talk about the situation facing electorate assistants who come under my control and also the people working in the Department of Housing and Construction and the South Australian Housing Trust. I have been concerned for some considerable time at the number of cases of RSI that have occurred, especially in the electorate offices, and I am coming to an area which has affected the honourable member very significantly. As a result of the problems in electorate offices, and in conjunction with the then Deputy Premier (Hon. Jack Wright), I undertook to have officers from my department look at the work places of electorate assistants to see whether there could be any way in which the working conditions of those assistants could be improved.

Since that decision was made, there have been studies made in certain electorate offices—I think one was even carried out in the member for Light's office. Officers of my department looked at the working conditions of the assistants. As a result of that, a report was prepared by the Director, and I have referred that report to the Deputy Premier. I understand that there will be a Cabinet submission dealing with ways and means in which we can in effect improve the lot of electorate secretaries. I know that the allocation of ergonomic furniture for electorate offices will be included in that submission.

I have requested that the Director of Housing and Construction prepare a similar report, not covering the whole department but selected work places; similarly, with the South Australian Housing Trust. It is my contention that for a small sum of money the Government can overcome many of the problems that result in RSI. That is the general background of my involvement in trying to alleviate the problems facing those people under my portfolio.

Mr Nichols: There is a drive right through the Public Service at present to attend to this problem which came to everybody's attention as a result of the virtual epidemic proportions of RSI. A most significant point in consideration of it is that it is not just a question of ergonomic design of furniture and equipment. One of the major problems has been the introduction of computerised systems to typing stations, such that typists do not have to stop every page and do something else as they change over the page and work different muscles.

Typists now see their work on a screen, press a button and something prints out separately. In fact, they type for a long time at a stretch unless they are very carefully supervised and properly advised on what they might be doing to themselves. Those people do not know that they have a problem until it is too late. The Public Service Board is ensuring that all departments are taking action to properly advise people who work in these types of jobs where repetition strain injury can occur and to advise supervisors not to put those people under the sort of stress that leads them to work in such a way that they finish up with this strain.

The question of ergonomic work stations is also being checked in the same way right through the Public Service. I speak from experience. It is happening in the Department of Environment and Planning, whence I came, which is not directly concerned with providing furniture. It is a big project and is taking a year or so to get through.

With regard to furniture (school or general office furniture bought on contract right through the Public Service) our department has some of the best ergonomic expertise in the State. I know, because we are being pestered to provide free consulting services to various people who want to get in on the market. Our general procedure is to outline basic requirements of height, weight, and so on, when new furniture is required in the Public Service, then to have the Department of Services and Supply call tenders. When those tenders come in, one has a number of various system made solutions to one's ergonomic specifications.

Those solutions are then assessed by an expert panel and a decision is made as to which furniture will be used for that specific task in the Public Service. That is the general approach throughout the Public Service to try to overcome what is a massive and costly problem.

Mrs APPLEBY: I concur with the comments about expertise in the department because my staff have had several occasions to ring and seek information. On one occasion a member of the department came to my office and discussed with my staff the correct work structures. This was quite effective and I compliment the department for it. In relation to property management services on page 27 of the yellow book, what proportion of accommodation in Government-owned properties is utilised by non-government agencies which provide services to the community? Are any Government agencies disadvantaged by such use? I am aware of many vital services that rely on the Government for accommodation. Self-help groups, such as DOME, would not be able to provide a central service without such assistance.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This is a rather vexed question that I as Minister have to face as so many voluntary agencies do worthwhile jobs within the community, and the honourable member mentioned DOME as being one of those. I know that the mature unemployed group is a subject dear to the heart of the honourable member and she has done much work for that group in her district and elsewhere. It falls on my portfolio to provide, with very limited resources, accommodation for those groups. We have the invidious job of deciding who merits free accommodation or accommodation at notional rental in buildings that we have in metropolitan Adelaide.

Those buildings are the Liverpool Building, the CEPAC building, Wakefield House, and the Torrens Building and we have a residence at Lockleys, the old troopers barracks at Port Augusta and the former police station at St Peters. If my personal secretary, Mr Barry Griffin, has a few more grey hairs it is as a result of the pressure from organisations seeking accommodation. Accommodated in the Liverpool Building are DOME, the Olympic Appeals Committee, the Working Women's Centre, Victims of Crime, the United Ethnic Commission and the Women's Resource Studies Group. The lessees pay for telephones and cleaning and the department pays for common area cleaning, rates and taxes, electricity and maintenance. DOME has a notional rental of \$12 000 per annum; the Olympic Appeals Committee, \$3 800; the Working Women's Centre, \$14 100; Victims of Crime, \$6 000; the United Ethnic Commission, \$5 100; and the Women's Resource Studies Group, \$21 000 per annum.

In the CEPAC building the Unemployed Workers Union pays for telephones, cleaning, liability insurance and excess water, and the department pays for rates and taxes, maintenance, electricity and gas, and that is \$1 300 per annum.

In Wakefield House, the Murray Valley League pays for nothing and the department pays for cleaning, electricity, rates and taxes, furniture and telephone: that is \$2 000 per annum. In the Torrens Building, the Australian Bicentennial Authority pays for telephone and we pay for cleaning, electricity, and rates and taxes: that is \$27 000 per annum. At Lockleys, the Prisoners Aid Association of South Australia pays rates and taxes, electricity, gas, maintenance and insurance. That is \$8 000 per annum.

The National Trust is a tenant of the old troopers barracks at Port Augusta and pays for telephone, cleaning, rates and taxes, electricity and internal maintenance. The department pays for external maintenance because it is a historical building. That is \$3 800 per annum. In the former police station at St Peters, the Crippled Childrens Association pays for telephone, cleaning, rates and taxes, electricity, internal maintenance and excess water, and because it is a historical building we pay for external maintenance. That is \$17 500 per annum. There is an all up cost of \$121 600.

I might add for the information of honourable members that that is just the tip of the iceberg. Almost weekly we receive requests from organisations for use of Government buildings. Members of the Committee might think that some of the charges that we levy are fairly excessive, but I can assure them that we charge the minimum possible. In effect, we could fill Wakefield House with agencies that are seeking rental accommodation in the city of Adelaide so that they can carry on their activities.

It is an ongoing problem: we understand that. When I look at Liverpool Building, as I am sure the member for Davenport did as Minister, I am not very proud to have it under my control: it is an eyesore. We have had to carry out extensive renovations within that building to cater for groups. There is a real need for accommodation for agencies within the city of Adelaide, and we are grappling with it. One unfortunate part of the exercise is that as soon as one gives one organisation access another 10 seek the same type of accommodation.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: How many are legitimate?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That is a very good interjection. We weigh up the pros and cons of what services they provide for the community. If one goes through the list that I read out, they would be the people who we consider have a legitimate claim to Government accommodation. The South Australian yacht syndicate fundraising team is now based in our Netley complex because the Government considered that that was promoting South Australia and that therefore we should give it accommodation. Whilst the accommodation is reasonable, the location is not ideal.

A time will come when this Government has to look at the whole of the accommodation needs of those agencies and either make another building available or be a little more ruthless and cut down on the number of people who are given that kind of accommodation. Many years back, accommodation was given free. We had to make a decision, as the previous Government did also, that there should be some form of charge. I as Minister support that concept. We try to help them out as much as we can with partitioning and furniture, but they have to pay at least some part of the rental.

Mr INGERSON: Concerning the involvement of the department in the Grand Prix, a report before the Public Works Committee last year stated that the first thing that the engineer should do is to look at the Estimates because they were set as if they were a bit thin in back-up knowledge. Has the Minister or the department found in investigation that significant items were omitted from that report, and were there significant overruns in any area when the consultant made his report to the department?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I ask Mr Power, Director, Professional Services, to answer that question.

Mr Power: The department's role in the Grand Prix is one of servicing the Grand Prix Authority in a contractual sense. The responsibility for the Grand Prix budget and the organisation of that very large project is with the Grand Prix Authority. Most of the contracting works have been called through the Department of Housing and Construction, so the principal to the contract is the Minister of Public Works, but in terms of the management and control of the Grand Prix we become a servicing agency.

Mr INGERSON: Are the servicing costs that the department is building up being recorded so that at some stage they can be written into the final cost of the Grand Prix?

Mr Power: The amount of involvement from the Department of Housing and Construction is minimal. Only one person has had a part-time involvement with that because our involvement is the calling, letting and processing of contracts, mainly.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It has all been charged against the Grand Prix, so the figures sought by the member for Bragg will be in the balance sheet. As Mr Power says, our involvement is minimal; in effect, we do the advertising and the letting of tenders.

Mr INGERSON: I was under the impression that the consulting engineer that was seconded to the committee was making a report to the department; is that so?

Mr Power: A report was made on what has been happening in an ongoing sense; it is more a recording of the events that have occurred on a monthly basis.

Mr INGERSON: Do they include overruns?

Mr Power: No, there is no financial involvement.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Could we have a list of all those contracts for the Grand Prix that have been called in the name of the Minister of Public Works and an approximate price for each of those contracts?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes, we can make that available.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The subject of computer facilities within the department was raised earlier, and the reply briefly touched on computer design. What is the department's intention? Will it purchase equipment and set up a full computer aided design facility within the department? Is it the intention to set up a coordinated facility to handle the whole of the Government? In other words, will it be a department-by-department approach, or will there be a common facility for the whole of the Government or, will the Government lease existing private facilities on a time share basis?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is at the investigation stage.

Mr Nichols: Many options are available for anyone wanting to get into computer aided design. Departments throughout Australia and major firms in this State are considering various solutions. At this stage we are considering those options because the price of computer aided design technology is reducing dramatically and one would not want to commit our organisation to a massive system—for example, purchasing hardware—which could cost several hundred thousand dollars unless we were absolutely sure that was the right solution. It may be that eventually we could share a system with the Commonwealth, because I have heard that it is going to set up a pilot scheme for Australia here in Adelaide. It may be that we could share a system with, for example, Woods Bagot, which have recently purchased a fairly extensive scheme. There are many options.

We can also get our staff involved in this technology—not in a major way, but in a sensible way. The Department of Further Education is well advanced in assessing computer aided design, as it can be introduced with less expense than getting into a major scheme. At this stage it is our intention

to work in conjunction with the Department of Further Education to buy some software at minimal cost over the next year or two to get people in our department working with these systems. The first thing we would want to do is to use computer aided design where it will be cost effective—in the office accommodation area. That is our intention at this stage, but we are still at the early stage of assessing just exactly what we are going to buy.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has any provision been made this year for personal computers to be installed in electorate offices?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: To my knowledge requests for word processors or personal computers have been made over the past two years. I understand that the Public Service Board has carried out an assessment of the needs concerning word processors as a result of a commitment given by the former Minister of Labour (Hon. J.D. Wright) at either the last Estimates Committee or the one before that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It was two years ago.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Members will be aware that my role in providing facilities for Parliament House depends to some extent on decisions made by the Deputy Premier in conjunction with Cabinet. A report has been prepared by the Public Service Board not only on word processors and personal computers but also in relation to additional furniture. The Director and I touched on the need for ergonomic furniture to overcome the problem of stress-related injury. I understand that that will be considered by Cabinet at a future date, and possibly some pilot study will be undertaken to assess the overall need for the whole of the electorate.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It has taken two years for what is a basic piece of equipment and we are hearing talk about pilot programs. It amazes me that, while much of the Public Service has personal computers or word processing equipment, electorate offices are still struggling, as in my case, with antiquated electric typewriters that regularly break down. We ring Housing and Construction and ask for the typewriter to be fixed and we get some abusive reply from the service company involved suggesting that it does not believe the machine has broken down. The company has not even been out to look.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That is not from our people.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: No, from the service company engaged. The point is that we have typewriters in the office that break down regularly. We try to get decent equipment. I understand that just about all the people in government have at least the Canon electronic typewriter.

Mr Groom interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is not—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mrs Appleby): Will the member for Davenport address himself to the Minister with his question and not to the rest of the Committee?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I suggest that the member for Hartley goes back to sleep, as he has done for most of the day. We do not seem to be getting any satisfaction in getting even basic workable equipment in electorate offices. The basic requirement is at least a Canon electronic typewriter. Will the Minister give an undertaking that at least we get that equipment quickly, and will he take to Cabinet a request that we have word processors installed in each electorate office within six months?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member is aware that it is not a matter that falls within my responsibility. I made the same comment to the member for Eyre last year when he asked about the provision of word processors to electorate offices. I indicated then that it was in the hands of the Deputy Premier.

I am sure that the Deputy Premier will make a recommendation when the evidence is before him that there is a

need for word processors. I speak now as an individual member of Parliament, not a Minister of the Crown: the public could see electorate offices filled with all labour saving devices—and I fully accept that there are needs in busy electorate offices where a word processor or a personal computer would be invaluable. I hope that when the member for Davenport said 'Government offices', he was talking about Government offices and not Government electorate offices, because I have seen a report which states that there is no difference between the supplies which go into Government electorate offices and those which go into Opposition electorate offices. There is no favouritism shown in any way. In fact, if one looks at the electorate offices in this State, one sees that the two members who have the worst electorate offices are the member for Victoria and me, and the member for Elizabeth will vouch for the kind of office that I have.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I referred to Government departments.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes, but it could have been construed by people reading *Hansard*—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I point out that Govt members of Parliament got special benefits as far as additional staff is concerned. We all know that there are about five Government members of Parliament who got additional help in their electorate offices which Opposition members did not get, did they?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Does the Minister wish to respond to that?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Could the Minister bring me up to date with one of the State's great white elephants, the Gladstone Army depot? Some time ago I was aware of the decision of the previous Government to purchase that property, and the various projects which it intended to build there subsequently were not proceeded with. I understand that the property was subsequently leased to an explosives development company for various purposes. Can the Minister bring me up to date on the current status of that property? Who is the current lessee; what activities are ongoing there; does the Government intend to retain ownership of that property in the long term; does the return on the lease justify the expenditure and purchase costs of the property; and what generally are the long-term plans of the Government with respect to the property?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I understand that it is still leased to the explosives company. That company is not paying its rent and I understand that my department is looking at that aspect. When the member for Elizabeth mentioned the white elephant that still remains, for a minute I thought that there could not be any white elephants under my portfolio, but I suddenly remembered that this was the grandiose plan under the previous Administration to convert that old depot into a prison. I do not know whether it was the brainchild of the member for Davenport, but I must admit that it looked very good on paper. I read through the docket, which was quite thick, and discovered that it was a place where they were going to put dangerous prisoners.

When someone inspected it they found that it was full of unexploded shells and it was decided that that was not the place to put dangerous prisoners. In effect, we are stuck with it. I suppose that the member for Elizabeth's description of its being a white elephant is true. I would say it is a bungle that we inherited from the previous Government and presently we are trying to extricate ourselves from it.

Mr M.J. EVANS: I have a supplementary question. Will the Minister complete the answer and let me know the current financial status of that lease and where he is at in terms of leasing it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will take that on notice.

Mr GROOM: During my time as an industrial advocate, over many years I was in a position to observe that the use of private contractors for so-called 'efficiency' amounted to nothing more than a reduction in the take home pay of the work force or the worsening of their industrial conditions. That would be, of course, the consequence of privatisation.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mrs Appleby): Order! Would the member for Hartley direct his question to the Minister.

The Hon. D.C. Brown interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the member for Davenport desist from interjecting.

Mr GROOM: I know that it is painful to members opposite to have to listen to these types of questions that expose their policies. In relation to page 4 of the yellow book dealing with the Work Force Planning Review, will the Minister state the object of substantial increases in efficiency in the work force? Will he indicate whether there has been any increase in the level of industrial disputes in the work force as a result of changes in the organisation of working procedures? In other words, what are the efficiencies and the level of industrial disputations?

An honourable member: A dorothy dixer!

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is not a dorothy dixer at all. All honourable members will be aware of the many speeches that the member for Hartley has made in the House about the tragedy that the present Opposition is pursuing in following the line of privatisation. The member for Hartley should be congratulated on the many speeches he has made outlining the problem. I hope that the member for Hartley—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister has the floor to respond to the question. Will the member for Bragg desist from interfering.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I hope that the member for Hartley is as successful in convincing the Opposition of the dangers of privatisation as I have been with the Leader of the Opposition in getting him to reverse his original stance on deregulation of home loan interest rates. I wish the member for Hartley well in his endeavours, and I am sure that, with his powers of oratory and debate, he will eventually convince the Opposition that privatisation will not benefit the people of South Australia.

Concerning the industrial record, when this Government came to office, within my own department there was a wide range of industrial disputes. Because of the previous Administration's attitude, in line with its lowering of morale in the old PBD, one could accuse the previous Liberal Government of encouraging industrial disputes. My predecessor inherited something like 37 industrial disputes in the blue collar work force. During this Government's term I am happy to say that the industrial scene in the department has been relatively quiet in terms of any significant industrial disputes. There is a matter currently before the Industrial Commission but there has been agreement by all parties that is subject to the ratification of the commission.

The Hon. D.C. Brown interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, it deals with a mix of skills involving the repair and maintenance of airconditioners. It has been a significant breakthrough. When the commission ratifies the decision, the honourable member will be most envious that he could not resolve that matter in his three years as Minister. Not one dispute has been registered in the Industrial Commission for the trade workforce during this Government's term of office. That is a good indication that morale has increased and of this Government's record in industrial relations.

On occasions there has been some form of industrial unrest and at times short-term work bans have been applied, but because of the Government's policy, whereby as the Minister of the day I have immediately talked to all parties concerned, I am happy to say that not one of those disputes has developed into a major confrontation. I believe that the sound lines of communication and the processes that were originally set in train by my predecessor and refined and continued by me as Minister of Housing and Construction have proved yet again that the State Government has one of the soundest industrial relations policies, which is the envy of other State Governments.

Mr GROOM: The yellow book (page 18) states that \$1 million will be provided for 'Property acquisition services, primary schools' this financial year. Will the Minister, in the most detailed manner possible, advise what acquisitions will be included in this program?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I appreciate the concern of the member for Hartley in this regard. There is not one member of Parliament who at some time has not received representations from primary schools in his or her district. When one is dealing with children in their formative years, one tends to put pressure on the Minister of Education to ensure that work is carried out. I appreciate the honourable member's concern. The proposed allocation represents a considerable increase over the amount voted last year. I am happy to say that considerable capital works programs have been forecast for 1985-86, and that involves land for the Aberfoyle Park Hub Primary School.

Perhaps I could put in a plug for my department. The Aberfoyle school complex won the department a major award from the Civic Trust. I well recall that the member for Davenport, in one of his fortnightly grabs for publicity, condemned the Department of Housing and Construction, saying that we produce unsightly buildings. I put out a rather strong press statement condemning the honourable member for making such an outrageous statement, because the night before he made that statement the Civic Trust presented that award to one of our architects. If I had known that the member for Hartley would ask this question, I would have brought that press release with me and read it out so that it was recorded in *Hansard*.

I started off the press statement by saying that the member for Davenport should take his foot out of his mouth, or something like that, but it was too strong for the *Advertiser*. The member for Davenport should realise that within my department are some of the finest architects in South Australia, producing some very good designs. At the time he was condemning my department they came out with a Civic Trust award.

At Parafield Gardens North West Primary School we will spend \$352 298; Mannum Primary School, to show that we do not pork barrel only in the city areas, \$150 000; Golden Grove Primary School, \$280 000; Noarlunga Downs Primary School, \$160 000; Bolivar Primary School, \$200,000; and smaller purchases for LeFevre Peninsula Primary School, Port Adelaide High School and Primary School and Port Augusta School.

We are well aware that the previous Government let the capital works program for schools completely run down so as to load its recurrent program, but this Government has reversed the process. If one looks at the line estimates on the capital side and the yellow book, one will see example after example of where we are attempting to reverse the disastrous years of 1979 to 1982 for the benefit of the people of South Australia.

Mr GROOM: In each of those primary schools named, is the Minister able to outline further details? I am sure that they would be of interest to the members concerned.

The purpose of the Committee is to get as much information as is possible.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The kinds of questions that the member for Hartley is asking are really what the line estimates are all about. We talk about capital and look at our own electorates or at an area of special interest, but when the member for Hartley asks questions such as this one he seems to be treated with some form of hysteria from the other side. Unfortunately, I do not have the details, but I will take them on notice and will get them to the member for Hartley well before 18 October.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister for acknowledging this evening that the Government pork barrels in country areas as well as in city areas, which is what he said.

Mr Groom interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: He said, 'Just to show that we do not pork barrel only in the city or metropolitan areas, we have also done it at Mannum.' One can infer from that—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As well as making mistakes about my architects, the honourable member cannot understand what I am talking about.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions?:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes, Mr Chairman; I am waiting for your protection. I would like to know when that most unfortunate school, the Linden Park Primary School, is to get some funds for redevelopment. It has tried and tried. The Minister knows the terrible state of the temporary buildings at the school. The people there have the clear impression that because they happen to be in a Liberal electorate they are not being pork barrelled. We wonder whether there is some genuine way of bringing that school up the list to at least meet some of its needs by putting in some solid construction. In particular, they would like to see an activity hall put into the school urgently. Can that be done in the next 12 months and, if not, why not?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I resent the accusation that any work that is to be done at the Linden Park Primary School is being held up because it is in a Liberal area. The member for Davenport knows full well that the Education Department, in advising my department as to whether or not a particular school should be upgraded, does not take into account the electorate in which a school is situated. As an example I refer to the time when you, Mr Chairman, brought a delegation to me regarding the situation at the Port Adelaide Primary School. The students of that school have been taught in disgusting conditions for many years. If we are talking about spending money in areas where we could gain some advantage, money should have been spent in the member for Price's electorate. Whilst Port Adelaide Primary School is part of an upgrading process, it does not meet the requirements of the teaching staff or the parents.

I am also aware of the Linden Park situation. In fact, I recall the member for Davenport's deputation coming to see me and outlining the requirements. I submitted all the information to the department and asked my officers to give me a report, which was sent to the Minister of Education. Despite the Minister of Education's sympathetic understanding of the problems of the Linden Park Primary School, it is not on this year's list. That has nothing to do with the fact that the Linden Park Primary School happens to be in the member for Davenport's district. The Director was a pupil at that school, so, if one was going to do a bit of pork barrelling, he would apply a bit of pressure. I can assure the Committee that the needs of the Linden Park Primary School have been taken into account by the Education Department, based on the report by my officers.

I reiterate statements that have been made many times in the House of Assembly: the Liberal Party stands up time

and again and tells us that we are employing too many public servants, we are spending too much money, we are raising taxes too often, and that we are charging the people of this State far too much. In the next breath they ask about what can be done for various schools. They cannot have it both ways. If we are going to bring the schools of South Australia up to an acceptable standard, we must be prepared to pay the cost. If the Liberal Opposition is not prepared to accept that criteria, then they will have to accept the fact that schools that need upgrading in Liberal districts will have to be assessed on a needs basis and upgraded whenever money is available. I can assure the honourable member that we have not discriminated against Linden Park Primary School simply because he is the local member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister make available the report that his department prepared and sent across to the Minister of Education? If money is not to be made available for the Linden Park Primary School this year, when will it be made available for that school, on present projections?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In answer to the first question, I do not think it is reasonable that the member for Davenport should see an in-house document.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Why not?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Am I allowed to answer that interjection, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: I have said before that interjections are out of order and answering interjections is also out of order.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The in-house document will not be made available to the member for Davenport. As in the past and now, if any documents can be made available, I will freely make them available but I do not ever recall when I was a member of the Opposition that we got any

information given to us. The Government has been more than willing to be an open Government and to have a free flow of information, but that kind of information will not be made available to the member for Davenport.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In which year will they get the money on the present schedule?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is not on the three year list.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Not even for stage 1—the resource centre or activity hall?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will take the question on notice and give the member a more detailed reply.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Department of Housing and Construction, \$238 043 000—Examination declared completed.

Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works, Miscellaneous, \$37 330 000—Examination declared completed.

The CHAIRMAN: I lay before the Committee a draft report for presentation to the House.

Mrs APPLEBY: I move:

That the draft report be the report of the Committee.

Motion carried.

At 9.58 p.m. the Committee concluded.