

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, October 13, 1977

The **SPEAKER (Hon. G. R. Langley)** took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: GOVERNMENT TENDERS

The **Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer)**: I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN**: On the media yesterday the following report occurred in relation to statements made by the member for Davenport:

Q. During your speech, you said you knew of two companies who have been told they should adopt the Government's industrial democracy policy, and that if they do they'll receive consideration for Government tenders on a more favourable basis—will you name the companies?

A. No I can't name the companies . . . The allegations came from Government sources.

Q. Do you think it is a widespread practice?

A. It is a disgusting practice! . . . It shouldn't exist at all. No Government should go along and offer more favourable terms for someone who adopts their policies. If they've got any guts whatsoever, they'll introduce legislation, and do it openly through Parliament, not through the back door! . . .

The most disturbing thing is that they—the Government—

are prepared to give Government contracts on a more favourable basis, apparently therefore not necessarily to the lowest tender.

The allegation by the honourable member surprised me (surprised me as to the facts: it does not surprise me that the honourable member is prepared to make any allegation without basis whatever, because that has been his practice). Following the allegation and publicity given to it, I asked the Chairman of the Public Service Board to inquire into the matter. His report was that inquiries had been made by him of the following: the Director-General of Services and Supply, who is the Chairman of the Supply and Tender Board; the Director-General of Economic Development; the Associate Directors of the Public Buildings Department; the Director of Engineering Operations in the Engineering and Water Supply Department; the Deputy Commissioner of Highways; the Deputy Auditor-General in the Auditor-General's Department; and the Executive Officer in the Unit for Industrial Democracy—all the officers whose departments could conceivably have been affected in any way by the allegation made by the honourable member. The net result of these investigations is that no impropriety of the kind alleged by the honourable member has occurred. In fact, the Director-General, Department of Services and Supply, who is the Chairman of the Supply and Tender Board, has categorically stated:

I understand that certain allegations have been made to the effect that certain firms have been advised that they will receive favoured treatment with respect to the awarding of Government tenders if they are prepared to adopt industrial democracy practices within their organisations. On behalf of the Supply and Tender Board, I can state quite categorically that such a matter is not taken into account when the awarding of tenders is considered. The board is concerned with matters of quality, price and delivery. There is, of course, a preference extended to South Australian firms as against their interstate or oversea competitors.

The honourable member's allegation is that firms who adopt the Government's industrial democracy policy receive more favoured consideration for Government tenders. In general principle, Government departments are not required to automatically accept the lowest or any tender, and there are firmly established practices in relation to the calling and acceptance of Government tenders and contracts. These practices are set down in the audit regulations and in general require that where the lowest tender is not accepted good and cogent reasons must be made to the approving authority before acceptance can be recommended.

These reasons could include such matters as the capacity of the firm concerned to carry out the work, technical reasons in relation to the product or service to be provided, etc., but do not include the need for the company to be committed to industrial democracy. All recommendations to the approving authority for large tenders and contracts are made via the Auditor-General for inspection and certification that proper procedures have been adhered to. In these circumstances I can categorically state that it is not Government policy to give preference to firms who adopt the Government industrial democracy policy. Consequently the acceptance of tenders in the manner alleged by the member for Davenport is not possible.

I think it is quite disgraceful that a member of this House should make this wild and unsupported allegation concerning the proper procedures of Government and the letting of tenders in this State. I believe it is vital for the well-being of this House that the honourable member take the earliest opportunity to withdraw publicly and to apologise for his allegation.

QUESTIONS

HOSPITAL LOSSES

Mr. TONKIN: Will the Premier say what was the source, nature and exact detail of the evidence given to him, which caused him in the first instance to call on the Auditor-General to conduct an inquiry and report upon thefts, losses, and wastage alleged to be occurring at public hospitals and institutions, including Northfield? Will he now table that material in this House and, if not, why not?

The report prepared by Mr. Epps, a senior auditor in the Auditor-General's Department, was apparently the result of a request from the Premier, based on information he had received. In the *Advertiser* of September 6, 1977, he stated that he had initiated the inquiry, and he again raised the matter at a press conference yesterday. The question then arises: on what evidence did he take that action, and from what source did it come? The matter is patently far more serious than the Premier would have had everybody believe when it surfaced during the election campaign, and it certainly is not a dead issue as he claims.

The **Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN**: The Leader is a glutton for punishment. He did very badly with this issue during the election campaign, and he will do even worse now. The source of my information was an employee of the Hospitals Department who provided the information to me that he believed there was pilfering at that hospital and that it ought to be investigated. He asked, however, that I take the most stringent precautions to see that his identity was kept secret and not disclosed.

Mr. Tonkin: Will you table the document and—

The **Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN**: Of course I cannot, as the

document, in fact, would give evidence as to who he was, because of the information it contains. I took care to pass all relevant material on to the Auditor-General's Department and asked that an investigation be made.

Mr. Tonkin: Didn't you think that was relevant?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have given the Leader the answer, and I do not know what he is carrying on about.

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

Mr. BANNON: Could the Attorney-General explain the purpose of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act and whether it provides benefits for victims of criminal offences? As a member of the Government, I have been disturbed by newspaper headlines this week suggesting that in some way the victims of criminal offences can sue the Government. In the case in question, the merits of which I am not concerned to canvass, newspaper reports gave the impression that in fact there is some Government involvement in what I would have thought was purely a police matter.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I think that the particular matter is known to members, and I do not want to go into the details of it, either, because not only has it been aired in the press sufficiently this week, but also it has been the culmination of events of a long and rather tragic situation for the family concerned.

Mr. Chapman: Is it *sub judice*?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: No. I know that the honourable member is being facetious, but there are no matters before the court at present involving this particular case.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: All the paper said was—

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the Attorney-General will not answer interjections.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Most definitely not, interjections being out of order. The situation is that the newspaper report that I saw did not indicate that a claim was before the court, and my understanding of the situation is that there is no claim before the court. I think it important that the public should be well aware of the provisions of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, which, as members would know, does not grant to members of the public who suffer injuries as a result of crimes the right to sue the Government directly as a result of suffering from that crime. What it does provide them is the opportunity, first, to claim against the perpetrator of the crime sums up to \$2 000 a victim, and secondly, where the perpetrator cannot be traced or found, it then, in effect, subrogates the Government into the position of the perpetrator, if he could have been found, and permits the victim to sue in the court to have a claim for compensation and the amount of compensation determined by the court. Then the Government meets out of general revenue the amount of that claim.

That is only in instances where the perpetrators of the crime or crimes concerned cannot be traced, and that has been the situation in the case the honourable member has instanced. In that case, if the family concerned decides to proceed, it will make a case, have compensation assessed and the amount of compensation will be paid out of general revenue. I emphasise that in no way does this reflect on the Government; the method merely ensures that society at large pays some compensation to people who suffer injury as the result of crimes. Whilst I have this opportunity, I point out that, at the recent election, one of the Labor Government's promises was that we would examine the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act,

introduce wide-ranging amendments to it to simplify the procedure, and substantially increase the amount that may be claimed under the Act. At the earliest possible time, I will be introducing legislation to provide for that.

HOSPITAL REPORT

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: My question is to the Premier, and is supplementary to that asked by the Leader. Has a formal reply to the letter referred to on page 138 of the 1976 Auditor-General's Report, under the heading "Food Facts", been sent from the Hospitals Department or the Government to the Auditor-General and, if it has, when and in what form? If it has not been sent, why not? If it has been sent, will the Premier table it? The Auditor-general called for a report, and I am simply asking whether the Government or the Hospitals Department has sent it and, if it has, will the Premier table it?

The item in the Auditor-General's Report reads:

An investigation was made into the procedures and controls over foodstuffs with particular reference to the Northfield Wards. The examination disclosed that internal control was weak or non-existent, budgeting poor, reporting ineffective and the records inadequate. A reply has not been received to the report.

The detailed report, prepared by Mr. Epps, is of about 30 pages, and discloses gross deficiencies in budgeting and control, and food losses of some \$80 000 a year from the Northfield Wards. It was sent to the Hospitals Department in the first half of 1976, and there is no indication in the 1977 report that any detailed reply has been given. There, of course, I am referring to the report requested by the Auditor-General (Mr. Epps is an officer of that department) of the Government or the Hospitals Department. In view of the grave nature of the facts contained in that report, and the implications which it has on Government accounting generally, will the Premier now make the Government's reply available to the House, or, if none has been given, explain why the Auditor-General's request for a report has been ignored?

The SPEAKER: Before the Premier replies, let me say that only this week I asked members to give their question and ask leave of the House. It has become a growing trend with members that, towards the end of the explanation, they are asking the same question again. I hope honourable members will not follow this course.

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

ASIAN LANGUAGES

Mr. GROOM: Will the Minister of Education say what is the present position concerning future expansion of the teaching of Asian languages in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in South Australia?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: The honourable member was good enough to indicate to me some time ago his interest in this matter, and I have been able to get some information about the current position in relation to the teaching of Asian languages in our schools. Regarding Indonesian and Malay, 18 primary schools are involved with 1 299 students. An additional 700 are having an exposure to Indonesian and Malay culture but not to the language. Regarding secondary schools, 18 schools are involved with 851 students. In Japanese there is as yet no course in the primary schools. There are 10 secondary schools with 904 students involved, and for Chinese there is one secondary school with 79 students. So far as

Indonesian and Malay are concerned, a new course with ancillary material has just been completed by a seconded teacher acting as a course writer and assisted by a committee. This new course will be used in schools next year and will also be available for use in other States. The key to this matter, of course, is the training and the availability of teachers. Regarding primary schools, teachers can study Indonesian and Malay for up to three years at the Salisbury or Adelaide college of advanced education. In relation to secondary schools, Singapore exchange Chinese teachers are employed for one year, and teachers of Japanese are brought from Japan for two-year periods.

However, there is a problem here that is worth airing. Because the universities are getting from the Commonwealth, from the Tertiary Commission, indexation only for recurrent expenditure, because this is a global picture, and because of the necessity for the newer universities, particularly in Victoria, that are in a growth phase to get something better than indexation, Adelaide University in particular has suffered a decline in its funding situation. This has put a question mark over the future of Chinese and Japanese as major subjects. I understand the present stance of the Vice-Chancellor is that if funds are available it will be possible to continue with Japanese III and Chinese III, but there is in fact no guarantee that this position will obtain. This creates some problems for the continued expansion of these courses in our schools.

If young people are unable to proceed in these courses to a degree level, they and their parents will probably think twice about opting for secondary level courses. This is one problem brought about by what in effect is a cut-back in Commonwealth support through the Tertiary Commission for the universities. This is a concern not only to the South Australian Education Department but also to some private schools involved in this exciting programme, and one which I think so important for a country that is increasingly looking to its geographical part of the world for the extension of trade and cultural contacts. I hope that additional assistance will be given to the universities so that these programmes can continue.

EPPS REPORT

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Will the Premier now table the full Epps report referred to in the 1976 Auditor-General's Report and, if not, why not? We do not wish to have any procrastination on this issue, but simply a "Yes" or "No" reply.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not quite certain whether it would be proper for me under Standing Orders to do so, but I will examine the matter.

NET FISHING

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Fisheries whether it is intended to increase the number of areas along our metropolitan coastline in which netting for fish is now prohibited? Most members would know that, since there was an extension of areas in which netting was prohibited along the metropolitan coastline, there seems to have been a significant increase in the fish caught by people fishing from jetties. Because of recent reports of the intrusion into fishing activities by so many amateurs, it may well be that consideration of increasing the areas in which netting is prohibited may be of use to all members of the community interested in fishing.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will obtain a report from my colleague for the honourable member.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr. BLACKER: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture whether the Government will extend the 50 per cent subsidy scheme to include the cartage of water in drought-stricken areas in a way similar to that in which the 50 per cent subsidy is paid in relation to freight on fodder and the stock agistment programmes? No doubt members would be aware that large areas of South Australia are in the grip of a serious drought, and in many cases it is the third drought in succeeding years. As a result of this series of dry years, farm water storages are at an all-time low. Many farmers have been carting water for stock use for more than 18 months. These farmers are not able to enjoy the privilege of a reticulated water supply and are unable to absorb the mounting costs involved in carting water. The situation that these farmers find themselves in is a result of a State-wide disaster and therefore outside the ability of individual farmers to cope with. If the Government could extend the 50 per cent subsidy scheme to include water cartage costs, some relief could be given to those in a less fortunate position.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to ask my colleague for an early report.

APPRENTICE TRAINING

Mr. SLATER: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry any details of the proposed pilot scheme aimed at the Government's training of an extra number of apprentices beyond the number needed for one year, and seeking employers willing to employ them for the remainder of their training period? Can the Minister say whether final details of the plan have been decided and, if they have, when the plan will operate?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Details of the pilot scheme have not yet been finalised, but the matter will go to Cabinet on Monday. I believe that my recommendations should not be revealed at this stage until Cabinet examines the matter. If it accepts my recommendations, the scheme will start at the beginning of next year. I give an assurance to the honourable member that I will bring down a full report for him next week.

HOSPITAL INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. ALLISON: Can the Premier say whether the Government has extended investigations, similar to that conducted by Mr. Epps at Northfield, into the operations of other hospitals and institutions and, if it has, what have been the results and, if it has not, why not?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Following the events at Northfield, arrangements were made for committees to work between various institutions in the Hospitals Department and the Auditor-General's Department to ensure proper accounting procedures in the various institutions. There was only one institution in which that arrangement was held up, that being Northfield, for the reason given in the Auditor-General's Report that it was being investigated by the Public Accounts Committee.

CONSTRUCTION DAMAGE

Mr. DRURY: What assurance can the Minister of Works give to residents who live close to Engineering and Water Supply Department construction sites regarding minimal noise and replacement of damaged native flora?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: If the honourable member could give me more specific information on the question I should be pleased to have any instance investigated because I would expect the department, as I would expect any private contractor employed by the department, to do everything possible to minimise deleterious effects on people who live near any construction site. Certainly, I would hope that those involved would be conscious of the need to replace any native flora that may have been damaged in the course of construction.

EPPS REPORT

Mr. RUSSACK: Can the Premier say why, during an interview with Mr. Mike McEwen of 5DN, on Friday, September 9, 1977, he denied that he had seen the report prepared by Mr. Epps on the Northfield Wards and, later in the same interview, clearly indicated that he had "been through Mr. Epps's report"?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member is evidently not aware that there are two Epps reports.

ANGAS INLET

Mr. OLSON: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Fisheries to investigate the practice of fishermen netting in Angas Inlet on the North Arm? I have received complaints from constituents, who are members of a small boat club, that unauthorised netting in the inlet is causing the fouling of propellers, with considerable inconvenience and damage being done to the craft, when leaving and returning to moorings in the basin. It seems that netting is conducted during darkness and usually at high or spring tides.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall ask my colleague to investigate the matter and let the honourable member know the outcome of that investigation as soon as possible.

EPPS REPORT

Mr. WOTTON: Can the Premier say why, during the interview referred to in a previous question, he denied that the Epps report (and I believe that it is the report that has been referred to) established that about \$80 000 a year was involved in food losses through theft, excess wastage and lack of quality control at Northfield Hospital? When asked whether Mr. Epps's report established that a sum of \$80 000 a year was involved, the Premier replied, "No, it didn't." I therefore ask the Premier how he can possibly continue to deny that he is covering up.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Epps report does not establish that. Clearly, what happened in relation to the auditor's investigation was that certain figures, which were then contrasted, were extrapolated to give a certain result. There is not supporting evidence to show that that result is in fact what occurred, and there was no information indeed in the report, as the Commissioner of Police has publicly reported, on which further investigations of a police nature could be based. The auditors have endeavoured to establish some sort of figure around losses in the department from various bases simply by taking

contrasting figures and doing a multiplication sum. If the honourable member bothers to take advice from anyone in the law who has been involved in fraud and deficiency cases, he will know that that evidence is quite insufficient to establish the facts the honourable member alleges. I have had such experience myself.

ST. AGNES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Education obtain a report on the progress that has been made in the erection of a child and parent centre at the St. Agnes Primary School site, when it is considered that it will be ready for occupation, and any other relevant information?

The Hon. D. J. HOPGOOD: Yes.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Mr. RODDA: Why did the Premier yesterday, having called a press conference on the Auditor-General's Report, then refuse to answer questions put to him by journalists and terminate the interview prematurely?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I did not refuse to answer questions by journalists at all. I refused to answer some questions by a particular journalist that did not relate to this year's Auditor-General's Report at all.

Mr. Dean Brown: It related to the reason for the press conference.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Davenport is out of order.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: On the contrary, it did not relate to the reason for the press conference, nor in fact did that reporter report the reason for the press conference. The reason I refused to have anything further to do with that press correspondent and his questions is well known to his station. I do not intend to comment on this matter further until I have completed my discussions with the manager of his station, who has asked to see me before I make any further public statement on the matter.

YOUTH WORK UNIT

Mr. ABBOTT: Can the Minister of Labour and Industry say whether the youth work unit, which is administered by his department, has been successful in establishing link courses in secondary schools and colleges? I, like all Government members, am extremely concerned about the future employment opportunities for school leavers and the youth of our country. In view of recent statements by the Prime Minister in which he refused even to consider any special schemes to relieve the unacceptable level of unemployment in Australia today, I would be interested to know how successfully the youth work unit is operating within the Labour and Industry Department.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The honourable member was good enough to tell me yesterday he was going to ask this question.

Mr. Gunn: Dear Dorothy.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: It is not a Dorothy Dixier, actually.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister is not required to answer interjections.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I realise they are out of order. I will not answer that gentleman again. I am pleased that the honourable member has asked this question. There is no doubt that young men and women leaving school need practical assistance in making the adjustments

necessary to their new situation as members of the work force. The knockers and the doubting Thomases seem to have no trouble getting media coverage for their views, but very little is said about the practical measures that have been taken in recognition of this problem. A major function of the youth work unit is to assist in the co-ordination of all our educational resources when dealing with problems young men and women face on joining the work force. One practical measure is to establish link courses where schools and technical colleges can combine to present courses that introduce students to situations they are likely to encounter in their working lives, and to develop understanding of, and attitudes to, their new situation.

The extent of the activity can be appreciated from the fact that last month the funds made available through the youth work unit were being used to support more than 80 link courses involving 19 colleges and over 40 secondary schools, as well as public and private employers. These courses are directed at a wide range of situations, for young people who are thinking of industrial employment, apprenticeships or further technical studies. Some are directed to the specific problems of handicapped job-seekers. The list is too long to give all the details here. I have, however, brought down a comprehensive, detailed list, and any member who would like to look at it to study the information it contains may do so.

A recent report of a working group has strongly advised the concept of link courses as a desirable form of pre-vocational training and experience for our young men and women. The operation of the courses I have mentioned has stimulated further activities which will be valuable in the coming months, when youth unemployment will be quite clearly the most critical issue facing the nation. These courses are offered to establish employable skills among our young people, but also with the social objects of assisting them to gain confidence and self-respect and to make the best use of themselves and their time. These link courses, the other activities of the youth work unit, our programme of pre-apprenticeship training and the State unemployment relief scheme are all aspects, and by no means the only ones, of a comprehensive programme of this Government directed at the problems of youth unemployment.

MAGISTRATES' LETTER

Mrs. ADAMSON: Why has the Premier not tabled the letter recently written by Magistrates regarding the affair of Mr. D. F. Wilson, S.S.M., what was the substance of the letter, and will he now table it in this House? I understand that magistrates are disturbed at the difficulties which arise as a result of their being members of the Public Service, and their transfer from the Attorney-General's Department to the Premier's Department was a partial response to that problem. It is generally felt that magistrates should be outside the Public Service and that the affair between Mr. D. F. Wilson, S.S.M., and the Attorney-General has highlighted that need.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know why the honourable member should question me about why I have not tabled a letter; there is no call for me to table it. It was not asked to be tabled or published by the magistrates who wrote to me, and it is not my normal practice to table all correspondence which comes to my desk. I do not know whether the Leader intends to publish all his correspondence by tabling it in the House.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know what the point of the question is.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Will you table it?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, I will not, because it is a matter of ongoing negotiations between me and the magistrates, who are members of my department. I have invited the writer of the letter to have discussions with me and, once that has happened, if he comes to have a discussion with me, I may have something further to tell the House.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Mr. KENEALLY: Will the Minister of Works investigate the possibility of having a Government office complex constructed at Port Pirie to house the various Government departments in that city? Since Port Pirie has become a part of the new Stuart District I have visited all Government departments there. It is quite obvious that in some at least there is a shortage of office accommodation. While I appreciate that the Minister and his department are taking action to overcome this shortfall in accommodation, I would appreciate it if he could look at providing the complex I have mentioned.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to look at the honourable member's proposal and provide him with a report in due course.

ELECTRICITY TRUST

Mr. VENNING: My question is directed to the Premier, who has been doing a fair bit of blocking this afternoon.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Rocky River is out of order.

MR. VENNING: With your knowledge of the game, Mr. Speaker, I thought you would have given him out l.b.w.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not part of the question. I ask the honourable member to ask his question.

Mr. VENNING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When will the Premier index or take other measures to rectify the injustices of the legislation that require the Electricity Trust to pay to the State Treasury 5 per cent of the gross sales of electricity used in South Australia? Back in 1971, when the Premier introduced legislation requiring the trust to pay a percentage of its gross sales into the Treasury, it was 3 per cent, and the sum paid that year was \$450 000. In commenting on the legislation the Premier said that, because the trust did not pay income tax, he considered it necessary that it should pay money into the Treasury. I draw the Premier's attention to the latest Auditor-General's Report, which indicates that the sum paid by the trust into the Treasury was about \$6 900 000, which, when added to the trust's profit for this year of \$524 000, totals about \$7 480 000. If that sum were assessed by the Taxation Department, \$3 000 000 would be payable in taxation. Will the Premier consider indexing the situation?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member asked that at the beginning of his question.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, I do not intend to do that. The position of the State Treasury has been amply outlined to the honourable member in the Budget papers and, if he proposes to reduce the amounts available to the Treasury, perhaps he will tell me which of the services for which he has sought assistance in his district he would discontinue.

WHYALLA COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr. MAX BROWN: Can the Minister of Community Welfare tell the House whether a time table exists for the construction of the Whyalla Community Welfare Centre? Certain people in the city of Whyalla are engaging in some kind of scare tactic, saying that the State Government intends to move departments out of Whyalla. I understand that the planning stage of this centre has been under way for some time. I want to know whether the construction of the centre is about to take place, when it will be completed, and when it is likely to be in use.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I can indicate a time table, and I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that approval has just been given for the expenditure of \$750 000 to enable the project to proceed in the current financial year. Tenders for the construction work will be called shortly. The Whyalla centre will form part of the proposed community complex and will be constructed on a site to the south-west of the child care centre which has already been completed and direct knowledge of which the honourable member will have. The community welfare centre will be important not only from the point of view of providing improved facilities for the delivery of welfare services. In line with the practice at other centres, my department will give every encouragement to the use of the facilities by community and voluntary groups who have need of a venue for meetings or other activities. Provided that the present time table is adhered to, the centre should be ready for occupation by October next year.

WATER SUPPLIES

Dr. EASTICK: Will the Minister of Works inform the House whether the availability of wholesome water from the Murray River system will be adequate in the forthcoming summer to maintain the supply of water to all persons whom the department is committed to supply? We are all aware of the continuing drought conditions. The Budget mentions the large sum of money which will be required for the purpose of pumping and in effect I am seeking information from the Minister, not only on whether water of good quality will be available but also whether we have the capacity within our system to pump the quantity which could be required, by which I mean more particularly the availability of electricity at the right times for this purpose. I make that comment against the background that, during the 1976-77 summer period, there were times when the electricity supply was questionable because of the tremendous strain being imposed on it by industry and, more particularly, by air-conditioning units.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I can give the honourable member the assurance that there is no danger at all that there will be a shortage of water of suitable quality to the system which the Engineering and Water Supply Department is responsible for supplying from the Murray River. I think he would appreciate that the advent of the Murray Bridge to Onkaparinga main puts that well beyond doubt. Indeed, unless there was a prolonged lack of electricity, which I doubt could happen barring some freakish sort of situation, there is absolutely no cause for concern about the likelihood of rationing of water supplies in the coming summer.

MILLIPEDES

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Premier say whether his Government will undertake, either directly via its

departments or through the relevant local government authorities, to finance or otherwise assist by subsidy the control of the Portuguese pest known as black millipedes which are at present crawling around certain areas of South Australia? A report from residents of Willunga indicates that a number of houses in that town are being invaded by what they describe as the stinking black crawlies in plague proportions.

Mr. Evans: Welcome to the club.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I note the comment from my colleague, because he has furnished me with a file dating back some years, when he sought similar assistance for residents in the District of Fisher. Despite the inquiries that were made and despite the information made available to the member for Fisher at that time, it seems that these pests have spread at a much faster rate than was expected. They are now reported to be in Willunga in a number of houses, and the residents, whilst agreeing that they do not bite, have expressed concern that these little crawlies are in the homes, the bedrooms, and in the foodstuffs. Little technical information appears to be available, but cases have occurred where the pests have crawled up the noses of babies and children and into their ears, and so on, causing undoubted distress. Apart from the undesirable nature of the whole subject it seems now, according to these reports, that something urgent should be done. I seek the co-operation of the Government in the form of the assistance I have outlined.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will get a report for the honourable member to see what can be done.

IRRIGATION

Mr. ARNOLD: Can the Minister of Works say whether the Government will reassess the design of the new irrigation headworks now being constructed at Berri and planned for other irrigation areas in South Australia to enable the maximum use of modern irrigation techniques and equipment in order to increase productivity, save water, and reduce salinity? It is unfortunate that whilst the Government is spending vast sums to upgrade the irrigation distribution system in South Australia, and undoubtedly has improved it markedly on the existing system, it is not taking full advantage of modern techniques and equipment now available and being used in other countries, so that it could receive the maximum benefit from spending that money. One option put forward in paper No. 5 from the Engineering and Water Supply Department states that a reduction in salinity could be achieved by a water-on-order system, which we have at present, with improved irrigation practices, but they can be achieved only by upgrading the facilities. I point out to the Minister that the new sprinkler equipment now available will operate effectively on a pressure of about 18 to 20 p.s.i., whereas the old type sprinkler required about 35 p.s.i. That is a considerable drop in the pressure now required to operate effectively the modern equipment that is available. Can the Minister say whether the Government will reassess the rehabilitation programme before it is too late?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member is aware that this matter has been fairly contentious recently. However, it goes back much further. The honourable member would appreciate, if he has read the reports of the Public Works Committee on this matter when it was being investigated, that recommendations were made from certain quarters that a reticulated system

should be pressurised in order to allow the operation of sprinklers, rather than use the system that is now being operated.

Mr. Arnold: At that time they were looking at 35 p.s.i.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I appreciate the point raised by the honourable member that, because of new technology in relation to methods of use and types of sprinkler, the pressure required is halved. This information would be known to the authorities, but I will put to my engineers the point raised by the honourable member. I do not know whether it is possible, or whether it would be less costly, to pressurise the system whether it be at 35 p.s.i. or 18 p.s.i. I am not a technical man, but I shall be pleased to have those better equipped than I am examine this point, and I will inform the honourable member of the result.

SUCCESSION DUTIES

Mr. GUNN: Can the Premier say whether the State Government has any plan to amend the Succession Duties Act because of the serious effect this legislation is having, particularly on rural properties? The Premier would be aware that his colleague in New South Wales, Mr. Wran, has given exemptions up to \$300 000 on succession duties in that State when the property passes from father to son and is a rural property. As the United Farmers and Graziers of South Australia recently approached the Premier about this matter, I shall be pleased if the Premier can say whether the Government will amend the Act in order to give further concessions, which are absolutely essential.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Very considerable concessions have been given, as the honourable member well knows, and from studying legislation introduced by this Government he would know that several kinds of concessions have been granted. The Government does not intend to amend further the Succession Duties Act. I have received submissions from the United Farmers and Graziers, and I have invited that organisation to give me specific details of hardship cases that it says have occurred. Most of the cases that I have had shown to me so far are cases where, with proper estate planning, there would not have been a great burden, and I have pointed out that the Public Trustee's Office is available to assist in this area. I am awaiting further submissions from the United Farmers and Graziers, and I will review the matter then.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT

Mr. WILSON: Can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government will amend the existing Fire Brigades Act to provide for one fire district for the metropolitan area, excluding the city of Adelaide and Port Adelaide, which require special consideration? A recent report in the *Standard*, the local newspaper in my district, states:

Prospect Council paid \$26 700 towards the maintenance of the Fire Brigades Board. This amount is a proportion of the cost of the maintenance of the Northern Fire District, which includes several other councils.

The report also stated that Prospect Council was trying to persuade the Government to change the system so that areas served by the Fire Brigade became one fire district, with maintenance costs shared equitably by all areas. Councils are now contributing about 12½ per cent of the maintenance costs, the State Government contributing 12½ per cent, and the balance being paid by insurance companies. A letter from the council concerned states:

It is appreciated by this council that, with one fire district for the metropolitan area, it would probably pay a higher contribution, but at least the system would be equitable with no juggling of district boundaries to spread the cost, as now applies under existing legislation.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I am not *au fait* with the matter raised by the honourable member, but I will investigate it and give him a reply in due course.

ACCOUNTING VARIATIONS

Mr. BECKER: Can the Premier say what caused the problems experienced in the variations of the Hospitals Department and the Health Department accounting on the Revenue Account this financial year to the period ended August 31, 1977? The Revenue Account for this financial year (which I received today) shows an aggregate deficit for two months of \$54 009 000. The statement from the Treasury Department accompanying the figures states, in part:

There were several variations in the timing of major receipts and payments, especially in the hospitals and health area and, as a result, the cumulative deficit to the end of August was larger than would have been expected had financial operations flowed more smoothly.

The Revenue Account, on the receipts side, under the heading "Social Services, Medical, Health and Recreation", gives a total of \$1 089 000 for the two months ended August 31. The sum of \$743 000 was received by the Treasury for those departments in August. On the payments side, under the heading, "Social Services, Medical Health and Recreation", is a total of \$47 390 000 for the two months ended August 31. Payments for August totalled \$15 000 000.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: A late payment was made by the Commonwealth under the Medibank arrangements.

LIVE ALONG WORKSHOP

Mr. EVANS: Will the Premier, through his Government, assist Mrs. Hooft, President and founder of Live Along Workshop, to re-establish or continue that workshop somewhere within the metropolitan area? Recently that lady wrote to the Governor of this State. I shall read only the first paragraph of that letter because it is a long letter. It states:

I am writing you for guidance and help in what might prove to be a last stand. You might remember, Sir, that in 1971, I visited you in your office at the Central Mission to discuss with you a project I had in mind. You were most encouraging and agreed with me that there were too few agencies to help young people who were unemployed, emotionally disturbed and/or unmotivated.

In sending copies of that letter to members of Parliament the lady enclosed a pamphlet, which stated:

Why the banner is on the corner—
that is, the Live-along Workshop banner—
of Parade and Portrush Road. In 1974, Mr. Virgo, Minister of Transport, allowed our charity to move into that building for six years. That, and exactly \$780—is all the help we as a licensed charity, Live-along Workshop, had from the Government in seven years of our existence.

The State Government and the Norwood Council have since sabotaged us! Why!! We have two guesses, but even when we would know for sure, it would not help.

Just some observations about Mr. Dunstan, M.P. for Norwood. About drugs: Our charity aims to help the

unemployed fiddling around with drugs. In 1973, while "door-knocking" for the election, Mr. Dunstan, visiting some "communes" in Norwood, allegedly promised the youngsters that marihuana would be legalised soon!!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. That is a disgraceful allegation for this man to make in this House. If he is going to get up with libel in this way, I invite him to repeat outside what he is now saying in the House, and I will take him for libel.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: He wouldn't have the guts!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hanson is out of order. The honourable member for Fisher.

Mr. EVANS: I am reading from a document that has been posted to members of Parliament.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: You are repeating a libel.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable Premier is out of order. The honourable Minister of Works is out of order. The honourable member for Glenelg is also out of order. The honourable member for Fisher has the floor.

Mr. EVANS: The words were "allegedly promised". I am not saying whether or not the Premier promised it, but this document is floating around, and I ask the Premier direct because I believe that this matter should be cleared up. I think he is the man who should do it. I object to the allegations made against me. The person went on to state:

Why! Lowering the age of adulthood; allowing the youngsters to leave home at 16. Drink at 18.

There are other matters in the accusation. As the Premier objects to what I am saying, I will not continue with them, but I believe that the Premier would be aware of the circular. If he is not aware of it, I am amazed.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Why haven't I got a copy?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Fisher has the floor.

Mr. EVANS: In clarification, I can say that in the letter that was sent to me it is stated that the person has forwarded it to other members.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: Not me.

Mr. EVANS: The member for Davenport has indicated that he has a copy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. EVANS: I will not read the rest of it, but the woman is concerned because she believes she has been squeezed out a project that I believe has done some good within the community. She has made some serious allegations against the Premier and has used the term "alleged promise". I believe that this is the right place for the Premier to correct the situation. I believed that most members in this House had received a copy of that correspondence.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: First, I find it absolutely disgusting that the honourable member should take the opportunity of privilege in this House to repeat a gross libel upon me. There would be no point in my suing Mrs. Hooft for libel: it would cost me much more money than I could possibly get from her, and I would thereby be giving her added publicity. Of course, what the honourable member can do under privilege is to repeat a defamation and use this cowards castle to do so. I therefore ask whether he would kindly repeat outside this House what he has said so that I can sue him for libel.

Mr. Venning: On principle—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Rocky River is out of order.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: You had to read it out—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Premier is out of order.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As to this particular woman, Mrs. Hooft, she set up an organisation called "Live Along Workshops" and sought the assistance of the Government in getting a Highways Department property for rental. She was allowed to go in there for rental, and she has not paid the rent. She is significantly in arrears to the extent of about \$1 900, I believe. She has applied from time to time for community grants, and I believe there is a current application, but that investigations of the Community Welfare Department have not shown that she, in fact, has any worthwhile programme and no recommendation could be made by the Community Welfare Department that she be supported. Indeed, the community workers within my district have similarly reported to me.

I have had approaches from her organisation, and I have informed those people of the basis on which we could assist community organisations. It was obvious that this was not such an organisation that should receive assistance, and the claims she makes of doing good work for young people are quite unsubstantiated. She was given considerable latitude in relation to this particular property, but she did not pay the rent.

Eventually it was necessary for the Minister of Transport to give her notice to quit. When the notice to quit had been delivered, she then proceeded to make an application under the Excessive Rents Act in order to delay the proceedings in relation to the notice. She proceeded to publish, amongst other things, various banners on the front of her property saying rude things about me. There is no basis on which, from our investigations to date, any community grant could properly be given to this organisation. There is no basis for the claims made by Mrs. Hooft. There are no bases for claims which she has made in her letter, which the honourable member knows are libellous, and which he has read to this House.

Unless there is a recommendation from the Community Grants Committee that a grant should be made, and I know of no basis on which such a recommendation could be made, the eviction proceedings must go on unless Mrs. Hooft can find the necessary cash to pay the arrears of rent. Advantageous work could be done in that property for the use of the district if properly organised, but that is not the situation with that property or this individual.

At 3.14 p.m., the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on motion of the Hon. Peter Duncan:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for consideration of the Bill.

(Continued from October 12. Page 173.)

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I wish to raise a few matters in this grievance debate. First, I register my objection to the increased contributions to the Fire Brigades Board imposed on the council areas within my district, namely, Glenelg, Brighton and Marion. The Auditor-General's Report states that the overall percentage of contribution

from councils to the Fire Brigade is going down from 12 per cent to 11.6 per cent. In 1976, local government provided \$983 298, and this year it will provide \$1 366 939. Although there has been a reduction in some areas, the councils in my district have all received notifications of increased charges. Last year Glenelg council paid \$12 019, and this year it will have to pay \$16 631. Last year Brighton council paid \$11 445 and this year it will have to pay \$15 186. Last year Marion council paid \$35 275, and this year it will have to pay \$49 949.

I understand that one of the reasons for these increased charges is that new Fire Brigade depots will be built within the area. Nevertheless, I believe that members of the community are being asked to pay twice, because they are paying through Government taxation and again through a levy in insurance premiums. This year \$8 684 232 will be paid to the Fire Brigades Board by insurance companies. This is an additional levy paid by people who insure their properties. They are already paying through local councils as ratepayers. The southern area also includes the council areas of Unley, Mitcham, Meadows and Noarlunga. In all, they will provide this year \$147 699, compared with \$91 838 last year. I believe that is most unfair. I think it is about time the Government thought again about this extra burden being placed on ratepayers, not only in this field, but also in the area of extra hospital taxation through local government. Local government has enough to do with its revenue without having to pay increased charges to save in some way the face of the Government.

The Auditor-General's Report also refers to goods and property stolen from the Government. In the Premier's Department a pay-roll for the domestic staff at Government House of \$1 866.59 disappeared completely and no trace has been found of it since. The head office of the Agriculture and Fisheries Department, which I presume is in Adelaide, lost a refrigerator valued at \$220. Whether it fell off the back of a truck or someone lowered it down from the second floor is unknown, but the whole thing disappeared. Another person got away with a wheelbarrow from Oodnadatta. Six dining room chairs, worth \$60, disappeared from Magill Home.

If we turn to the Education Department and do some quick arithmetic, we see in one area a loss of \$37 851 for equipment and sundries taken. The Engineering and Water Supply Department lost an air-conditioning unit; cost, \$330. The people at Mount Gambier obviously know what they want, as a cathode ray oscilloscope disappeared without trace; cost, \$400.

It appears from this report that there has been a rush on fire extinguishers from the Highways Department, which lost four. Another disappeared from the Minister of Labour and Industry's department in Adelaide. There has been a rush on electronic flashing lanterns, 46 of which disappeared from the Highways Department; obviously they must be the "in" thing. What the kids do with them, goodness knows.

Another matter that causes concern is that 31 lifebuoys, valued at \$1 018, disappeared from the Marine and Harbors Department. What people do with lifebuoys I do not know. It surprised me to learn that the Police Department lost a Honda motor cycle. One wonders whether one of the police officers was on it! It cost \$1 434, so I presume this is one of the few motor cycles equipped with radio. There are only, I think, four such motor cycles in South Australia equipped with radio, so it must be one of the good ones. I hope that did not disappear from Angas Street.

We see that a roll of carpet (not a piece, a square, or a tile, but a whole roll) costing \$1 500 disappeared from Glenside Hospital. That is a fair knock off, I believe. I can

understand somebody getting away with a couple of tiles, but how anyone could disguise a roll of carpet in a tool bag I do not know. With all my experience in the armed services, I do not think that we ever lost a roll of carpet. We see that a number of items reported as missing have not been recovered. They add up to a colossal amount of money.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. DEAN BROWN (Davenport): It has recently been brought to my attention that the current Queensland peanut crop is infected by the mould *Aspergillus flavus*. This mould produces a range of toxins, the aflatoxins, one of which (aflatoxin B) is probably the most potent carcinogen known to science. Carcinogens are substances which may help to induce cancer.

As this is a technical matter, which if misunderstood may cause an unnecessary health scare with peanuts, I shall refer to correspondence I have received from Dr. John Sabine, Senior Lecturer, Animal Physiology, University of Adelaide. Dr. Sabine is one of the most highly respected researchers in this field in Australia. He wrote to me on August 26, 1977, as follows:

Dear Mr. Brown,

As you may have gathered from recent media publicity (copy enclosed) I am particularly concerned about the current infection of the Queensland peanut crop by the mould *Aspergillus flavus*. This mould produces a range of toxins, the aflatoxins, one of which (aflatoxin B) is probably the most potent carcinogen known to science. There are many publications dealing with the aflatoxin problem. A general review that I have found useful is M. Enomoto and M. Saito: *Carcinogens Produced by Fungi. Ann. Rev. Microbiol.* 26:279-312 (1972).

Since the general public is now aware of this problem, which in my opinion represents a very serious long-term health hazard, I believe that they should be reassured that adequate safety measures are being taken. Thus, I believe it would be appropriate for you to raise this matter in the South Australian Parliament at the next convenient opportunity. For this purpose I enclose a suggested question with notice that you might address to the Minister of Health. And, of course, if you require any further information concerning aflatoxin I should be happy to provide it.

I look forward to your reply in due course.

Yours sincerely (signed John R. Sabine, Ph.D. Senior Lecturer Animal Physiology).

I replied to that letter, and I have placed some Questions on Notice.

I understand that aflatoxin B is used at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute to produce cancer in rats. One dose in the food of laboratory animals produced 100 per cent effective incidence of cancer. The World Health Organisation accepts 30 parts a billion as the upper safe limit in food. Contamination of 100 000 parts a billion was possible in peanut crops.

Apparently the peanut growers are aware of the problem. The Chairman of the Queensland Peanut Marketing Board (Mr. R. Ward) warned peanut farmers recently to expect big revenue losses this year because of contamination by mould-producing aflatoxin. I emphasise that there is no need for panic within the community over this matter. However, it is important that the Government take action to determine the extent of any danger that may exist to South Australians from the sale of peanuts or any other foods contaminated with aflatoxins.

The Health Department should be monitoring the level of aflatoxins in certain foods, such as peanuts, that are known to be contaminated with the mould *Aspergillus flavus*. The department should establish suitable standards

and through legislation control the sale of substances known to be highly carcinogenic. If, after a thorough investigation, it can be proven that the current Queensland crop does pose a health hazard, it is important that Government pressure be applied to encourage farmers to initiate a planting system which dried crops faster and minimised the risk of mould. The Minister of Health should give this matter urgent attention, and I expect detailed and frank answers to the series of questions that I have placed on the Notice Paper.

The second issue I raise relates to the dog problem that our community faces in urban areas. Three years ago, during the Budget grievance debate I raised the problem of stray dogs within urban areas. Since then the problem seems to have become worse rather than better and the Government has taken no action to solve the problem. Unfortunately, there is a lack of respect by some owners for their animals. Those owners allow dogs to wander unattended in the streets.

With the breakdown of personal and property security within our community some residents are keeping larger and potentially more dangerous dogs. Recently, a number of residents have complained that such dogs have been allowed to roam unattended and menace nearby residents, especially children. In one such case a resident was attacked by a neighbour's Alsatian dogs, two of them. Now he and his family live in constant fear when the dogs are allowed to roam the street. Should anyone question this case, the facts have been referred to the police who have investigated. On another occasion a resident complained that she had seen on a number of occasions a large dog corner terrified school children walking home from school.

People have the right to move freely about our community without the fear or danger of being attacked by stray dogs. Stray dogs are also a major hazard on the roads, as I pointed out when I last spoke on this matter three years ago, and they cause damage to public and private property alike. Many pieces of legislation relate to the control of dogs; such legislation includes the Registration of Dogs Act, local government by-laws, the Police Offences Act, the National Parks and Wildlife Act, and the Alsatian Dogs Act. However, the law seems to be difficult to administer and somewhat ineffective. I say that as a result of the first case to which I have referred, because for about two or three months this family has been trying to obtain satisfactory action from either the police or local government to ensure that they are protected against these two Alsatian dogs.

I support the earlier plea made by the member for Fisher, I think at the beginning of the last Parliamentary session, for a comprehensive Act to be passed by Parliament that will give more effective control of dogs. I understand that the member for Fisher is likely to introduce a private member's Bill, and, if he does, I shall certainly support it.

The Local Government Association has a working party on the disposal of stray dogs, and the party's recommendations warrant action being taken by the Government. Having examined some of those recommendations, I hope that the Minister of Local Government, in particular, has taken note of the working party's report and is willing to have his departmental officers examine the recommendations as quickly as possible and to take action, wherever feasible. I believe that the Government, through the Minister, should immediately instigate an inquiry into the dog problem and the working party's recommendations, and ensure that adequate legislation passes this House to consolidate existing legislation to ensure that it can be effectively administered and so that some security can be given to members of the public

against the problem of stray dogs.

Dr. EASTICK (Light): I was most interested this afternoon towards the end of Question Time to hear the Premier say, in essence, that the price of justice was not cheap. Certainly the number of occasions on which people come through the office doors of members gives a fair indication of the problems they find in that regard. Even if they are successful in their case, the cost to them is still considerable, and I will speak about one aspect of that this afternoon. This aspect relates to a reference made to me by one of the district councils I represent. I have a copy of a letter dated September 27, 1977, forwarded to the Minister for Planning. It is by no means an attempt to prejudge the decision the Minister may subsequently make, but it highlights a point which, I think, bears identification in the House.

Under the Planning and Development Act, 1966-1975, more particularly that part which provides for fines, the council recently had an experience, and it states the case in the following way:

The case also involved an offence under the Building Act. Although the prosecution followed a serious assault on an officer the offences were, in their own context, clear and deliberate and the legal results were a foregone conclusion, that is to say, it was not a complex case. The Local Government Association solicitors were engaged for the prosecution and their charges were \$470.

I shall read the entire letter, without highlighting who the solicitors were; the council does not state who they were. The letter continues:

The case was found proven, and fines and costs were \$238 under the Building Act charge and \$524 under the Planning and Development Act. Of this \$762, only \$262 was paid to council, the \$500 fine under the Planning and Development Act being paid to Consolidated Revenue. Council agrees that this was the only legally correct procedure. It is, however, most concerned that fines for planning offences should go to the State rather than to local government when action is instigated and followed through by a council.

In other words, the council has been called on to take action in the interests of its own ratepayers and in the terms of the law of the land, and it has not been recompensed for the cost that applied. The letter continues:

Preliminary inquiries through the State Planning Authority indicated that this is a long-standing policy based on some theory that a department or instrumentality should not appear to profit by its actions in the courts. Council cannot agree with this and cites at least the Building Act, the Road Traffic Act and the Local Government Act itself where at least some fines are payable to councils. The administration of the Planning and Development Act is a necessary function of local government but it gives little revenue and council sees no reason why the general body of local electors should be expected to sustain a loss, in this case \$208, on prosecutions of an individual while the State gains.

The State gain was to the extent of \$500. The letter concludes:

Council is fully aware of its responsibilities under planning legislation, but feels that if it must lose financially in such a clear-cut case it may as well ignore the penalty clauses of the Act—a course it would be hesitant to take but which would be good financial policy. My council urges you to give serious consideration to providing that any fines imposed under the Planning and Development Act 1966, in an action instigated by a council, be paid to that council.

I totally agree with the council's proposition. I emphasise that the council should be recompensed for expenses incurred, and any balance should be made available to

Consolidated Revenue. That would at least overcome the difficulties to local government and would not deny some funds going to Consolidated Revenue. At least justice would be seen to be done to the ratepayers of the area. I raise this point because I hope that, during this session, the Minister for Planning will have given the council's proposition deep consideration and will see fit to introduce amendments giving rise to the benefits I have suggested.

I make the alternative proposition available to the Minister at this early stage on the basis that, if the Government was questioning the Opposition's attitude, I believe that I have stated a view which, in justice, would be the view of all members who addressed themselves to this problem. Local government has expense and difficulties enough in fulfilling its role in the community without having to bear unreasonable costs when those costs have been recouped by another authority, in this case local government.

The next point I raise arises from an announcement made by the Premier during the recent election. It was reported in the press on September 14, 1977, that the Premier said that there would be a \$7 200 000 boost for South Australia's libraries. He went on to indicate that the great part of that expenditure, at least in the first instance, would be to the councils in the western suburbs.

I do not want to deny access to library facilities to the western suburbs, but many communities are not as close to existing libraries as are the persons in the western suburbs. I think that at least a proportion of that money should be farmed out to provide the first and only library facilities to which many people in the rural community would have access.

In the provision of libraries, it becomes extremely important that the use of funds be a matter totally discussed within the community which the library is to serve. A point has been drawn to my attention by the District Council of Barossa, which recently passed to my colleague the member for Kavel, in relation to representation. Members of that council read for the first time in a newspaper circulating in the area that there was within their community a community library in which \$7 500 had been spent and which was based at the Lyndoch Primary School.

Whilst they were pleased that such a facility was available and that it was a community library which would provide assistance to many people within the community, members of the council for a long time, in concert with a group of people devoted to the cause of providing library facilities, had been spending money on the local district library. Under their noses, and without consultation, this larger sum of money had been spent to provide what might have been not necessarily a direct duplication of the facilities available to the community but something which at least was cutting across an existing facility. I make a plea that proper integrated consideration be given to all such matters so that the end result will be most beneficial to the community and so that value will be gained for the dollar spent.

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): I have been concerned for some time about my belief that the Builders Licensing Board was to a degree an ineffective board. Its main role appears to be an attempt to have builders correct faulty workmanship or replace faulty material where the builder is still in operation or is prepared to co-operate. At election time, we as a Party promoted a policy (and the Hon. Mr. Hill some years ago moved to amend the Act accordingly) which is tied to that amendment and which would give people a guarantee against faulty workmanship and materials and also against default on the part of the builder, whether through bankruptcy or simply through

determination not to attempt to correct the faults.

I wish to raise a specific case and to point out that, if the Liberal Party policy had been included in the legislation and had been in practice, this person would not have found himself in his present situation. Although he lives in Salisbury, he came to me, as shadow Minister, because he appears to be getting nowhere in the area in which he has been seeking assistance. The Liberal Party policy would have had set up an indemnity scheme through the board, or preferably through insurers within the community. Under the scheme, a person could not commence to build a house until he had a certificate from the local government authority; that authority would not issue the certificate to commence building until a certificate of insurance had been shown.

In Victoria, such a certificate of insurance costs about \$35 for a \$40 000 house, and gives a guarantee against faulty work and materials or bankruptcy on the part of the builder. I will not name the builder or the person concerned. The person went to the Builders Licensing Board and complained verbally in mid-February, 1976. He was advised to send letters of complaint to the builder. If not satisfied after two letters of complaint over a period of one month, he was advised to put the complaint in writing to the board. He sent letters on March 24 and April 14, 1976, and got no reply. He officially complained to the board on April 29, 1976, and on July 21, 1976, the board gave its decision as follows:

The Builders Licensing Board has considered a report of the joint site inspection conducted at your premises on June 30, 1976, and has advised the builder that in its opinion the brick work is unsatisfactory and should be rectified. It is also the opinion of the board that the only method of rectification of the brick work is by demolishing and rebuilding.

The builder has been requested to contact you before commencing this work to establish the availability of bricks to match the existing brick work and that once this matter has been resolved he should carry out the rectification work within 28 days of the delivery of the replacement bricks.

The particular areas of unsatisfactory work noted at the inspection were:

- (1) West wall bowed at up to 10 mm in height.
- (2) Reveals to door and window openings not straight.
- (3) Jointing poorly carried out.
- (4) Window frame not built parallel into opening.

Will you please keep the board informed on the progress of this matter.

On August 12, 1976, after the bricks had been ordered, the builder cancelled the bricks, and the owner informed the board on September 2. He requested the board to issue an order to rectify the work. On December 7, 1976, an order was issued by the board, but there was no similarity to the original recommendation of the board. The builder was being let off the hook and not being asked to do all the work he had been asked to do originally to have the faults rectified. The board's letter is as follows:

At today's meeting the board decided to issue an order on the builder for rectification of the work which has been the subject of your complaint. The builder has requested the board to allow him time to February 28, 1977, and because of the Christmas break the board did not consider it unreasonable to extend the time for completion of the work until that date.

I attach a copy of the order for your information.

The board requests that you give the builder all the co-operation to enable him to carry out remedial work.

I will not read the order that was given, except to say that it was not nearly as stringent on the builder as the original order by the board had been. The builder has been let off the hook. I should like to quote from a report from

Australian Mineral Development Laboratories regarding the quality of mortar in this brickwork. The report was dated November 11, 1976, and it stated that samples of mortar had been taken from different areas of the brickwork. The report stated that the two mortar samples were analysed in accordance with the procedure given in British Standard 4551 entitled "Methods of Testing Mortars" for the determination of cement/lime/sand ratios in hardened mortars. It was found that the upper mortar (in the brickwork, not in the base course) contained one part cement, no lime, and 11 parts of sand.

They are the figures by weight but by volume it was one part cement to nine parts sand. In the base course, in weight it was one part cement and nine parts sand, and by volume it was one part cement and seven parts sand. The specifications for that project required that the ratio should be one part cement to three parts sand. You would know, Mr. Speaker, that a ratio of 11 parts sand to one of cement is virtually useless. However, the builder was not forced by the board to rebuild the work, but was let off the hook. He has improved some of the rendering work around the foundation, but refuses to do anything more because he has said that he is awaiting the result of court cases pending concerning companies that refuse to carry out work that the board stated they should do.

The Valuation Branch supported the owner of the house. On June 21, 1977, the owner received a notice of valuation showing that the annual value was \$2 100. He appealed on the ground that the building was not of a suitable standard and was of poor quality, and could not be valued on the basis of normal good-quality work. On August 9, 1977, the Valuation Branch told him that it had reduced the valuation to \$1 880. This man has had a shoddy job done and the Builders Licensing Board has failed to help him, so I say that the board is ineffective and the Government should use the provision in the Act and forget that the Liberal Party forced it to be inserted, because this would give protection to the community. This owner has been disadvantaged by a lack of Government action.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Schedule.

Legislative Council, \$228 000—passed.

House of Assembly, \$367 000.

Mr. GUNN: Because of the lack of office space in this building has the Minister of Works considered using the facilities of the Old Legislative Council building as offices for members? Many improvements have been made to Parliament House, but it should be the long-term aim of the Government that each member should have an office to himself. I understand that an earlier suggestion was made that a new building be constructed, but I should like to know what plans the Government has in regard to this matter.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): It is not intended to use the Old Legislative Council building as offices for members, because it is to become a Parliamentary Museum. The Treasurer agrees with my contention that it should be one thing or the other. Parliament House is now fully taxed for accommodation, but I cannot agree with the honourable member that a separate office should be provided for each member. Opposition members have criticised the amount spent on improving Parliament House, so that the honourable member is not consistent with the view expressed by some of his colleagues. The Government has supplied every member with an electoral office and secretarial assistance. I am aware of the accommodation problem in this building, and this matter is being constantly reviewed.

Mr. GUNN: When I first entered Parliament, the condition of this building was a disgrace, so I do not criticise the Minister; improvements have been welcome. Several Parliamentary committees have taken over office space that used to provide accommodation for members. The Government should try to provide more office space for members either in this building or nearby.

Line passed.

Parliamentary Library, \$152 000.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I am puzzled by the salary of the Parliamentary Librarian, because it seems that he is paid about \$10 000 less, for instance, than the Clerk of the Legislative Council and the Clerk of this Chamber. I am not reflecting on the other officers of Parliament House, but the Parliamentary Library staff has grown considerably in the time that I have been a member here. I would have thought that the Librarian is a senior officer of the Parliament. He controls a large staff, is a graduate of tertiary institutions, and it seems to me that, in comparison with salaries paid to other officers associated with Parliament House, he is out of step. I do not know under what award permanent officers here are employed. I suppose they all come under the Public Service Act. I would be interested in any comment that would throw light on this matter.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Librarian is a public servant and is subject to the provisions of the Public Service Act. He would be paid under a classification. If there has been an increase in his responsibility and the staff that he supervises, I am sure he would be competent to apply for a reclassification. If the Librarian believed (and I am not suggesting that he does, because he has not approached me) that he was not being paid a proper remuneration, it would be perfectly competent for him to seek a reclassification.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: As the Minister may or may not know, a new research officer recently replaced another research officer who left the Parliamentary Library. There are two such positions, and those officers handle requests from this House and the Legislative Council, including research requests from Ministers when the House is not sitting. I understand that some of those requests from Ministers are fairly considerable.

I was somewhat perplexed and horrified at the poor scope for promotion for those staff members. Frankly, I believe that the maximum salary they can achieve in the research area here is incredibly low. I would compare the salary they receive to the salary received by a research officer working for a Minister. The maximum salary of a research officer in the Parliamentary Library in that situation is still \$2 000 to \$3 000 a year below what the average Ministerial research officer is receiving.

I do not see why the Library staff of this Parliament should be considered to be on a lower scale than is Ministerial staff. The work load placed on the research staff is large and more than two researchers are needed to cope with it. Recently, throughout Australia, Parliamentary Libraries have upgraded their research facilities. The Federal Parliament has the sort of research facility now of which any Parliament in the world would be proud. I have seen some of the research papers prepared by that library and believe that the same standard could be achieved here provided adequate staff was made available. I ask the Minister to consider the matters I have raised, first, the lack of research staff and, secondly, the poor scope for promotion to ensure that the research staff here is put on at least a similar level to that applying to Ministerial research officers.

Dr. EASTICK: The salaries being paid to research officers somewhat depend on what is being paid to the

person at the top. I should like the Minister to undertake to consider the situation.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: It's not up to me: it's a matter for the Chairman of the Public Service Board.

Dr. EASTICK: I believe that, on occasions such as this, we could obtain an undertaking that if a reply was not available immediately some effort would be made to get it. Does the Minister's interjection indicate that he will not give such an undertaking (and we are not asking him personally to undertake the investigation)? It could well be that the benefits the member for Davenport is trying to obtain (and they certainly get my support) could be the subject of a bottleneck because of the salary available to the person at the top. We are dealing not with personalities but with facts. The work load of this place could be improved considerably if members had access to the type of information that has been made available in other Parliaments.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member is probably right when he says that the salary paid to a research assistant in this case is limited by the salary that is paid to the Librarian. As I pointed out, the Librarian is a member of the Public Service and can apply for a reclassification, as can his research assistants. I will not give an undertaking that I will personally conduct an investigation or even order an investigation when those facilities are available. If my understanding of the problem is not as I believe it is, and these people are barred from approaching anyone to improve their position, certainly I would take what steps I could to have the matter investigated. However, they are perfectly competent themselves to make the necessary approach to have their position reviewed by the Public Service Board.

Dr. Eastick: If not—

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: If I am wrong, certainly I will consider the matter.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The commitment we want from the Minister is whether the Government would be willing to upgrade the research staff in Parliament House. I accept the points made by the member for Light. The upgrading of the research service here is not done by the Public Service Board. The Minister would need to give a commitment that his Government would appoint additional staff. Once that commitment was given undoubtedly the library staff would automatically approach the Public Service Board to be upgraded. Not only a higher salary but also more staff are necessary.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Public Service Board plays a real part in deciding what services should be available through the Parliamentary Library. It is not a question of a Minister's deciding how many staff members there should be. The Public Service Board examines the matter and makes recommendations to the Government in relation to staff. The honourable member wants his cake and wishes to eat it, too. On the one hand, he urges the Government to increase the number of Public Servants in this State and, on the other hand, he has the luxury at times of hitting the Government around the head for increasing the size of the Public Service too rapidly.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I do not know the way in which the Public Service Board goes about determining the relative value of public servants to the Legislature, but the suggestion that the Librarian himself can put in an application for a higher classification with any real hope of achieving success seems flimsy. To my knowledge no member in this place has ever been asked to give any evidence about it. I do remember when the Assembly messengers were seeking some sort of award a suggestion was made that members of Parliament might be prepared to give evidence on their behalf. I think several members

were prepared to do that.

If I was comparing the work of the Clerk of the Legislative Council whoever he may be from time to time with the work done by the Parliamentary Librarian and I was the Chairman of the Public Service Board and the only evidence I had was what I see moving around this place, I would be inclined to pay the Librarian more than the Clerk of the Legislative Council. The suggestion that the Librarian, who gets \$10 000 less than the Clerk, should apply for a higher classification will not solve anything. It seems to me that when responsibilities and work loads have been adjudged in the past, relativities have got out of step in relation to the people who serve members of Parliament and the public in this place. I have had no particular request from the Parliamentary Librarian to raise this matter today, but I notice the sum allocated and I know roughly the number of people on his staff. I know he does not receive overtime payment and I know the salaries of the two officers I have mentioned. If I were making the judgment, I would reverse the salaries. There is nothing personal in my comments in relation to the officers concerned. I do not think that telling the Librarian to apply for a higher classification will solve the problem.

Line passed.

Joint House Committee, \$176 000.

Mr. TONKIN: I would like to pay a tribute to the work the staff does here. I do not think we had the opportunity at the end of the last Parliament to take this action because of its somewhat precipitate end. I would like to place on record the appreciation of members of the Opposition, and I hope all members will agree with me, for the way we have been served so well by members of the staff.

I do hope the Deputy Premier does not think I am advocating spending money for nothing. We are particularly well served by Miss Stengert, who does a remarkable job in looking after things. Looking through this document, one sees time and time again reference to overseas visits by departmental officers. I think some provision should be made for Miss Stengert to visit other Parliaments in the States of the Commonwealth and if necessary to travel overseas so that she can be more fully informed of the practices of her job in other Parliaments. This is a serious suggestion and I would like to put it to the Deputy Premier that the whole Parliament would be well served indeed if Miss Stengert were given this opportunity.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member raised this matter with me some months ago. He will be pleased to know I have taken preliminary steps to discuss the matter with Miss Stengert. Whilst no finality has been reached, it is on the way.

Mr. RODDA: I have raised before the matter of a refreshment room for non-members. Outside this House it has been mentioned that perhaps there are many boozers in Parliament House. Many people work in this House to make it the competent place it is, and they give dedicated service. I know the Minister has problems with space, but these people should be considered. Similar facilities are available in other Parliaments for *Hansard* staff, messenger staff and members of the press. I believe this should not be ignored by members in this place.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The subject the honourable member raises is very close to my heart. I could be considered to be a connoisseur of bars. I would be delighted to be able to provide such a facility but there are two limitations; the honourable member has raised one of them, space, and money is the other.

Mr. EVANS: We have spent more than \$4 000 000 on Parliament House in the past few years and the office facilities of *Hansard* have not been improved at all. In fact, I think those who understand industrial regulations

and rules would find that, if we measured the rooms in which the number of people work in *Hansard*, the space would not meet the required standard in terms of space for each employee. I ask the Minister whether he will look at the conditions under which the *Hansard* staff work. I know they have received some equipment in the way of recorders and other transcribing equipment, but the actual office space and the conditions of the *Hansard* staff have not been improved for decades. This is one group that works very hard for all of us as well as for the State, and it is one area where improvement should be made, particularly in relation to industrial standards laid down.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am unable to comment on the situation as outlined by the honourable member, because I must admit I have not been in the *Hansard* offices for some time. Again, I must come back to the point I made before that there has been much criticism by the honourable member as well as other members of his Party about money spent in this place. We have renewed services, and lifts, electricity, water reticulation and sewerage systems have all been updated. If the points raised by the honourable member are valid (and I will have them examined), I will see what can be done to upgrade the accommodation for *Hansard*, and I hope the cost will not be criticised by the honourable member.

Mr. EVANS: I cannot let that remark go without making the point that I have always made. I will attack when expenditure has been used in a way that I believe is not practical and not truly beneficial. That has been my tack in the past. Where money is spent for practical purposes to improve working conditions and there is no extravagance, I will support the move. If people look at how the \$4 000 000 plus has been spent in this place, they will find many cases of extravagance. Some of that money could have been more wisely spent giving better facilities and working conditions to *Hansard*.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I wish to comment about the bells, buzzers, squawks, or squeaks, regularly heard in this House, especially in the morning when they are being tested. I raise this complaint particularly on behalf of some of the staff who work in the building and on behalf of some of the members. I think last Tuesday morning the sound continued for what must have been at least 20 or 30 minutes. Having been a member of the Select Committee that considered noise control and knowing the noise level permitted in industrial premises, I believe the noise level exceeded that considerably. It reached the level where it was posing a hearing loss threat to some of the employees; frankly, the installation of those bells has been a disaster. The House should look at whether it would not be better to return to the old system, if it still exists, or if it does not exist, ensure that any noise emitted does not interrupt, especially in the mornings before Parliament sits, the office work of members, Party meetings, and especially the pleasant surroundings of the staff, so that they are in the position where they can hardly function.

Line passed.

Electoral, \$1 005 000.

Dr. EASTICK: I am interested in the amount of money that has been made available for the Principal Returning Officer, Returning Officers, etc. Is the Minister aware of any of the circumstances at the recent election whereby some of the actions normally expected of a returning officer were not conducted by the Returning Officer of the district, but were contracted out? The situation was that some returning officers were responsible for the total conduct of the poll, which included the receipt and handling of postal votes, whereas other returning officers were responsible for the conduct of the poll in the particular district, but were not involved in the handling,

counting or checking associated with the preparation of postal votes. I believe that the sum of money available to respective returning officers was equal in the 47 electorates. I am interested to know whether on earlier occasions there has been any contracting out of some of the activities of a returning officer and in what circumstances payment was made on those occasions in comparison to payments made on this occasion.

It appears to me, and I believe to other members, that a person who is a returning officer for an electorate of equal voting strength (and that is basically what the present situation is) would be in receipt of the same sum of money and it should be expected of the individual returning officers that they provide the same total requirement in the action they took as returning officer.

In the recent State election, were any decisions taken by the Government not to advertise to the public the existence of polling booths? Several polling booths were open that had been closed for Federal elections and there was no indication by way of advertisement by the Electoral Department in newspapers circulating in various areas that a certain polling booth would be open. The net result was that some polling booths had a very poor return in numbers. Had proper information been given to people about the booths nearest to their residence, the figures from those booths would have been increased.

Was it a decision of the Government that there be no additional expense in the advertising of the places that would be open? I suggest to the Government that, if it was not a monetary consideration that can be justified, would it seek to ensure that on all future occasions the existence and place of polling booths be advertised and that it be a responsibility of the Electoral Department to inform the public?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will deal first with the last matter the honourable member raised. The same thought occurred to me on the Thursday before the election, particularly because there had been a redistribution. I contacted the Minister responsible for the Electoral Department, the Attorney-General. Not being able to contact him, I took steps to contact Mr. Douglas to point out to him that it was necessary. I asked whether or not he was going to do anything about it.

I can assure the honourable member an attempt was made, but because of the lateness it was evidently not possible to have the advertisement lodged. As the honourable member would appreciate, it was not just the detail but also the magnitude of the matter, so it was not done. I expected an advertisement to appear in the *Advertiser* on the Saturday. When it did not appear, I made a mental note to check with the Returning Officer about what in fact occurred. I assume what I have stated did occur. I will take the matter up to see what happens. The same thought had occurred to the Government and there was no monetary restriction placed on the matter. I will have to obtain a report about the first point raised by the honourable member.

Mr. VENNING: I have several small polling booths in my area that were closed for the Commonwealth election and reopened for the State election. I think it was a mistake to open them. At many of these places there would not have been more than 20 voters: it would have cost from \$5 to \$10 a vote. These days people go to the main towns to shop, anyway. I know that in this place after the Federal election the member for Frome (Mr. Allen) had much to say about what happened in the North of the State. That is different from what happens in areas closer to Adelaide. I think much of the taxpayers money could have been saved if many of these small polling booths had remained closed. At 3.30 on the Friday afternoon before

the election the Attorney-General instructed that a small polling booth south of Kadina, namely at Cunliffe, be opened. Fewer than 20 people voted there. I believe a reasonable saving could be made if the Commonwealth policy was adopted for our State election.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I draw attention to the urgent need to review the Electoral Department's policy, especially regarding the commissioning of certain polling places at future elections. We all know the astronomical cost of holding elections, and I believe it a waste of money to hold certain polling places open throughout the State. The department was caught short prior to the last election, and I do not reflect on its efforts to prepare the polling booths at short notice. I am aware of the lack of advertising and of the attempts made by Mr. Douglass and his staff to convey the message as well as possible. I believe that at least the policy on commissioning polling booths ought to be consistent between the State and the Commonwealth. The Editor of the *Herald* has gone to much effort to prepare for readers of that paper a breakdown of the results in each of the 47 electorates in South Australia, but a great mistake was made in relation to Alexandra. In all fairness to the endorsed Labor candidate, I point out that the *Herald* has given him the paltry figure of 1968 which was the Democrat's figure.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Can the honourable member tie his comments in with the cost of elections?

Mr. CHAPMAN: No, but the rest of my remarks do.

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member is unable to do so, I shall have to rule him out of order. If he is able to do so, he should do it now, rather than later, so that the Committee gets his point.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I said that, in order to cut down on costs as much as possible, we ought to be cutting down on the number of booths that seem to be unnecessary. Alexandra had 43 booths, of which 18 attracted fewer than 100 votes, five fewer than 50, and one attracted only 11. Chaffey had 28 booths, seven of which attracted fewer than 100 votes, and six attracted fewer than 50 votes. In the large electorate of Eyre there may well be a good reason for keeping some small booths open, but of about 70 booths there, 40 attracted fewer than 100 votes, and 29 attracted fewer than 50 votes. That demonstrates that, whilst the policy ought to be consistent between the State and the Commonwealth, and every care ought to be taken to justify the opening of a booth, hopefully the Electoral Department, in consultation with members of districts like Eyre, will determine the convenience to the people in those outlying areas. In the Playford District, we find that the Cross Keys booth attracted fewer than 100 votes, whereas several kilometres away at Pooraka was another booth, and several kilometres away from that booth was another booth at Gepps Cross. Residents in that area would not be really inconvenienced by being without one of those booths, thereby saving \$100. There appears to be a need to rationalise some of the 100 or so booths that attract so few votes in the State.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: One of the Electoral Department's senior officers was courteous enough to discuss this matter with me in relation to my district. I said that, in my view, these booths should remain open, particularly in Eyre. In the light of having had a State election soon after a Federal election, there is a case for some of the smaller booths to be closed, and I have changed my mind in relation to some of them. However, there are some isolated areas where people have to drive long distances to a booth, and it would be unreasonable to assess the system on the basis of fewer than 50 votes. In the inside areas, certainly in my district, I believe that at least some of the smaller booths could be closed.

Mr. WILSON: Regarding fees for elections and referenda, booth salaries and wages, and contingency payments, does the Minister have the projected figures for the referenda? When working out the Estimates, the department must have had the cost of the recent election in mind and should have estimated the cost for the referendum.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not have the projected figures, but I will obtain them for the honourable member. I am certain that Mr. Douglass, as the State's Chief Electoral Officer, would welcome any member going to him and talking to him about the set-up in his own district. I invite every member to do that. I support what the Deputy Leader has said in relation to this matter, and am surprised that a Liberal Party member representing a country seat has spoken in the way in which he has spoken. A non-country member might demonstrate that only 22 people voted at a certain box, but it may be some 80 kilometres to the next box. The Electoral Department must take into account the convenience to people. There is sometimes the difficulty that the Party machine is not able to supply people to man them, and they can become something of a nuisance and sometimes an embarrassment, but the department does not look at that angle; it looks at the angle I have mentioned.

Whilst I have no argument about consistency between Federal and State matters in relation to the location of booths, I think people should know where to go. I am certain some people in the metropolitan area were confused because there were no official advertisements of the locations of polling booths. However, members in some areas that were changed put out pamphlets and maps showing the location of polling booths. Whilst the odd anomaly may occur, I think the Chief Electoral Officer (Mr. Douglass) and his staff are to be congratulated on what they were able to do in such a short time on the new boundaries.

It is important to note that no return was disputed, and I do not think any major problems arose in relation to the number of votes cast and the way in which they were counted. That is a credit to the staff. For the first time, the department was faced with hospital visitors, and I think the officers did remarkably well. I am certain, however, that it will be possible to do better next time. I do not think any member would disagree when I say that the department did a first-class job. If any member has any point which he wishes to discuss with Mr. Douglass, I invite him to do so.

Mr. EVANS: I agree that the electoral authorities did an excellent job, although I have raised some matters privately with Mr. Douglass. There were problems in the recent election, and many resulted from the office not being given the time necessary to decide whether people were in one district or another. This was first brought about by the need to put together the local government rolls. There were pitfalls in that because of the shortage of time available. When the joint rolls were compiled, part of a street in my area was shown in the wrong district. Some people going along to vote knew that they were really in one district although on the roll they were shown in another, and in some cases people were denied 110A votes; in other cases people argued until they got them. Much work has still to be done, and I do not think the average member can check the matter right out.

A great deal of work will be necessary to check the area where the Districts of Davenport, Kavel, and Fisher meet. Sometimes people do not have streets to show their address and they are not named on sections or part sections. They are simply shown as "near Stirling", for instance. It is difficult to know exactly where they live. I

congratulate the department and its officers on the work done, but some problems remain. On election night I pointed out some of them to Mr. Douglass.

Some people who work in polling booths appreciate the extra money they receive, although taxation is starting to change that. I believe that, if one booth in my district were closed, people would not have to travel more than five kilometres to the next booth, and fewer than 100 people voted at that booth. If the Parliament or the Government shows responsibility in saving the taxpayers' money, I am sure people do not mind a little inconvenience. I support the comments made in relation to looking at some of the smaller polling booths.

Dr. EASTICK: I agree that the Commissioner and his staff did everything possible to achieve the best results. The State electoral roll is compiled from representations made in the first instance to the Commonwealth for enrolment; the State then uses the Commonwealth roll. The form used does not require the notification of the hundred or section number on which a person lives. Whilst this is of no real consequence in a town, it has considerable consequence in the country. I believe that the electoral roll for the District of Light is oversubscribed by 450 people who should be on the roll for Kavel, Goyder, Napier, Rocky River, or Eyre. In the area north of Spalding, the Commonwealth electoral authorities identified 80 persons who were on the roll for the District of Light but who should have been on the roll for the District of Rocky River. These people were telephoned before the election and informed of the alteration. The roll for the District of Eyre contains the names of about 100 people living in the area of Booborowie, Gum Creek, and Leighton, whose postal address is Burra. One small box had only 25 voters whereas, if people had been correctly enrolled, the number would have been about 90 to 120.

From preliminary discussions with Mr. Douglass, I am certain that these matters will be given consideration before any decision is made to close a box. I ask that representations be made to the Commonwealth so that the form used for enrolling people on the rolls of South Australia, for both Commonwealth and State elections, should include provision for specifying the hundred and section number. In country districts, many boundaries are along hundred boundaries. If a person is identified as being in a certain hundred, he would be put on the correct roll and not on some other roll simply because of his post code.

This comment has equal relevance to many of the rolls prepared for local government elections in July. Many people were identified in wards or in district councils in which they did not live, simply because the computer could not differentiate between a post office box number and the physical position of a hundred or section. Such a procedure would greatly assist the preparation of future rolls and could save many thousands of dollars in cleansing the rolls.

By Tuesday next, I believe Mr. Douglass will have received from me a 25-page typewritten document identifying errors that occurred in the areas of Gawler, Willaston, and Evanston. People living in the area initially gave an electoral address as a street in Gawler. However, with subdivisions it subsequently became a street in Evanston, and now it is a street in Evanston Park. They have three addresses but only one should apply. These matters can be rectified at little expense if an identification of a hundred and section number were applied.

Mr. VENNING: Can the Minister say why the Attorney-General directed that the polling booth at Cunliffe be opened at 3.30 p.m. on the Friday preceding the election?

Line passed.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, \$37 000.

Mr. ARNOLD: Can the Minister say why the allocation for Secretary and staff has increased so dramatically?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Previously, the stenographer was part of the Parliamentary Reporting staff, but will now be attached to this committee.

Line passed.

Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, \$5 000.

Mr. BECKER: I am aware that this committee was involved in taking evidence on Kangaroo Island this year, but can the Minister furnish details of the \$3 140 actually spent for expenses, equipment and sundries?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not have that information with me, but I will obtain it for the honourable member.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) moved:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I am upset at the refusal of the Minister of Community Welfare to release a report that will cause industrial action among residential care workers, especially those at McNally. Such action could cause hardship to the inmates, their families, and parents. Some time ago 100 residential care workers held a stop-work meeting and placed a ban on certain duties at this institution. The meeting was held about 10 days before the recent election, and the Government was keen to reduce any industrial disputation and so put a blanket on it. The following report appeared in the *Advertiser* of September 7.

Members working in the centres have refused to compile any report, log book, running sheet, assessment report or communications sheet or to take telephone messages. Mr. Payne said he regretted the meeting had rejected certain offers which the department and the Public Service Board believed were important changes on salaries and allowances.

On Tuesday, I asked the Minister whether he would release the report of the Welfare Advisory Committee into Youth Assessment and Training Centres, reminding the Minister that in September, 1976, he had appointed that committee to consider these matters. In his reply the Minister said:

The Cabinet position is quite clear—that the report needs to be considered in conjunction with the Royal Commissioner's report, and that is exactly what is being done. A working party has been set up.

That is poppycock: it is a stall by the Minister and the Government, because they want to sweep the matter under the carpet. The Minister knows that something should be done in relation to the releasing of this report because, according to the meeting held prior to the election by the residential care workers, it is imperative that they have the report to help them. The Minister slated me during his reply, when he said

As a result of that, I would think that the juvenile population of South Australia will benefit for some years to come, which is more than I can say will be the result of the interventions by the honourable member in the juvenile field since I have known him.

The Minister should be grateful to me, because I alerted him to what was going on at McNally, and consistently pointed out these things during the previous session when the Minister did not know what was going on in his department. He did not know that they were closing the

high security block at McNally or that they had moved high security risks in with first offenders. The Minister should thank me for bringing that information to his notice. A recent circular, published a day before the election by the Public Service Association, states:

In consideration of the Premier agreeing to meet a deputation of residential care workers to discuss the release of the report of the Community Welfare Advisory Committees into Youth Assessment and Training Centres we hereby resolve to cease all current forms of direct action and to withdraw any threats as to future action, pending the meeting with the Premier.

I understand that the Premier, the day before the election, said that he would consider releasing the report. That was a pre-election promise. It was obviously done to quieten the workers at McNally. The Premier did not tell them that he would be afraid to release the report or that he did not want them to have the information contained in the report made public. If he was an honest Leader of his Party he would have told them just that.

If the Premier is refusing to release the report now, he should have told them so the day before the election was held and should not have left it with the obvious intention of getting the backing of those workers at the recent election. Item 6 of the circular states:

This meeting of Residential Care Workers being concerned with the inefficiency and mismanagement of the Department for Community Welfare, the low morale of staff—

we all know what is happening there—

the incidence of bashings of residential care workers and the public criticisms of the department, calls upon the Public Service Board to conduct an inquiry into the efficiency of the operation of the department in accordance with the Public Service Act. If the Public Service Board does not give a favourable response to this demand within one month—

that was on September 16, the day before the election, and the month is nearly up—

we indicate that we are prepared to make available to the media, through the Public Service Association, certain information available to us which as Public Service officers we are not entitled to reveal in our personal capacities. Members are hereby directed to cease forthwith any ban on clerical work.

That promise was given in the circular to residential care workers. Having given the Minister a warning, I again asked him this week whether he would release the report. What is the Government afraid of in releasing the report?

Mr. Max Brown: Not you.

Mr. MATHWIN: We will see about that. Obviously the Minister is afraid of something—probably the workers in the institution. However, the point remains that the Minister refused to release the report. I call on him to release it forthwith, if not on my behalf, certainly on behalf of the residential care workers. As an election promise, the Government promised to consider seriously the release of the report. That promise has been broken: it was a promise that came from the Leader of the Labor Party—the Hon. D. A. Dunstan.

Mr. WELLS (Floreay): I take this opportunity to express my disgust at an action of pure bastardry as far as I am concerned—

Mr. MATHWIN: I rise on a point of order, Sir.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. The expression "bastardry" is definitely unparliamentary and I should like the honourable member for Florey to withdraw it.

Mr. WELLS: I apologise. It was an action of vicious premeditated villainy perpetrated by the member for

Alexandra. I have always believed that members of this House would be honest with each other even though they are on opposite sides of the Chamber. My experience in the House has been that members have always been honest with each other and have not tried to take points against another member or a Party purely and simply for the political gain that might be achieved. An attack on a Party by a member is fair game. It is perfectly all right to do that. When a member has the honour to sit on a committee of this House, stays on it for almost the full period for which he was elected and then, immediately before the termination of that period, resigns purely and simply to afford himself an opportunity to appear to disclose in this House information he gained from his membership of that committee, that is an absolutely disgusting episode. As far as I am concerned, never again will I trust that man as long as he or I remain in the House. It was disgusting for him to have done it, and it was done purely and simply for political gain.

The committee has a new membership. I have the honour to be the Chairman of that committee, and I am pleased with that membership. I am confident that the members sitting on that committee will not emulate the member I have just described.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Your record in the House is not too clever.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Leader is out of order. The honourable member for Florey has the floor.

Mr. Venning: How many times have you attended meetings?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Rocky River is out of order.

Mr. WELLS: I believe that the action of that member was a complete prostitution of the trust that he was given. He tried to disclose facts that he gained in participating as a member of that committee.

Mr. Venning: So what!

Mr. WELLS: It was a shocking situation that was engineered by that member purely and simply to gain an opportunity to castigate the Government and to produce a situation that may have given his Party political gain. Of course, it reacted in just the opposite way and people were disgusted at the allegations that he levelled against decent workers. It was stated clearly that thefts occurred from certain institutions and every worker in every public hospital in South Australia is now under a shadow as a result of allegations that were never established. It was an assertion, an absolutely filthy accusation, and I can assure members that the people concerned are furious about the charges that have been levelled against them, charges that were entirely untrue.

Every man and woman now working in a public hospital is under a shadow because it was stated by that member, and unfortunately supported by the Leader, that these thefts took place in certain hospitals. However, no proof was furnished to substantiate the allegation. Every person who works in a public hospital in South Australia is now under a shadow and may be accused of theft. The situation is disgusting.

Before long the official report will be tabled. This should have been awaited before an attack was made on the Government and the workers in these hospitals, that is when this situation should have been discussed. That is when these vicious vile allegations against decent workers should have been made if they could be substantiated. They cannot be substantiated but it made no difference to the member who was prepared to make those allegations, because no retribution could be taken against him.

I am disgusted. I have trusted people in this House and I

do not think that ever, certainly not in my period in this House, have I heard such a vile and vicious betrayal of trust and truth as was offered by that member. As far as I am concerned, never again will I trust him even if he went on his knees and swore on a stack of Bibles. He cannot be trusted. For political gain he prostituted his position as a member of a very important committee and deserves no sympathy for the actions he took.

Mr. Venning: When is your next performance?

The SPEAKER: The member for Rocky River is out of order.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): The grievance speech we have just heard is one of the biggest displays of humbug I have witnessed in my seven or eight years in this House. I would like to remind the House of an incident when the member for Florey made vile accusations against one of my constituents without any basis whatsoever. The man had been sick and, as a result of the accusations made by the member for Florey, headlines about him appeared in the newspaper. It was a case of class hatred, which is so strong in the breast of the member for Florey. He called the man, who is a member of a prominent family in my district, a member of the squatocracy. He levelled against that man the vilest of charges without one shred of substantial evidence, and when I looked at the records which the man produced there was not one vestige of truth in what the member for Florey had said.

Mr. Wells: But you backed away from the man—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Florey has just spoken.

Mr. Wells: I apologise.

The SPEAKER: There have been several interjections during the course of this debate, and I ask honourable members to show courtesy to the honourable member for Kavel.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: For the member for Florey to stand on his dignity and rant and rave, saying there are members on this side of the House he will never trust again—

Mr. Wells: I said—

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Florey.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: —is sheer hypocrisy. It is not the standard which members in this place have come to expect of him. In the past year or so, from the way in which he has been going on in this place, members are fast losing their confidence in him. I doubt whether he will get the vote again as member of the year in this Chamber. The work of the Public Accounts Committee has been far from satisfactory for some time. We know that the Chairman of the committee was changed. I had the utmost confidence in the original Public Accounts Committee, of which I was a member. The Chairman who put the committee together displayed to me some independence of thought, even when he ran up against some of the heavies in the Government which I thought was refreshing, and I said so. Unfortunately, those days have gone. The Public Accounts Committee was proving to be a nuisance to the Government. The committee was starting to turn up evidence about the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the Highways Department, and the Woods and Forests Department, and this was embarrassing. We all know that Government departments are not perfect, and this sort of thing is likely to occur, and the Auditor-General indicates this only too clearly in his yearly reports.

In my view, as a result of the embarrassment that that committee has caused the Government, the Deputy Premier in particular has been as sore as a boil (and he has been out of sorts with me for about a year because I raised

this in the House previously) because his attempts to thwart that committee and to run down the Secretary and to hobble it, because his departments were under investigation, have not been successful. What did the investigation achieve? The next Chairman was changed. Quite unceremoniously a resolution was dumped into this House without notice and the member for Albert Park was dropped.

Mr. Harrison: It was for my own personal reasons.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Maybe; no explanation was given.

Mr. Harrison: I do not have to give one.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: All right, but the Chairman was changed unceremoniously and the member for Florey was made Chairman. From the reports I have had and from the lack of reports that have come to this House since that time, the Public Accounts Committee has been making progress very slowly indeed. I believe it has been investigating the Hospitals Department for about a year. The number of reports which have come to this House have been quite minimal.

If a member of that Public Accounts Committee is fed up with what is going on, as was the member for Alexandra, because the committee is getting nowhere and the Government is trying to hobble it, and it has a lame duck Chairman whose function appears to be to see that nothing happens and that the Government is protected, he has every right to resign.

Mr. Venning: He was never there.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Rocky River is out of order. He has been out of order several times today.

Mr. HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I ask the honourable member to withdraw the remarks about a lame duck Chairman.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I am not talking about you.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I am sorry if the member for Albert Park did misunderstand me. I am referring to the present Chairman. It is my view that the Chairman was put into that committee to replace the former Chairman. I have no complaint against the two former Chairmen. If a member of that committee is dissatisfied with the progress that is being made I believe it is within his competence to resign. No-one has refuted anything said by the member for Alexandra. In fact, the Premier conveniently slid away from requests by members today to table the report. He said he would think about it. I asked the Premier whether he would table the report from the Auditor-General, which the Auditor-General requested. The Premier will not say whether the report was ever made. The answer to that question was a soft-shoe job.

I am sure in my own mind there are facts behind all this. When a senior officer of the Auditor-General's Department talks about \$80 000 a year disappearing from one institution over a period of time, and when the Auditor-General himself, I understand, has suggested to the Public Accounts Committee that it investigate this and concentrate on it, you cannot tell me there is no fire somewhere. Nothing the member for Florey has said here has refuted any of the statements made by the member for Alexandra. For the member for Florey of all people to get up in this House and talk about honour and integrity of members is the lowest form of hypocrisy I want to witness here.

Motion carried.

At 5.19 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 18, at 2 p.m.