

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, October 20, 1977

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

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The following recommendations of the conference were reported to the House:

As to Amendment No. 1:

That the Legislative Council do not further insist on its amendment but make the following amendment in lieu thereof:

Page 2—After clause 4 insert new clause as follows:

“4a. *Amendment of principal Act, s. 12a partially exempt land*—Section 12a of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out from subsection (5) the word ‘No’ being the first word in the subsection and inserting in lieu thereof the following passage ‘Except as is provided in Section 68a of this Act, no’;

(b) by striking out from that subsection the passage ‘in any court’.”

And that the House of Assembly agree thereto.

As to Amendment No. 2:

That the House of Assembly do not further insist upon its disagreement.

As to alternative amendment and alternative suggested amendment in lieu of Amendment No. 3:

That the Legislative Council do not further insist on these amendments but make the following amendments in lieu thereof:

Clause 7, page 3, lines 34 and 35—Leave out “appeal against the decision to the Treasurer” and insert “lodge with the Treasurer an objection in writing that sets out in detail the grounds of the objection”.

Lines 35 and 36—Leave out all words in these lines.

Page 4, line 2—Leave out “appeal” and insert “objection”.

Line 4—Leave out “appeal” and insert “objection”.

After line 6—Insert—

(4) *Appeal*. A decision of the Treasurer under this section shall be final and without appeal, and shall not be called in question in any legal proceedings whatsoever.

68b. (1) Subject to this section, a person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Commissioner, under Section 42 of this Act, to treat a contract, agreement or arrangement as void for the purposes of this Act, may appeal against that decision to a Local Court constituted of a judge of that Court.

(2) Subject to subsection (3) of this section, an appeal under subsection (1) of this section must be instituted within thirty days after the appellant receives notice, either personally or by post, of the decision of the Commissioner.

(3) An appeal under subsection (1) of this section is limited to a decision of the Commissioner which involves a question of law.

(4) In any appeal under subsection (1) of this section, a judge of the Local Court may—

(a) dismiss the appeal;

(b) reverse or vary the decision appealed against;

(c) make any order as to costs or any other matter that the justice of the case requires.

(5) A decision of a judge of the Local Court under this section shall be final and without appeal and shall not be called into question in any legal proceedings whatsoever.

68c. *Tax recoverable* (1) The right of the Commissioner to receive any land tax under this Act shall not be suspended or delayed by an objection or appeal under this Act.

(2) Where the amount of any land tax is reduced or increased in consequence of an objection or appeal under this Act, the Commissioner shall refund to the taxpayer any excess paid, or may recover from the taxpayer any additional tax payable as the case may be.

And that the House of Assembly agree thereto.

Later:

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the recommendations of the conference.

Consideration in Committee of the recommendations of the conference.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): I move:

That the recommendations of the conference be agreed to. The compromise reached with the other place is that instead of a lengthy series of appeals, it will be possible for a taxpayer to elect. He may put in an objection that will be considered by the Treasurer, and the Treasurer may consider all the matters which are to be considered by the Commissioner of Taxes to start with. If he elects to do that and the Treasurer gives a decision, that is a final decision; no other proceedings may be taken. He may, however, elect to appeal to a judge of the Local Court on a question involving a matter of law. If he does that, that is a restricted right of appeal that only relates to matters which involve a question of law, and then he does not get the right of making an objection to the Treasurer; he has the limited right of appeal to the Local Court only, and that is a final decision to be made by the Local Court.

The aim of the conference was to endeavour so to confine the appeals that we did not get a whole series of rules written by a court in deciding cases that would then try to do the very thing that we have said cannot be done in this legislation, that is, cover all the circumstances of cases, and write a series of explicit rules in light of which the Commissioner has to make his decision. Because this has to be a discretionary area, it means the major decisions have got to be made on a discretionary basis and not on a series of specific rules and precedents. The managers on behalf of this place were prepared to compromise to the extent that a limited right of appeal on questions of law, matters involving a question of law, could go to the judge of the Local Court.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Members will recall that, when this Bill was before the Chamber initially, Opposition members expressed concern that an opportunity be given to the public to go beyond the opportunity of complaint to the Treasurer. Initially, an effort was made to open up the opportunity of appeal to the Supreme Court. As one of the members at the conference this morning, in accordance with the system I supported this Chamber in its effort to reach a compromise. I appreciate the explanation given by the Premier, but it was my understanding that the compromise reached this morning was just a little wider than that as explained by the Premier.

The agreement reached by the committee of managers provided that, where a decision of the Commissioner relating to section 42 of the principal Act involves a question of law, the taxpayer may elect either to object to the Treasurer’s ruling or to appeal to a judge of the Local Court. So far, the Premier relayed that message. Where an appellant seeks a hearing at the district or local court, this

business of the case having to involve a matter of law is in my opinion wide enough to allow almost any matter to be raised before that district court, as long as it has an element of law about it. I make that point because, in his explanation, the Premier rather restricted the opportunities of an appellant to a matter of law, even though he used the word "involvement". My interpretation was that the conference intended to allow an appellant to go to that level of appeal, as long as a matter of law is involved in the basis of his appeal. It is quite clear from the words of the amendment agreed to (and it has been agreed by Parliamentary Counsel and all others who have asked about it) that, if a judge of the Local Court felt he had no jurisdiction to deal with the appeal on the ground that the decision of the Commissioner did not involve a question of law, the taxpayer could still lodge an objection to the Treasurer.

Therefore, whilst in the first instance the taxpayer appealing must elect to do one or the other, if he elects to go to the court and, in the opinion of the court, it has no jurisdiction to deal with the matter, then the appellant can go back to the Treasurer. That is my understanding of it. Accordingly, if the judge of the Local Court held that it had jurisdiction to deal with the appeal but in fact found against the taxpayer, in those circumstances the decision would be final.

The aims of the Opposition in this case have been virtually achieved since we have provided in this Bill an opportunity for a taxpayer to have a wider range of appeal and indeed at the public court level. This is over and above the provision that appeared in the original Bill. There are some restrictions (as the Premier has pointed out, desirable restrictions in this instance) so that the opportunity to appeal to the Supreme Court is eliminated and, accordingly, by eliminating the Supreme Court, the other lengthy process of going from one court to another, in the extreme case to the Privy Council, is eliminated.

Mr. TONKIN (Leader of the Opposition): The member for Alexandra has outlined the situation well. I believe this Bill will be much better as a result of the conference. We have some right of appeal written in, and it is an appropriate right pertaining to matters of law. This whole matter could have been dealt with more simply if the solution had been introduced into the Bill in the first instance.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Up to now I have not taken any part in the debate on this matter, but during Question Time, as an exercise, I was trying to work out what the amendments seem to mean. I looked at the Bill as originally introduced and the amendment as it was circulated before I heard any explanation. That is probably a better way from a professional point of view to tackle it than to hear an explanation. I make a couple of points, and the Premier may care to say whether he thinks that I am right or wrong. I point out to him that often compromises that are patched up like this as a result of a conference are the most extraordinary things. Whilst it is a good face-saver and people say pleasant things (the comments of the Leader of the Opposition were utterly typical of that and not nearly as valuable as those of the member for Alexandra), it is the sort of thing said in both Houses and everyone is happy, until the provision is tried in practice and then it is found not to be as expected.

The first thing that struck me is that there does not seem to be any election required. As it is drafted, I cannot see why a person aggrieved should not take both steps. It is permissive in both cases. New section 68a (1) now provides:

68a (1) A person who is aggrieved by
may, within thirty days after notice of the decision of the

Commissioner is served personally or by post upon him, lodge with the Treasurer an objection in writing that sets out in detail the grounds of the objections.

That is the sort of administrative appeal from Ceasar to Ceasar which was the original provision in the Bill. That is one path that may be taken. The other path simply states:

68b. (1) Subject to this section—

not to new section 68a in which the path to which I have referred appears—

a person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Commissioner, under section 42 of this Act . . . may appeal against that decision to a local court constituted of a judge of that Court.

Unless we make this new section 68b subject to 68a, I cannot see why the person cannot try to have his cake and eat it too, and have both appeals. There may be an answer to it, but I cannot, after puzzling over it for half an hour and at the same time listening to what is going on in the Chamber, see the answer. I should think that the best way would be to make new section 68b subject to new section 68a, but that is not done. My second point is that 68b (4) provides:

An appeal under subsection (1) of this section is limited to a decision of the Commissioner which involves a question of law.

What is "a question of law"? That is likely to lead to litigation, because it is a very difficult question in itself to answer. I think that the member for Alexandra may be correct—that it is wider than the Premier said in his explanation. Almost anything involves a question of law.

Mr. Chapman: Among other things, as long as it has that element in it.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, so long as there is an element of law involved in the decision, there is this sort of appeal. If the Premier were explaining strictly what he thinks the amendment means, he may have misconstrued it and it may be rather wider than it is. Because of the phraseology involving a question of law it is wide, and whether or not it involves a question of law is open to debate and dispute.

My last point, and this is where an element of rather silly compromise comes in, is that an appeal has been given, limited or otherwise, to a Local Court judge: that is it, no further. I should think that it was not sensible to talk of going to the Privy Council; it is pretty wild. Two or three cases a year would be referred to the Privy Council from South Australia, and to say that this sort of case can go to the Privy Council is extravagant political talk and not reality. The chance of its going past the Supreme Court would be remote.

Mr. Chapman: You would agree that the risk is there?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. However, the real risk, and I speak in deference to my friends on the Local Court bench, is that they, too, can make mistakes. With the utmost respect, I say that they are the lowest tier of judicial office. I am just wondering where magistrates stand, but that is not relevant. Local Court judges can make mistakes, and I cannot see why they should not be corrected if they do. In any case, because of this question as to whether a question of law is involved, we may have a few prerogative writs flying about in order to get the matter decided by the Supreme Court anyway. Looking at it quickly but in a professional sense rather than in the usual congratulatory nonsense that goes on after a conference that has led to a compromise, I should think that the amendment is perhaps not quite what the Premier thought it was, and its drafting is open to considerable future difficulties. The Premier may care to say what he thinks about these points, or he may be anxious to get it through and leave it to an unfortunate taxpayer or taxpayers to find out how it works. This is our last chance

to do anything: it has been fought over a bit during the past week or so, and we should get it right now.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not suggest that the drafting of these provisions is what I would regard as ideal. I was willing to give way to some extent. While it is true that the appeal must involve a question of law, if the honourable member looks at the things that involve the Commissioner's decision in the original Bill and what the onus of proof is, he will see that the appeal is really quite restrictive to the Local Court. As to its being possible to go from one to the other, the subsections of each section dealing first with the Treasurer's decision and then the court's decision provide that those decisions are to be final, and no further proceedings in law courts may be taken in relation to them. In that case, I think that disposes of each one when finality is reached in each course.

Mr. CHAPMAN: The member for Mitcham touched on the matter to which I shall refer. In no circumstances do I seek to have the understanding of this subject that he or the Premier has, but it seems to me that in the case where the taxpayer intended to appeal to the court and where there could be any doubt whether or not the decision of the Commissioner involved a question of law, it would be essential for the taxpayer to lodge within the prescribed time the objection expressed to be the subject to the court, so that the court may then find whether or not it was within its jurisdiction to proceed. The time of lodging the appeal at the court would be the time to decide whether or not it involved or contained a question of law.

Common sense would appear to indicate that it would be at that level that it would be decided whether the court could proceed or not. Therefore, it would not be subject to all the hassles and legal argument about whether or not the case was acceptable, because that decision would be made by the court upon its acceptance or otherwise. If the case was not accepted by the court, or if the judge found that it was not within the court's jurisdiction to handle it, the appellant would have the opportunity to go back to the Treasurer and enjoy the hearing of the case at that level. He would not be excluded from going backwards, in that sense, although, as the Premier has pointed out, he would be excluded from enjoying the benefits of both.

Motion carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: NOISE CONTROL ACT

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yesterday, the member for Davenport made a series of allegations about the working of the Noise Control Act. In my brief reply to the honourable member I promised him that I would investigate his allegations and provide a report. I can now do so. First, it is reasonable to comment that the honourable member has done the Noise Control Unit of my department a serious disservice and has been responsible for misleading the public.

I noticed that the honourable member was assiduous in repeating the allegations he made in Parliament to radio and television. It is a pity that the honourable member's opinions were given such wide circulation for they may have resulted in many people doubting the efficacy of our new legislation. The member for Davenport, who really should have known better and probably did, claimed yesterday that the Act was totally ineffective or, as he also claimed, was useless as a legal document. I can assure the member for Davenport and every member of the public in

South Australia that the Act is in no way lacking in legal force, except only that accompanying regulations have yet to be drafted, and I indicated yesterday that they would be available in December. A specialist committee is currently active in this matter.

Putting aside the bluster of yesterday's question, I can say plainly and directly that the Act is operative for dealing with complaints of noise coming from domestic premises.

Further refinements will come later when the unit, which after all is one of the newest of Government operations, gets into full operation. However, for people concerned about loud late night parties or similar disturbances, the remedy is there, and the remedy is simple. It is: telephone the police.

The Noise Control Act (Part V) enables police to take action. They have already been taking action. On average, the central Adelaide police operations room receives 30 noise complaints by telephone every day. I find it extremely difficult to accept that any substantial number of people, as the member alleged, were asked, when contacting the Noise Control Unit in Keswick, to put their complaint in writing. The honourable member said:

It is useless for a person with a noisy party or loud music next door to complain in writing and expect action a week later.

What nonsense! This was never intended. In fact, it would be impossible for people to ring the unit at night with complaints about domestic noise. If people ring the morning after a noisy party and ask what can be done about any repetition, they are informed that the police can deal with such problems.

The Noise Control Act empowers the police to take action. Before the Act became law the police were unable to take action. As a general practice (there could be some exceptions in special cases) the Noise Control Unit does not instruct people to write in.

Since September 13 this year, the day after we invited the media to visit the unit so that the general public could be informed about its role, the unit has dealt with or is currently dealing with 74 investigations. It is interesting and instructive to note the source of these investigations: 59 were complaints received by telephone; nine were initiated by letter; three were from personal calls to the unit in West Beach Road; and three were referred to the unit from other sections of the department.

The next point is the claim that since the regulations have not yet been completed the Act is useless as a legal document. Such a statement coming from a member who served on the Select Committee, debated the Bill and took part in its Committee stages is little short of incredible. Let me tell him and again reassure the public that the Act has teeth. For the present the police can act. The Act is far from useless. People have received relief as a result of its provisions. Letters of thanks are on file at Keswick as testimony of this.

Yet another claim was difficult to credit, namely, that, despite some assurances, police have not been given any equipment to deal with noise complaints at night. The police do not need—they have not wanted—any noise-measuring equipment. The best way of dealing with domestic noise complaints, with the minimum of haggling and the maximum of common sense, is by using the judgment of individual police officers who are able, on the spot, to decide what is a fair and reasonable thing. The honourable member knows that such a provision is in the Act.

Finally, reference is made to a request for a special telephone number so that complaints can be registered right around the clock. The request has been made; that is

quite possible. But let us look at the realities. If people want to register complaints at odd, or I suppose, early morning hours, it will almost always be because of some immediate short-term problem, dealing with short duration noise. It is on such occasions that the police can be contacted and will be able to act. Police have around-the-clock staff and it makes sense for them to handle such matters.

One quite despicable additional observation needs dealing with. The honourable member said the Act was proclaimed prematurely "for purely political purposes". The Act was proclaimed in the ordinary course of events. To have delayed proclamation, as he appears to suggest, until the regulations were ready, would have denied people the domestic noise remedy which is now available to them and which was not available previously. There is a backlog of uncompleted investigations, and they are being dealt with in the order in which they have been received. It must always be remembered that this is new territory and initially we will be dealing with a backlog of matters accumulating over the years.

Good liaison has been achieved with the Police Department, and that is very important if the Act is to achieve the best possible results. The honourable member should do what he should have done many times in the past, and apologise to the House for the misleading statements that he made yesterday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport is out of order. I do not want to warn the honourable member, but he is definitely out of order, and I hope that we do not have a repetition.

Mr. Mathwin: What about the racket from the other side of the House?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg is out of order, and he will receive the same treatment.

CEDUNA AREA SCHOOL REPLACEMENT

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Ceduna Area School Replacement.

Ordered that report be printed.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answer to a question be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

SMALL LOTTERIES

In reply to **Mr. EVANS** (October 11).

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: Proposals are currently being considered to amend a number of the regulations relating to small lotteries. The proposals raised by the honourable member have already been taken into account.

INFLATION

Mr. TONKIN: Can the Premier say why the inflation rate in Adelaide as disclosed by consumer price index

figures released today, is the highest of any capital city in Australia, and what action does his Government intend to take to combat this alarming trend? In sharp contrast to the overall 2 per cent rise throughout Australia, figures for the consumer price index for the September quarter, 1977, have been released today and show that the consumer price index in Adelaide has risen over the previous quarter by 2.5 per cent, the largest increase of any capital city in Australia.

Furthermore, the change from the corresponding quarter of the previous year, that is, the 12 months from September 1976, to September, 1977, shows that the consumer price index in Adelaide has risen 14.7 per cent again the highest of any capital city in Australia. The actual index for Adelaide is now almost the same as the highest in Sydney; Adelaide at 235.8 and Sydney 236. Clearly Adelaide is rapidly becoming the highest cost city in Australia.

The Premier constantly asserts that South Australia is the lowest cost State because of the State Labor Government's policies. Obviously, these claims are totally without substance and, as has already been recognised by his Labor Premier colleagues, his policies are now out of touch with reality. Will he now face facts and take urgent action to bring his Government's idiot financial policies into line with the rest of Australia?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Obviously, the Leader does not know much about the consumer price index figures or he would not have said that, by taking the measurement of movement and contrasting it between this State and Sydney, one obtains the same absolute figure for that base. He is completely illiterate concerning what the index figures are about.

Mr. Tonkin: Come off it!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That is what the Leader said: he contrasted the index figure for South Australia and New South Wales and said that we were at the same cost as that State.

Mr. Tonkin: I didn't, you know.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: There could be nothing more indicative of the Leader's actual ignorance of what index figures are about. I refer to the figures for this month. The difference in monthly figures occurs because of changes in prices or charges that occur at different times in different States. In the previous two quarters we were below the average: this time we are above the average. The factors that affected that were that this was the period of the year in which governmental rents increased, there were increases in milk and bread prices in this and certain other capital cities, and increases in beer prices.

Mr. Tonkin: But what about—

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Leader asked me about this month's figures, and I am trying to give him that information. It seems that when I start giving him details he does not want them.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: He does not like them. The other significant thing that is, frankly, at this stage unexplained is that the sample for purchases of motor vehicles (that does not relate to registration costs, or things of that kind) is seen to be higher than anywhere else. There was a movement in South Australia which, quite frankly, I have no explanation for at present. I have not been able to discover why this should happen in this section of the sample, and we are seeking information from the Commonwealth Statistician as to why that should have been so.

INDUSTRIAL LEGISLATION

Mr. BANNON: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry assessed the value of industrial legislation permitting more active Government intervention in industrial disputes, and has he any plans to introduce such legislation? It has become usual now to read, whenever a major industrial dispute takes place in States such as Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria, or at the Federal level, of much sabre rattling taking place on the part of those Governments. Even more alarming has been the recent trend for legislation to be introduced in response to industrial situations. The Victorian Government has introduced emergency powers legislation supposedly to deal with the current state Electricity Commission dispute. At the Federal level, debate is taking place today in the Commonwealth Parliament on further repressive and Draconian legislation aimed at trade unions.

Mr. Gunn: Are you a friend of Halfpenny?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: If the member for Eyre has finished, I will answer the question.

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

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The member for Ross Smith has asked me two questions: first, whether I have evaluated and assessed the type of legislation currently being introduced by States other than the Labor States and by the Federal Government. Secondly, he has asked—

Mr. Gunn: Do you support Halfpenny?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Eyre is out of order; this is the third occasion he has been out of order.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The second part of the question is whether I intend to introduce such legislation in South Australia. South Australian legislation does not in any way attempt to control situations as does legislation introduced by the three State Liberal Governments and the Federal Government. The amount of industrial time lost in this State compared to other States should be examined. I do not know how many members bother to listen to *AM* in the morning—it is a very informative programme. On Tuesday morning this week, it gave the South Australian Government one of the best wraps I have ever heard any Government get in relation to its industrial relations programme and its industrial legislation.

The South Australian Government has never believed, and I have never personally believed, that confrontation between trade unions, or between any organisations, is a satisfactory way of settling disputes. We believe in consultation, co-operation and in talking to people as quickly as we can. I think our record over the past seven years is unsurpassed in Australia. This has not just been in my time in this portfolio: this goes back to other Ministers, who laid the foundation that I have attempted to follow.

The attempted legislation in Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia and the proposed Commonwealth legislation will not be used. This is a complete and utter bluff. Hamer has not had the courage to implement that legislation in Victoria. It is a complete bluff and attempt to stand over, as the Liberal Party always does; it tries to stand over the working class of this country, but it will not be able to do that, because the working class is more united than the Liberal Parties of this country. So it is no good trying to get confrontation by bluff—that is not going to work.

Let me just recap on the performances of all Australian Governments, including the Federal Government. South

Australia's industrial record stands supreme, and no-one from any Party or State in Australia can point to our industrial record and say it is not the best, as has been reported on radio, television, and in the press. Even the *Melbourne Age* bothered to publish a full page report that congratulated the South Australian Government on its industrial performance. That in itself is absolute proof that confrontation or legislation does not solve disputes: disputes are solved by consultation and co-operation. I commend not only this Government but also South Australia's trade union officials, who appear to me to be taking a very responsible attitude to all of the problems. The member for Mitcham can put on his sly smile as much as he likes.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I said not one word. Although I was smiling, I was agreeing in my own mind with what the Minister was saying. I believe in consensus, but neither I nor my Party believes in confrontation. In this matter, I agree with the Minister.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: It is now my duty to commend the member for Mitcham; after all, if it was an agreeing smile, that was good, but, if it was a disagreeing smile, I was entitled to object. This Government's policies are well enunciated and understood by employers and employees in South Australia. Almost daily, I get a telephone call from an employer, or an employee organisation asking me to initiate discussions in order to get people together. That is what we are doing, and we believe that that is the proper way to proceed. We do not believe that there is any other way. If the big hammer is pulled out, it just does not work. I will now give some facts—

Mr. Mathwin: Oh!

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Opposition members do not like it, but they are going to hear it, anyway. If I could get some order, I should like to proceed.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is the prerogative of the Speaker, and I will at all times give the honourable member on his feet every opportunity to be heard. The honourable Minister's reply is becoming lengthy, and I hope that it will not take much longer.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I made no slight on you, Mr. Speaker, but there was noise from Opposition members, who I know do not want to hear the figures I will give. This is an extremely important subject for all Australians and for this country's economy. Let us examine what is happening in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia in relation to over-award payments. It is my view (and this must be said) that, if the S.E.C. in Victoria had adopted a sensible and rational approach to over-award payments in Victoria, namely, to go to award paid-rates and index the over-award payments as we have done in South Australia, this dispute may not have occurred. I do not say that it would not have occurred, but I believe that there would have been some chance that it would subside more quickly than it has. The over-award payment in New South Wales Government departments is \$28.10 and in Victoria it is \$21.10, a difference of \$7 a week between the two States. In South Australia, the over-award payment is slightly lower than in New South Wales, but at \$24.87 we are \$3.77 in advance of Victoria. I believe that, if this situation had been evaluated by the S.E.C. and the Victorian Government, and if positive policies had been taken originally, as they were taken here, this dispute may never have occurred.

BUILDING COSTS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Will the Premier say why the price index of materials used for housebuilding is the highest in Adelaide of all State capitals, and what he intends to do about it? The figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics under the heading, "Price index of materials used in housebuilding, September, 1977", demonstrate that the price index in Adelaide of 267.0 is the highest of all State capital cities. This unfavourable comparison clearly shows that Adelaide is a high-cost State in which to build a house.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: It doesn't show that at all.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Let us hear the expert on statistics put us right.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister is out of order.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: In his 1970 policy speech, the Premier promised that a Labor Government would administer the Prices Act to protect the purchasing power of money in this State. The Premier appears in this case, as in many others, to be capable of breaking promises.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am astonished at the howlers being perpetrated from the so-called front bench of the Liberal Party.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: They're not preparing them themselves, though.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: My complaint about that is that I have provided them with some very expensive staff and, if the staff are making the howlers, they had better look to their own administration and account to me, as Treasurer, for it. The honourable member is taking the index figure as a comparison of absolute costs, and that is precisely what it is not. The index figure is an indication of movement from a base, and the base is 100 for each State, regardless of what were the actual prices as between the States at the time that base figure was struck.

Mr. Chapman: The trend is disastrous in South Australia.

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

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: There have been increases in prices in South Australia. One of the significant increases has been in the price of imported timber. It is difficult for the South Australian Government to control the price of imported Canadian oregon. We have been looking for substitute timber to try to bring the price of timber down, but the timber is extensively used in timber-frame housing, which is widely considered necessary in South Australia because of the type of soil we have. That was one of the influencing factors in this area.

Mr. Chapman: That's only one.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Alexandra will have his opportunity to ask a question. He is out of order, and I hope he will not continue in this way.

Mr. Mathwin: Can't we grow any pine in South Australia?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg has interjected on several occasions during Question Time. I hope he will not continue to do so.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The comparison of absolute costs as between the States has already been dealt with in debate in this House. The only effective contrast in housebuilding costs is the contrast which is taken of comparable houses by the Commonwealth Bank, and it shows that we are the lowest of any State except Western Australia in absolute figures. When we add to those figures the very much lower cost of land in South Australia, which has occurred because of the action of this Government, the

creation of the Land Commission, and the elimination from South Australia of speculation in land that has occurred under Liberal Governments elsewhere (look at Victoria at the moment), the fact is that in South Australia the housing package is by far the cheapest. The completed total cost of a house to a purchaser in South Australia is by far the cheapest of any State capital, and we are keeping it that way.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. KENEALLY: Can the Minister of Works say when a significant reduction in the colloidal clay content in the State's water supply is expected to occur? As the Minister said last evening, there seems to be a competition in South Australia as to who has the worst water supply. I would submit Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Pirie as candidates for the prize. The northern cities of the State do not have the advantage of the metropolitan area with its reservoirs where suspended solids can settle. These cities are getting their water supply direct from the Murray River. They would be pleased if the Minister could tell them when the slug of water from the Darling River will pass through the system.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will have the matter checked. My understanding is that the flow from the Darling will probably cease about now or in the next couple of weeks, but that the effect will remain in the Murray until about March next year. I regret that that will happen, but we have no control over it. I sympathise with the honourable member's constituents because of the difficulties with which they are faced as a result of this situation. It is unusual for the Darling River to flood as often as it has, as the honourable member obviously appreciates. Although this is good water from the viewpoint of irrigation, it is not aesthetically acceptable.

The honourable member has said that those towns are receiving their water direct. I am well aware of that; that is why the Government has taken the initiative to set up a study to investigate the necessary design for and feasibility of filtering water to northern cities. The honourable member would also appreciate that this will be very costly. Because the Government is now involved in a programme of filtering the metropolitan Adelaide water supply, and because the financial support that the State has been getting from the Federal Government has been reduced dramatically, it will be a long time, unfortunately, before the State Government on its own can face up to the costly programme of filtering the water supply to the northern cities. That will not prevent us from again making approaches to the Federal authorities to ascertain whether or not they are willing to assist the State Government in financing the programme that would be necessary to filter water to those cities.

PAY-ROLL TAX

Mr. DEAN BROWN: My question was to be asked of the Premier but, in his temporary absence, I am not quite sure to which of the other five shadow Premiers I should direct it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am sure that that is not part of the honourable member's question.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I will try the Minister of Works. I wondered for a moment whether it should have been directed to the member for Ross Smith.

The SPEAKER: Order! I want the honourable member to ask his question.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Is the Government aware that cuts in pay-roll tax will reduce real labour costs and therefore the rate of inflation in South Australia, and, if it is, why is its attitude towards pay-roll tax cuts so completely inflexible? I should like to explain the question.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Without comment!

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister of Mines and Energy is out of order.

Mr. Goldsworthy: I have never yet heard the Minister reply without comment.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Kavel is also out of order. The honourable member for Davenport has the floor.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: In order to back up my statement that what I am suggesting is the right course to take, I present to the Government what the New South Wales Labor Treasurer, Mr. Renshaw, said in his Budget speech, as follows:

We have therefore decided to grant New South Wales employers a full rebate of pay-roll tax on the wages paid to young people during their first full year of employment. Obviously, the New South Wales Labor Government has realised the truth. The other fact I present to the House comes from the latest *Australian Bulletin of Labour* for September, 1977. A report in that bulletin states:

There are other ways in which Governments could make the elimination of the real wage overhang more certain and less painful. One would be to cut pay-roll taxes . . . One of Australia's leading economists, Professor Max Corden, has recently been supporting such proposals, and a number of western European countries are trying similarly inspired wage subsidy schemes.

The management committee of that bulletin has on it such notable people as the member for Ross Smith, Mr. Philip Bentley (who heads the Unit for Industrial Democracy), Mr. Lindsay Bowes, and Dr. Barry Hughes (who, I understand, is the Economic Adviser to the Premier). I believe that if such an authoritative source advocates a cut in pay-roll tax the Government should adopt it.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Of course, cuts in pay-roll tax can have an influence on costs of industry, and I would be delighted to be able to provide money for the services of this State without having to impose any pay-roll tax at all. Indeed, I have endeavoured in the past two years to reduce tax in several areas in South Australia where they would have an inflationary effect. The first action I took, as soon as I was able to provide the money in substitution for it, was to take off the petrol tax, and this had a marked effect on the rate of inflation. The honourable member, in taking what other people had said about what would happen if pay-roll tax were reduced, does not of course give a picture of what happens to the general revenue situation. It would be an ideal situation if pay-roll tax could be reduced and we could still keep the level of services, but this Government does not intend to do what the Federal Government has done in markedly reducing services and, if we are to maintain services in South Australia, as I believe is necessary, we do not have room to reduce pay-roll tax further than the reductions which have been proposed by the Government and which will come before the House soon.

STUART HIGHWAY

Mr. WHITTEN: Can the Minister of Transport say whether the Commonwealth Government has provided funds for the possible sealing of the Stuart Highway soon? Today I received, from the Australian Road Federation, what I think is an invitation that has been processed

through the South Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The invitation advises that a meeting is to be held at the end of this month at which the topic will be "Stuart Highway—When?" The speakers at this meeting will be Senator Kilgariff from the Northern Territory, the Mayor of Alice Springs and a representative from the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association. A donation of \$2 will be accepted at the meeting, but I do not know what the donation is for—perhaps it will go towards sealing the highway.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am not aware of the meeting to which the honourable member has received an invitation. I wonder whether it is an extension of the political gathering that was established about 12 months ago. The member for Eyre and Senator Jessop were in it up to their ears.

The Hon. D. J. Hopgood: Senator who?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Jessop, I think—a bloke who says a lot and does nothing. The chamber was in it, too. The Country Party's spokesman on transport at that time, Mr. Ryan, was involved, but the people of the Northern Territory woke up to him and sacked him at the last election. It was a Country-Liberal Party gathering . . .

Mr. Gunn: Answer the question and tell the truth. Did you give an allocation of money? You are telling untruths.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It appears that this meeting may well be factious along the same Party-political lines. Instead of having such meetings perhaps members, particularly the member for Eyre (who is often jumping up and down on the Stuart Highway, and that is all), could prevail on the Federal Minister to provide South Australia with adequate funds for road purposes. The funds allocated by the Commonwealth for national highways in this financial year have been reduced in actual money terms from \$17 200 000 to \$15 000 000.

The Federal Minister has already approved the continuation of the work which had already been instituted and which could not be stopped. It is ridiculous for the Federal Minister, the member for Eyre, Senator Jessop, or anyone else who likes beating drums to claim that South Australia should be proceeding with construction of the Stuart Highway, when in fact funds from Canberra have been reduced. We do not hear one word of protest from Opposition members at the shabby treatment that Fraser and Nixon are handing out to South Australia: we simply hear criticism from their Party-political friends. The member for Eyre knows that this is a statement of fact.

Mr. Gunn: It's complete nonsense, and you know it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The member for Eyre is complete nonsense. If he throws his memory back a short time, he will recall a statement I made in this House. The former shadow Minister of Transport was at Willunga Hill when I made it at the opening of that road.

Mr. Chapman: Be careful!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The honourable member was not shadow Minister then: he had not done enough sabotage on the pork chop scandal.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think that the honourable Minister and the honourable member for Alexandra are having a bit of a talk to one another. I do not want to warn the member for Alexandra, but if he keeps on I will have to do so. I hope that the honourable Minister will shorten his reply.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The point I made then was that, in the belief that we were going to receive a reasonable financial allocation for national highways in 1977-78, I advised the gang from Willunga that it would be transferred to the North to start sealing the Stuart

Highway. I am sure that the member for Goyder would vividly remember my making that statement. It was only when Peter Nixon cut savagely the funds available to South Australia that that decision had to be reversed. The answer is that if some of the people, like the member for Eyre, the Senator Jessops, the Kilgariffs, and other people, stopped playing Party-politics and stood up for the rights of South Australia, the better it would be for all of us.

BUILDING COSTS

Mr. EVANS: Is the Premier aware that the latest available figures (for September, 1977) from the Bureau of Statistics indicate that the cost per square metre of building a house in Adelaide is not only the highest of any mainland city but also has risen at a faster rate than it has done in any other mainland city? Any reference to the Commonwealth Bank figures issued to migrants is not valid, because the houses that bank is quoting are completed houses, many of them old, not new. It is for a complete house including many facilities, and these vary from house to house. There is no clear indication in the bank's figures of building costs, and I have checked with officers who carried out the survey.

The comparison between mainland State capital cities indicates that the average cost per square metre to build a house in Adelaide is \$215; in Sydney, it is \$189; in Melbourne (the only other city to be more than \$200), it is \$202, but that includes an indemnity scheme that has been paid for to insure the owner against faulty workmanship or material; in Brisbane, it is \$181; and in Perth, it is \$192. For the last quarter for which figures are available, the cost per square metre has risen at the fastest rate in Adelaide, at 2.9 per cent, compared to Melbourne, 1.5 per cent; Perth, 1.6 per cent; Sydney, 2.7 per cent; whilst Brisbane's cost went down by 1.6 per cent.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: What sort of housing?

Mr. EVANS: I will not answer interjections, but the type of material used in houses in the different capital cities has always varied, and the cost of housing in Adelaide, until six or seven years ago, had always been one of the lowest, if not the lowest, of all mainland capital cities. In the case of all capital cities, as the Premier has been heard to say in recent times, Hobart has still the lowest overall housing costs in Australia, if one considers the cost of land and the completed house. It is not true that South Australia has the lowest cost, and I think that point should be corrected. The cost rise in South Australia has been at the fastest rate and the average cost per square metre is the highest rate of all mainland capitals in Australia. Is the Premier aware of this, and what will he do about it?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have said that there has been a rise in costs in South Australia and that it has been a higher rise than previously, and I pointed to some of the factors involved. As to the contrasting figures that the honourable member is quoting from the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics, he must know that those are, in fact, not comparable examples; that is quite clear from the statistician's own material. The only fair comparison is made by comparing houses of a particular kind with the house which is predominant in South Australia, the brick clad timber-frame house. In that case, the South Australian figure is lower, certainly, than that in all other mainland cities except Perth.

HENLEY BEACH BUS SERVICE

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Will the Minister for Transport inform me what is the present plan for improving bus services in the Henley Beach area? The Minister recently informed me by correspondence that the present Flinders Park bus service would be extended from the Kidman Park area through to Henley Beach on two different routes. One route is an extension from Valetta Road through to Henley Beach, and the other is by way of Tapley Hill Road and Cheedle Street to Henley Beach.

In view of the build up of population, particularly in the Kidman Park and Fulham Gardens areas, and the need for the bus service, I was pleased to hear that news. The Minister told me that, whilst the extensions had been approved by his department, they were subject to the availability of buses. Will the Minister look at the matter and ascertain what delay there will be before the buses are available?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will have the points the honourable member mentioned examined and obtain for him precise information about the introduction of the new services about which he is concerned.

JUVENILE COURTS ACT

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Can the Minister of Community Welfare say when we may now expect a Bill for a new Juvenile Courts Act? It is some time since the Royal Commissioner, His Honour Judge Mohr, brought down his report on our system of juvenile courts. When that report was made public I think the Premier, and perhaps the Minister as well, immediately announced the acceptance of the proposals in it. There was, I think, general agreement in the community that those proposals should be put into a new Act. I agreed with them, and said so. I understand that subsequently a committee (I presume it was a departmental committee) was set up.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: A working party.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am never sure about the difference between a working party and a committee, but I suppose there is some difference. However, I use the Minister's term—a working party was set up to draft instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel in the drawing of the Bill. Rumour has it that the working party did not altogether stick to the proposals in the report. A suggestion has been made that the department, not altogether happy about some of the proposals made, tried through the back door, as it were, to stymie it by the way in which the instructions to the draftsman were to be drawn, and this has substantially delayed the drafting of the Bill. I should have thought that the draftsman would be competent to take the report and draft the Bill. I remind the Minister that the Government announced (either by the Premier or by the Minister himself) that it was hoped that the Bill would be introduced this month. The election may be used as an excuse, whether rightly or wrongly, for the delay, but it was said that the new Act would be in operation by the end of the year. Unless it comes soon, there is no hope of that happening. It is for these reasons, and because of the talk going about, that I put the question to the Minister.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I am afraid that I have not met the "Mr. Rumour" whom the honourable member seems to know. There has been no change in the target that was announced, namely, the one the honourable member has just mentioned.

INDUSTRIAL PREMISES

Mr. SLATER: Will the Minister for Planning obtain information on the number of industrial premises which have been provided to industry by the South Australian Housing Trust, with the approval of the Industries Development Committee, and which are currently unoccupied, giving the exact location and the value thereof?

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

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Mr. RUSSACK: Does the Premier share the Opposition's concern about and can he explain why the contribution of food, clothing, housing, household equipment and operation, transport, tobacco and alcohol, health and personal care and recreation to the consumer price index in Adelaide is the highest of any capital city in Australia? Figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics—

The Hon. Peter Duncan: You should change your speech writer.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Attorney is out of order.

Mr. RUSSACK:—demonstrate that the contribution of these items to the consumer price index is 5.7 index points, the highest of any capital city in Australia.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have explained the bases on which our figures have differed from those of the other States in this quarter; however, that is not the case in every quarter. In this case, the honourable member, for instance, has referred to food. It so happens that milk and bread prices were increased, but imagine the clamour there would have been from the Opposition if we had refused the milk price increase.

CLOTHING COSTS

Mr. RODDA: I put my question to the Premier.

The Hon Hugh Hudson: Is this one of yours, or has it been made up for you?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister is out of order.

Mr. RODDA: Can the Premier say why clothing costs in South Australia are the highest of those in any Australian capital city? Figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics demonstrate that, with an index of 252.0, Adelaide has the highest figure of any capital city in Australia.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: How often does one have to explain to the serried ranks of absolute ignorance on the Opposition benches—

Mr. Millhouse: Say "the Liberal Party".

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am sorry. I accept the honourable member's qualification of that. Whatever my differences from the honourable member, I do not count him ignorant upon this score. In this matter, for honourable members opposite to continue to contrast index figures as contrasts of absolute costs at base—

Mr. Rodda: Why have them then?

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

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Because they relate to movement, not to absolute amounts. That the honourable

member has been in this House for the long time he has but has not yet caught up with that fact is a grave reflection upon his presence in this Chamber.

TAIL TAGS

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture whether the Government is satisfied that the tail-tagging system adopted in South Australia by regulation a couple of years ago is satisfactory? Members will be aware that a tail-tagging system was introduced here, basically for the purpose of identifying disease and other problems in carcass beef, offal, and so on, in animals processed for human consumption at the Gepps Cross abattoir. It has been drawn to my attention that, in the process of slaughtering (particularly of cattle) at the Gepps Cross works, there is some doubt as to whether the carcass continues to be identified with the hide after the hide has been removed. For those who may not understand exactly what I am saying, it necessarily follows that, when the hide is removed, the tail tag attached to the tail of the animal is also removed at the same time. It has been drawn to my attention that, by the process adopted out there, the identification of the hide with the carcass breaks down. I seek the co-operation of the Minister in this place in obtaining an assurance that that system is working and, if it is not working, that blood testing or another process will be quickly introduced so that the system does work, and the original public protection intent is fully achieved.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall make the appropriate inquiries and let the honourable member know.

CRIMINAL LIABILITY

Mr. ALLISON: Will the Attorney-General consider introducing legislation to protect the innocent victims of criminal acts who may suffer loss or damage to property as a result of those criminal acts? Some few weeks ago I wrote to the Attorney-General seeking his assistance and advice regarding one Mrs. Enderl, who had had \$500-worth of damage done to her car, which was stolen and which was involved in an accident when it was taken by an escapee from the Mount Gambier Gaol. The Government said, through the Attorney-General, that it was not responsible for the accident because the man was not at that time in custody.

I have been informed by the former Chief Secretary that the fence around the Mount Gambier Gaol was there not to keep people in but rather to keep felons away from the melons in the garden. Another case has been brought to my attention. Mr. Chuck, of Moorak, has had his car stolen by a destitute juvenile. It has been crashed and \$2 500-worth of damage has been incurred. Once again, there is no insurance to be paid, because that type of risk is excluded. There is no civil action in either case which could succeed, because the two miscreants are destitute. In each case, it appears that an innocent victim has suffered (in one case to the extent of \$500 and in the other of \$2 500), which is just an absolute loss, through no fault of their own. Is there anything that can be done to help?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: The Government has considered the matter raised by the honourable member. Of course, these matters concern the Government just as much as they concern the community at large. However, although the honourable member's constituent in the latter case may well have been an innocent victim and

suffered damage as a result of the activity of other members of the community, the Government is not, in that case, any more to blame for it than is any other innocent member of the community.

I was somewhat surprised to hear the honourable member say that it is not possible to insure property against such risks. As I understand the situation, it is possible to insure against such risks, although the premium is greater than one normally pays for the comprehensive insurance of a motor vehicle, for example. As I have said, we have considered carefully the possibility of trying to compensate people for property damage that results from crime, but the sums involved and the drain on revenue would be very substantial. We believe that the appropriate and proper course for people to take is for them to make their own private arrangements to insure their property so that, if they suffer loss as a result of criminal action, they can claim for that loss.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: PAY-ROLL TAX

Mr. BANNON (Ross Smith): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. BANNON: Earlier in Question Time today the member for Davenport, in directing a question to the Premier, suggested, in citing an article in the *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, that I was in favour of a reduction in or the abolition of pay-roll tax in the terms stated in that publication. I claim that that is a misrepresentation. I am a member of the Board of the Flinders Institute of Labour Studies, which publishes the bulletin, but it is made quite clear in that publication that the opinions expressed in its articles are the opinions of editors or the authors.

My views on pay-roll tax were stated at page 162 of *Hansard* the other day when I said that it might be a good idea if we could abolish pay-roll tax in view of the fact that it could be seen as regressive in relation to employment, but no alternative revenue source has been submitted.

Mr. GUNN: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The member for Ross Smith is commenting, and that is outside what he can say in a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The honourable member for Ross Smith.

Mr. BANNON: I am simply explaining what the misrepresentation entails. My view is that there is no alternative revenue source that has been submitted that could replace pay-roll tax. Until such time as there is, one could not abolish the tax. That squares completely with what the Premier said in his reply to the member for Davenport.

QUESTIONS RESUMED

CAVAN BRIDGE

Mr. VENNING: When will the Government, through the Minister of Transport, commence building the road traffic bridge over the railway at Cavan? My question this afternoon has been stimulated by the ranting and raving of

the Minister in replying to an earlier question. The former member for Gouger asked a similar question on July 20 this year, when the Minister stated that when he had the all clear from the Federal Minister he would proceed with the bridge. I conferred with the Minister the following day, having telephoned Canberra, and the Minister admitted that he had a reply from Mr. Nixon. That would have been July 23. That was three months ago, and work has not yet commenced on the bridge at Cavan. In replying to a question the Minister ranted and raved about the Federal boys, but when will he proceed with the bridge at Cavan?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: When I replied to the honourable member who was the then member for Gouger (I think that is how the honourable member referred to him) I told him that I had submitted the programme to Canberra and that I was awaiting the approval of the Federal Minister, which I must do because we are now under Canberra control. The honourable member does not seem to understand that. Subsequently, permission was granted for us to proceed, and the work has been proceeding on that bridge for a considerable time.

Statements have been made in relation to that work. The Leader of the Opposition made a statement in his election campaign that he would start work on the bridge if he were elected to Government. In fact, work on the bridge had already been started. Had the honourable member cared to watch the columns of the newspaper he would have seen that tenders from private enterprise to construct the concrete structures of the bridge had been called. We are waiting for those tenders to close to evaluate them.

One difficult problem will exist. Perhaps the honourable member would care, instead of just checking whether Mr. Nixon has given approval (as he indicated just now), to ask Mr. Nixon whether he would approve the new bridge being built to accommodate the standard gauge line or whether we should build it without making such accommodation. That is a question that friend Nixon will not answer. We have called tenders in two separate ways: to construct the over-passes over the existing rail system and, alternatively, to construct it over the existing rail plus the proposed standard gauge line.

If we do not get approval from Mr. Nixon and, of course the attendant cash that must go with it in accordance with the standardisation agreement (which Mr. Nixon would dearly love to tear up), we will have to build it over the existing lines and ignore the standard gauge line. That is the shortsighted attitude and policy with which we are contending whenever we deal with the Federal Minister for Transport.

BUILDING COSTS

Mr. GUNN: Is the Premier aware of the statement made by the Housing Industry Association on August 10, 1977, that over-protective consumer legislation is the major factor in making South Australian building costs the highest of any mainland State? I wish to quote from the figures provided by the Housing Industry Association's Vice-President, Mr. John Trowse, who stated:

"It costs about \$3 000 more to build a house in Adelaide than in Sydney." Mr. Trowse said up to \$1 000 extra was being paid on each dwelling in South Australia because of legislation relating to workmen's compensation, long service leave, builders' licensing and defective premises. Statistics show that material costs in South Australia are the highest of any mainland State. If we look particularly at the cost per

square of the final construction costs, that indicates fairly clearly that South Australia is unfortunately the dearest State, except for Darwin and Canberra . . .

Will the Premier explain what is the situation?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am aware of the statement and I dispute it. Mr. Trowse knows perfectly well that it is incorrect.

Mr. Gunn: Will you give us the figures?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member has asked me a question and I shall reply to it. Many of the sub-contractors who are working for members of the Housing Industry Association have no workmen's compensation payments made for them. They have extended the sub-contracting system to demand that a workman provides some material, and then they say he is an independent contractor, not an employee, and is not covered by workmen's compensation. As to the legislation about which the protest is made, I point out that the legislation in relation to builders' licensing was sought by the Housing Industry Association in South Australia. It was after negotiations with the then president of the association, Mr. Hannaford, I brought it in.

CITRUS MARKETING

Mr. ARNOLD: Can the Premier say whether the Committee of Inquiry into Citrus Marketing in South Australia has been appointed, and, if it has been, who are its members, and when will it commence duties? On October 11, the Premier said that he hoped the committee would be established within a week or 10 days.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As far as I am aware, it has not yet been appointed although the terms of reference have been agreed and the Minister has indicated that he hopes to have a recommendation on the membership of the committee shortly.

At 3.11 p.m., the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

SHOP TRADING HOURS BILL

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT (Minister of Labour and Industry) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for and regulate the closing times for shops, to amend the Industrial Code, 1967-1972, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is introduced to give effect to the recommendations recently made by the Royal Commission into the Law Relating to Shop Trading Hours and Ancillary Matters.

Before explaining the main provisions of the Bill it is appropriate that I should draw to the attention of all honourable members some relevant matters concerning the whole question of the trading hours of retail stores. Notwithstanding the fact that this has continued to be the subject of public discussion since the referendum in 1970, legislative provisions relating to shop trading hours have remained unaltered since then.

Last year I commenced a comprehensive investigation into the situation throughout Australia, as the Govern-

ment considered it was time that the matter be considered in the light of current conditions and attitudes. In some areas the existing legislation had become increasingly hard to enforce and there were indications of a change in public opinion on the matter.

This investigation revealed there were many interests to be considered when contemplating changes in the existing legislation. While many members of the public clearly would appreciate being able to buy any goods at any time of their choosing, it was not quite so clear whether they would appreciate the effects of a complete lack of restriction, which could include increased prices and the disappearance of the local store or delicatessen with an even greater concentration of shopping services in large centres readily accessible only by private transport.

The interests of those who work in the shops are also of great importance. Any major extension of trading hours could involve a loss of private leisure time which is not readily compensated for, even by increased penalty rates. Shopkeepers themselves also have the right to operate a commercially viable business without having to work unreasonable hours.

Having regard to the conflicting interests the Government, earlier this year, introduced into the previous Parliament a Bill that would have enabled wide public discussion being undertaken on the matter before an independent tribunal, to which all interested parties would have access. That Bill proposed that the Full Commission of the South Australian Industrial Commission would hear submissions from all interested parties and make decisions, based on the evidence presented, on what changes should be made in the trading hours. In other words, the Bill provided that no change would be made by an arbitrary act of the Government, but would take place only as a result of full public discussion before an impartial tribunal which could properly assess the arguments of the various interests and pressure groups. The object of this procedure was to ensure that the general welfare of the community would be properly protected.

It is now history that, because of the uncompromising attitude of Opposition members in another place, the Bill was laid aside. The Government was, however, determined that members of the public should not be denied the opportunity of expressing their views, and the reasons for those views, regarding the changes they considered should be made to the current legislation. Accordingly, on May 20, 1977, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into, and report on, whether the law relating to shop trading hours in the metropolitan area of Adelaide should be amended or modified. Mr. W. C. Lean, a commissioner of the South Australian Industrial Commission, was appointed to be the Royal Commissioner.

I publicly express the Government's appreciation to Commissioner Lean for the way in which he conducted the inquiry, during the course of which 180 submissions were received and 98 persons or organisations appeared or were represented before the Royal Commission. A public opinion survey was also conducted of a representative sample of members of the public on behalf of the Commission.

The interest shown in the Royal Commission, and the number and variety of submissions made to it, clearly confirm the Government's view that the review of trading hours of retail stores was a matter of such public interest that all interested persons and organisations should be given an opportunity to make submissions. In announcing the appointment of the Royal Commission I said not only that all sections of the community would be invited to give evidence before the Royal Commission but also that the

Government would introduce legislation to give effect to the Commission's recommendations. This Bill gives effect to that promise.

As recommended by the Royal Commission, this is a Bill for a separate Shop Trading Hours Act to deal exclusively with shop trading hours and ancillary matters. In order that as much notice as possible is given of the date from which extended trading hours will operate, the Bill specifically provides for it to come into operation on December 1, 1977. This will mean that every shop can have one late shopping night in each of the four weeks before Christmas. A definite date is also included to assist in having all variations to awards that will be needed as a result of this measure being made as early as possible.

The closing times for shops as recommended by the Royal Commission are set out in clause 12. On Thursday night each week, shops will be permitted to open until 9 p.m., except in the square mile of the city of Adelaide (that is, excluding North Adelaide), where Friday will be the late shopping night. The terms of reference for the Royal Commission concerned the metropolitan area only. However, it is clear that extended trading hours must also apply in the country.

The Bill therefore has application in all country shopping districts. Subclause (2) of clause 12 provides that the late shopping night in all country shopping districts will be Thursday. However, subclauses (6) and (7) of that clause contain a procedure by which the late shopping night in any country shopping district can be changed to Friday if that night is preferred by the majority of persons who reside in the shopping district, and of the shopkeepers and shop assistants concerned.

The Federation of Chambers of Commerce of South Australia asked that shopkeepers in country shopping districts should have the choice of opening on either Thursday or Friday night. I subsequently discussed with the President and Secretary of that organisation the two provisions to which I have just referred, and they indicated that the provisions were satisfactory.

Exempt shops as recommended by the Royal Commission are defined in clause 4 of the Bill. In his report the Royal Commissioner specifically referred to shops known as "convenience stores" which, in his view, had an unfair trading advantage and which he considered should cease to be exempt shops. The Government agrees that, with the extended trading hours that will be available, there is no need for any special arrangements for these shops: they will be exempt only if they come within the definition of an exempt shop.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission, there are special provisions relating to the sale of meat. By clause 5 of the Bill, the closing times set out in the Act for shops the business of which is mainly or predominantly the retail sale of meat will apply to all such shops in the State, whether in a shopping district or not. As recommended by the Royal Commission, the late shopping night will not apply to shops in which meat is sold.

Mr. Tonkin: Does that mean supermarkets, too?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Yes. Subclause 4 of clause 12 provides that these shops must close at 5.30 p.m. on every week day. This is the present closing time and is considered reasonable, having regard to the fact that butcher shops open much earlier than do most other shops. Because it is impossible to obtain casual or part-time butchers to work in that trade, most butchers already work about 47½ hours a week. Although the Royal Commission recommended that all shops should be able to open until 6 p.m. on week days, the Government does not consider it reasonable for there to be any opportunity to

extend further the working hours of butchers.

The provisions relating to the creation and abolition of country shopping districts, contained in clauses 10 and 11 of the Bill, are substantially the same as those in the present Act. The main alteration is that the power for the Minister to ask the Returning Officer for the State to conduct a poll of electors is not continued. There has been only one occasion when such a poll has been conducted. Instead, the responsibility is given, in the Bill, to the local government authority in the shopping district concerned to satisfy the Minister that any application it makes is supported by the majority of persons resident in the district and of shopkeepers and shop assistants affected by the application.

There is no provision in the Bill for a determination by the Director of the Labour and Industry Department of what is, or is not, an exempt shop, or for a tribunal to determine appeals against the Director's classification of shops, both of which were recommended by the Royal Commission. The procedure for defining an exempt shop, contained in the Bill, which places the onus on a defendant to prove that his was an exempt shop, as defined in the Act, makes these provisions unnecessary. Subclause (11) of clause 13 so provides and will obviate the necessity for the department's having to classify each shop, and so will considerably reduce administrative procedures without inconveniencing anyone. The penalties contained in the Bill for any shop open contrary to the Act are those recommended by the Royal Commission. Clause 16 of the Bill has been included in the form of the present provision in the Industrial Code, pending a further report from the Royal Commission on its extended terms of reference concerning the trading hours for the sale of petrol. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses of the Bill incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides that the Act presaged by this Bill shall come into operation on the first day of December, 1977. Clause 3 amends the Industrial Code, 1967-1972, by removing from that Act references to control of shopping hours. Clause 4 sets out the definitions used for the purposes of this Act and of these definitions the definition of "exempt shop" is drawn to members' particular attention. In summary a shop may acquire the status of an "exempt shop" if it is—

- (a) a small shop conducted by, say, a family and at no time there are more than two persons including "working proprietors" engaged therein;
 - (b) a shop, irrespective of the numbers employed if it is of a class or kind referred to in subparagraphs (i) to (xii) of paragraph (b) of the definition;
 - (c) a hairdresser shop in which only the working proprietary is employed;
 - (d) a small "convenience" store that is, one of under 186 square metres in floor area;
- or
- (e) a shop situated within a squash centre, ten pin bowling alley or golf club that sells mainly sporting goods.

However, no butcher shop, establishment selling new or used motor vehicles or boats or service stations may be an "exempt shop".

Clause 5 sets out the general application of the Act, and from this clause it will be noted that the Act applies to butcher shops wherever situated but otherwise only to shops within "shopping districts" as to which see the definition in clause 4. In subclause (2) of this clause certain

other exemptions from the Act are prescribed, generally following exemptions granted under the corresponding previous legislation. Clauses 6 and 7 provide for the appointment of and the exercise of powers, duties and functions by inspectors and are generally self-explanatory, as are clauses 8 and 9. Clauses 10 and 11 deal with what are described as proclaimed shopping districts, that is, shopping districts situated outside the metropolitan area, as defined. Briefly these clauses provide for the continuation of existing shopping districts with a power to vary them by proclamation subject to formal consultation with local interests. In general the scheme proposed here follows fairly closely the scheme set out in the corresponding previous legislation. Clause 12 is, of course, the crucial clause in the measure and sets out the closing times for various classes of shops. In substance it provides for—

- (a) shopping until 9 p.m. on a Friday in the central shopping district, that is, the area of the city of Adelaide that lies within the North, East, South and West Terraces;
- (b) shopping until 9 p.m. on Thursday in all other shopping districts, with a power to vary this provision by proclamation in relation to proclaimed shopping districts;
- (c) shopping until 9 p.m. on every night for establishments selling new of used motor vehicles and boats during the period when daylight saving is observed;
- (d) no night shopping in the case of butcher shops.

In addition, there is included in this clause a general power to vary temporarily any shopping hours by proclamation. This provision again corresponds to a previous provision in this matter.

Clause 13 provides for a series of offences in relation to closing time and, apart from some technical redrafting and a substantial increase in penalties, corresponds to the previous legislation in this matter. However, the method by which "exempt shops" are dealt with is somewhat different (see subclause (12)). First, it makes it clear that the onus is on the shopkeeper to show that his shop is exempt and, further, that it has been an exempt shop for the week preceding the relevant time, that is, the time at which it is alleged that an offence was committed. This approach has been adopted to ensure that shops cannot change their character over a period of 24 hours so as to enjoy the advantages of unrestricted trading. Clause 14 almost duplicates a corresponding previous provision with the addition of subclause (4) (auction sales of fine art), which was a specific recommendation of the Royal Commission on shopping hours. Clause 15 is a vestigial remnant of the concept of "non-exempt goods" and is intended to ensure that meat, motor vehicles and boats and petrol will not be sold "after hours" as it were. Save that in the case of petrol, provision will be made for "after hours" sales under licence, as to which see clause 16. Clauses 17 and 18 are formal.

Mr. TONKIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

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

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 5 p.m.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

In Committee.

(Continued from October 19. Page 332.)

Agriculture and Fisheries, \$14 843 000.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Under "Administration and Finance", for Deputy Director, Assistant Directors of Agriculture and Fisheries, inspectors, administrative, accounting, clerical and general staff, the sum of \$1 566 348 has been voted, which is less than the sum voted for last year and which is less than were the actual costs last year. Can the Minister explain whether the department intends to have fewer administrative staff in the forthcoming year and why, despite the lower figure proposed for that expenditure, the pay-roll tax applicable to it is higher in 1977-78?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): The reason is that it excludes administrative and inspectorial staff members, who have been placed under "Fisheries". If the honourable member looks at "Fisheries", he will see a substantial increase there. The sum includes expansion funds for an oversea project officer and a chief regional officer, Riverland regional officer, Riverland staff development officer, and three clerks. The reason for the decrease is that certain administrative and inspectorial staff has been transferred to "Fisheries". I will obtain information on the pay-roll tax query the honourable member has asked.

Mr. GUNN: I hope that this line affords me the opportunity to criticise the way in which the Minister of Fisheries and his staff have been operating. Unfortunately, I cannot make my criticisms direct to the Minister but must refer them to the Deputy Premier, who would not have made the kind of stupid statements and irresponsible administrative decisions in which the Minister of Fisheries has indulged. The sum of \$100 000 has been voted for the Office of the Minister. Recently, he took it upon himself to make a statement concerning cattle producers in the Far North, and indicated that assistance was not really justified in their case, because the properties were owned by large pastoral companies. When it was pointed out to him by the President of the Stockowners Association that it was a ridiculous statement, unfortunately he did not withdraw it: what he did was ignore completely the genuine problems existing in that area.

I am sure that the departmental officers knew what the facts were in the matter. The Minister reflected on those people who are in genuine need and whose 70 000 or 80 000 head of cattle must be taken out of the area because they are valueless. The cattle are not in a tuberculosis-free area, and there is no sale for them. The best the Minister could do would be to recommend to his colleagues in Cabinet that the Government provide funds to destroy the cattle, thus protecting the country. There are tens of thousands of cattle in the area, the reason being that the price for cattle is such that it would not pay the producers to muster them and bring them south.

The cost of slaughtering would make it completely uneconomical and would put people in a far worse position. The Minister has used his office and his press staff to continually castigate the Commonwealth Government and the Minister for Primary Industry in a completely outrageous fashion. The statements have been made by someone with no practical understanding of the needs of agriculture. The academic staff with which the Minister surrounds himself in the Ministerial office should be dismissed and replaced by people with a genuine knowledge of the subject.

For the benefit of the Minister of Agriculture, who has

taken \$100 000 of the taxpayers' money, I want to give the headings of what this Commonwealth Government has done for rural producers and the people of this State. He criticised the abolition of the \$16 000 averaging decision, something which had been asked for by rural producers for years. It has now been done. It is one of 40 initiatives the Fraser Government has taken in relation to rural affairs, and the South Australian Minister of Agriculture has been critical of nearly every one.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is not going to read the 40 initiatives?

Mr. GUNN: I shall give the headings. I am sure the Minister has not read them, or he would not make such foolish statements. I refer to personal income tax reductions, improved tax averaging, personal income tax indexation, income equalisation deposits, reduction in estate duty, devaluation, reintroduction of the 40 per cent investment allowance, private company profit distribution, valuation of trading stock, family allowances, pensions, unemployment benefits to farmers, extra assistance to local government, extra assistance for rural roads, telephone extensions from 8 km to 12 km, drought benefits, flood and bush fire relief, term and farm development loans, a national rural bank, an improved rural adjustment scheme, rural research—

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Gunn: We know you don't like this.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have listened to the fulminations of the honourable member. I cannot see how he links this up with the line he mentioned or with the general topic being discussed. I know that you want to be fair, Sir. I have listened patiently for some minutes and I suggest, with respect, that the honourable member is completely out of order when he goes on with irrelevant nonsense on this line.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order. I think the member for Eyre has gone far from the line under discussion. Unless he can link his comments to that line, he must not continue in the same vein.

Mr. GUNN: I link it up in relation to these measures which would assist the staff of the Minister of Agriculture in discharging their duties. They are decisions which benefit agriculture and which would greatly assist the Minister's staff. It is quite clear from his comments that the member for Mitcham does not want me to explain this, because he has a dislike of rural producers, and he has put on record in this Chamber his complete dislike for them and for the Commonwealth Government. I do not want to go on at length.

The CHAIRMAN: I have upheld the point of order. If the honourable member continues in the same vein, I shall have to rule him out of order.

Mr. GUNN: I thought I was within Standing Orders in referring to matters which would assist the Minister's staff in their deliberations on behalf of rural producers. The Minister of Agriculture has been not only incompetent and ill-informed; he has been a disaster. No Minister of Agriculture in any other State has received such consistent criticism. It is time he faced reality, discharged his duties competently, and adopted an attitude of support for rural industry rather than one of antagonism, for he continues to express an anti-rural viewpoint. He is not entitled, as he does, to knock any successful section of agriculture. He has a large chip on his shoulder. He wants to push the socialist barrow and destroy agriculture, and in that he has been assisted by the member for Mitcham.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: If the Minister of Agriculture has a chip on his shoulder, the member for Eyre has a woodheap on his shoulder. This is not the first

occasion on which the honourable member has made unwarranted attacks in this place on the Minister of Agriculture—baseless attacks, I might add.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Oh, go on, he's hopeless.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: That is not supported by the facts that the honourable member has related to the Committee. I am not going to stand by and see the Minister denigrated in the way in which the member for Eyre has attempted to denigrate him and his activities. I wonder whether perhaps the Minister of Agriculture has taken a realistic approach to his job, particularly in trying to steer the department in a direction in which probably it should have been steered many years ago, particularly in relation to the services it provides to primary producers throughout the State, since we are now attempting to get the department to face the fact that we should be looking at assistance, direction, and guidance to primary producers to ensure that they produce products that we can readily market—a market-orientated approach, as opposed to the approach of many years ago of growing something we could grow well, whether it could be sold or not. The Minister has been singularly successful in having his department change direction. It is a long and tedious path, as it is not easy to change the direction of any department.

The only point to which I wish to reply in what the honourable member has raised is in relation to drought assistance to pastoralists in the North of the State. They have real problems which are recognised by the Minister of Agriculture and by the Government. Three or four weeks ago, the Minister brought this matter to Cabinet. His advice to Cabinet (and no doubt the advice to him) was that we must get the approval of the Commonwealth Government to extend its assistance to the State. After \$2 000 000 is spent in the area, Commonwealth funds are involved. To put the matter in order, it was necessary for the Minister of Agriculture to contact the Minister for Primary Industry (Mr. Sinclair) and the Federal Government.

The Minister telexed Mr. Sinclair, and at about the same time the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister on the same subject asking for extension to cover this problem which is recognised by the Government. My information is that as yet we have had no reply, either to the telex or to the letter. If the member for Eyre believes that is the fault of the Minister of Agriculture, I fail to see, if he is fair, how he reaches such a conclusion. The problem is recognised; it is very real. If the Minister of Agriculture has not followed up this correspondence and the lack of reply to it, I shall ask him to do so to see whether the matter can be speeded up.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I am stunned by the remark of the Minister of Works. He said (if not in these words, then in words to this effect) that it is about time primary producers followed pursuits of producing lines that we can sell.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: I meant cereal crops, etc. The honourable member knows what I mean.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I should like a better explanation. Surely the Minister is not telling primary industry in this country that it should be chasing the market that happened to prevail at the time. He, above all people, with his past relationship with the rural community, should understand that just because pork is realising a high price for the time being everyone in the rural community does not go in for pigs. If that is the Government's thinking, it should lift its game: it should encourage people to pursue practices that enable them to produce the best possible product. Governments both in the State and Federal sphere should get off their backsides and establish those markets for

producers. They should not try to tell producers what to do.

I might be wrong about what the Minister said and he might, in a few words, bowl me out. In no circumstances, if that is what he intended, can the rural community accept that sort of direction or advice from Ministerial level. It is not easy for the Minister of Agriculture to change the function of his department. Equally, it is difficult for primary producers to change their function easily or quickly.

At the time of transfer of the Rural Industries Assistance Branch from the Lands Department to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department how many filed uncompleted applications for assistance were involved? Could the Minister also provide me with a personnel chart of that division as it now applies and, accordingly, the personnel complement that is to receive the \$255 000? I add that I do not criticise the transfer in any way.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will get that information for the honourable member.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Although I appreciate the difficulties involved in these major transfers, I should like the Minister to indicate any future change that might occur in the fisheries and agriculture sections generally. Does the Government support divorcing the two pursuits?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Minister seriously take into account the extent of primary activity that is and undoubtedly will be involved in fishing and, in doing so, will he at least investigate the merits of having a separate Fisheries Department so that all important primary industry can receive the attention it obviously deserves?

Mr. RODDA: The total expenditure in the summary for the department exceeds \$31 000 000, which is an increase of about \$19 000 000 over last year. Page 52 of the Auditor-General's Report states that staff employed in the department increased by 8 per cent from 687 to 741 employees. In the rationalisation of departments, there has been a transfer of branches from the Lands Department to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department.

On behalf of rural producers, it is heartening to see an increase in the vote for the department. For all the years I have been here it has been argued that insufficient funds are appropriated for this department. If the department is to be effective it must have highly qualified staff in correct numbers throughout the State in research centres, as we are seeing in the South-East and other rural districts of the State. Is a plan embodied in these lines to appoint highly qualified officers to take up the slack that will be necessary to streamline the department?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to ascertain what organisational changes have been directly necessary as a result of any change in direction of the department. The honourable member indicated the marked increase in expenditure, particularly in the transfer of certain operations from the Lands Department to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department. A marked increase in the sum provided for natural disasters has occurred. The sum amounts to \$11 000 000 and it is unfortunate that the Government must face that problem during the coming year. I will obtain a report for the honourable member on the matters he raised in relation to staffing.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Clearly, the Government intends to retain the two separate primary industry departments under the one canopy. In doing so it would be extremely useful if, in the preparation of the Estimates of Expenditure, fisheries could be included under a heading separate from the other agricultural practices. For example, I refer to the item relating to the purchase of

boats and engines because, immediately after that item, are general expense items that apply to the office of the Minister. I cannot accept that boats and engines form any part of the function of agriculture in the rural sense, as do other lines under that heading. Therefore, for the ease of operation, surely it would be handy to divorce the two functions of the department. How many boats and/or engines will be purchased for the sum allocated of \$116 000, and for what purpose will the boat or boats be used?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I believe the allocation provides for the replacement of engines in the *Warenda*, as well as the replacement of a number of small patrol boats and outboard motors. I will find out how many and for what purpose they will be used.

Mr. CHAPMAN: A sum of \$118 000 is allocated for operating expenses, whereas only \$13 000 is allocated for the purchase of equipment. Why will more money be spent on operating expenses than on equipment? Is the \$638 000 allocated for the Fisheries Research and Development Fund for research into the outer zone (the deep waters off the shelf) or for research specifically within our State waters?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The sum covers the salaries for the fisheries research programme, including provision for operating the new research vessel, *Joseph Verco*, and includes estimates of a statutory transfer of 50 per cent of licence fees. A provision for operating expenses is to cover travelling and operating costs for animal health, livestock and dairy branches. The provision for the purchase of equipment is to replace existing old equipment.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: The fruit fly eradication programme has been going on for about 30 years. It seems as though there is no hope of entirely getting rid of fruit fly, and that we will have to keep this control programme going indefinitely. I think I was told previously that the outbreaks are now largely the result of fruit which is brought into the State. Does the Minister believe that is the case, or do we have fruit fly permanently in the State? The last serious fruit fly outbreak was in a commercial garden at Highbury. However, that garden has since been subdivided for housing allotments.

The spotted alfalfa aphid can pose a serious threat to lucerne pastures in South Australia. The vote for the control of that pest is \$10 000. What measures are involved? Does the department think it can wipe out this pest completely or will we have a continuing programme of control? It seems as though once pests get into South Australia they cannot be eliminated.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The provision is for normal border road-blocks for fruit fly which shows that the department believes there is a risk of infestation into this State from without its borders, and it is also for lure and inspection activities within the State.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Does it cover stripping?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: There is no provision for outbreaks here. A special allocation will have to be made from Treasury if necessary. Calls are received regularly about suspected infestations of fruit fly, so staff must be available to answer such calls. I will get a report for the honourable member.

I think that during the last fortnight the Minister of Agriculture presented to Cabinet a submission which will involve an additional \$450 000 being made available to the department from State Government sources to try to control the spotted alfalfa aphid. This is evidently a serious threat to lucerne pastures, and that sum will be made available.

Mr. EVANS: Regarding the vote for economics and marketing, has any research been done, or can it be carried out, into the actual cost of the loss of markets, in particular the problems at wharves and the cost of loading at wharves? Hay can be delivered to the wharf for \$1.50 a bale, but by the time it reaches the hold of the ship the cost is \$3.

To a layman that is ridiculous. The same thing happens with meat and, by the time that is processed, the price has escalated tremendously. Departmental officers must have considered the effect that conditions on wharves and in transport are having on the industry. Perhaps a subsidy may have to be considered, but that would be a burden on society. This week the Dairying Section of the Agriculture Department had a display at which figures showed that 48 per cent of dairy farmers in South Australia were operating below the poverty line. Has the department carried out a survey into costs in the industry, is the Government concerned about this, and will it take action to solve some of the problems? Perhaps it could make representation to the Industrial Court concerning conditions.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will check with the department, and let the honourable member know the result.

Mr. EVANS: The Government has been asked by me and the Stirling District Council to make money available for research to control the millipede pest. It is possible that this pest could spread to the metropolitan area, as it is now in Stirling, Willunga, Port Lincoln, and other parts of the State. It is a horrible thing that originally came from Portugal, and perhaps the Government may take action to help Mr. Baker of the C.S.I.R.O. research this pest in Portugal to ascertain whether there is a natural predator or some other method of controlling it. This pest is also a health problem.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The matter was raised recently by the member for Alexandra, and I understand that he is awaiting a reply. However, I will draw the attention of the department to it.

Mr. NANKIVELL: The Minister may recall that, when an outbreak of spotted alfalfa aphid occurred in South Australia, it was announced that the Government intended to spend at least \$100 000 to try to control it, to develop a predator, and to take other action to control this pest which has come from New South Wales but which originated in California. No money was spent in the past financial year and only \$25 000 has been allocated this year. Is that a correct figure?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have already replied to this question, saying that Cabinet has approved \$450 000 for this purpose. The honourable member has referred to the amount on the line, but money can be spent as well.

Mr. WOTTON: The amount allocated to research centres seems to have been static for the past three years, although I understood that more research centres were to be set up. Has any further development taken place?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Any money required for further development of these centres would be provided from Loan funds and not revenue.

Line passed.

Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Forests and Minister of Fisheries, Miscellaneous, \$16 377 000.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Nothing has been allocated for fees and expenses for the committee of inquiry in regard to abattoirs investigations. Is there a reason?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: This investigation was completed in 1975-76 and, although an amount was placed on the 1976-77 Estimates, the expected need for funds did not eventuate.

Mr. RODDA: Can the Minister say when a decision will be taken regarding the setting up of pest plant boards? Councils are wondering what the final decision will be. What progress has been made in this matter?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The information I have is that this provision involves subsidies paid to pest plant control boards operating throughout the State, including the initial setting up grants, and salary subsidies to councils which have not yet formed control boards. Provision is also made for payment of grants for the control of pest plants on Crown lands. As I do not have the information that the honourable member seeks, I will obtain it for him.

Mr. NANKIVELL: An important international conference involving beekeepers is at present taking place in Adelaide. However, at present a serious outbreak of a bee-hive disease known as European foul brood is causing concern to beekeepers in both South Australia and Victoria. In fact, the Upper South-East area has been temporarily quarantined, the movement of bees in and out being permitted subject to inspection. A world expert on this subject was expected to attend the conference, and it was hoped that he would be able to help apiculturists and the department solve this problem. Will the Minister obtain some information on this matter?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes.

Mr. VENNING: Compared to \$874 spent in connection with country fire services last year, \$36 000 is now allocated in connection with the Country Fire Services Board. Why is there such a substantial increase?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Country Fire Services Board was constituted in May, 1977, following the commencement of operation of certain provisions of the Country Fires Act. Provision is made for fees and expenses of the Chairman and nine members and also for portion of the allowances paid to members of the three subcommittees constituted by the board. Provision is also made for the salary of an administrative officer and stenographer, both yet to be appointed. I think the honourable member would agree it was necessary to upgrade this operation, and this will do just that. Whether or not it is as effective as it ought to be remains to be seen, because it has not been working for long. However, I imagine it will be a vast improvement on what we had previously.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Does the Government not propose to make any investigation into the establishment of regional abattoirs for the next 12 months? As I have been told that this is an on-going process and that the Government is continually looking at providing the best quality meat and services, why is there no allocation?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The money was provided for a specific committee of investigation in connection with the abattoirs. That committee has been disbanded, and therefore there is no money for it. That heading is shown only because we had to account for \$1 000 which was in the system but which was not called upon. The Government is competent to form a committee again if it wishes. There is a constant review of the operation, but not necessarily by a committee with specific terms of reference.

Mr. ALLISON: There is no allocation for the committee of inquiry into the rock lobster industry to continue. Has a firm recommendation been made to the Minister about the future of professional and amateur fishing rights in this industry? Further, will amateur fishermen continue to enjoy the right to use three craypots?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The committee is no longer operative, having been replaced by committees

established under the South Australian Fisheries Industry Council which are not provided for here.

Mr. CHAPMAN: In connection with the costs of the advisory committee for the rock lobster and prawn fishing industries, to which line was the Minister referring?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I said that it has been replaced by committees set up under the South Australian Fishing Industry Council.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Is that at a cost to the Government?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The council is subsidised by the Government, but we do not put lines in for committees, the industry does that.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Who pays them?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The industry.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Does the Government assist financially?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Government subsidises the council, which in turn sets up the committees and pays them.

Line passed.

Environment, \$7 548 000.

Mr. EVANS: I refer to the allocation for the National Parks and Wildlife Division. Will the Minister ascertain for me the cost of maintaining and operating the Belair Recreation Park golf course as well as the revenue received by that golf course each month. Although \$600 000 has been spent on developing the course, it does not seem to receive maximum use. Perhaps it needs more publicity so that we will achieve a better usage rate.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister for the Environment): I will obtain that information for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Minister for the Environment, Miscellaneous, \$74 000.

Mr. EVANS: I refer to the allocations of \$13 750 for the Keep South Australia Beautiful campaign and \$10 500 for the anti-litter campaign. The sum of \$10 100 was actually spent on the latter campaign last year, \$10 500 having been allocated this year, at a time when legislation expected to solve the can litter problem was being implemented. Is it intended that this will be an on-going commitment by the Government in addition to the normal grant to Kesab until the litter problem is controlled?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I should think that there would be a need for an on-going commitment, as it would not be possible for us to control the litter problem by legislation. There is, therefore, a need for a continuing education programme and schemes of that nature. However, it could probably be reviewed each year.

Mr. EVANS: Will the Minister ascertain from Kesab whether it will keep an eye on the composition of litter? Already, I have noticed an increase in the number of amber-coloured bottles, be they non-returnable or full-size bottles, that are starting to encroach on the environment in place of cans. If this situation continues, there will be an increased amount of broken glass on the roadsides and in picnic areas, as we experienced in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Will the Minister ask Kesab to keep this matter in mind and bring down reports on it?

Also, will the Minister give me some idea of the support being given to the tree-planting programme? Last year, \$10 173 was actually spent on this line, and this year \$14 000 has been allocated. I support this concept. Some parts of our city park lands could be replanted with native trees. Some areas are used not by sporting groups but by fitness groups and, if these areas were replanted, it could attract more birds and improve the environment generally. Some voluntary organisations would be willing to do this work, so that no burden would be placed on the Adelaide City Council. Perhaps the Government could provide

native trees and shrubs from its Monarto, Woods and Forests, or Housing Trust nurseries.

The same applies to areas of the hills face zone that are owned by the Government. The shrubs in these areas comprise olive trees or exotic varieties that have been brought from other countries. Although these shrubs look attractive, the areas in between them comprise noxious weeds. If native trees were planted, they could tend, as they grew, to smother out and reduce, if not destroy, the noxious weed growth.

I support the concept of the tree-planting programme, and ask the Minister to get his officers to examine the possibility of expanding the scheme and asking for volunteer help. I am sure that in this way the environment could be improved not by obtaining more land but by making better use of the land that we now have.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to obtain that information for the honourable member.

Mr. WOTTON: I refer to the new sundry grants of \$9 000. Does that allocation include money that could be spent on examining the problems caused by birds in relation to fruit, a matter on which some research has already been carried out successfully? The previous Minister concentrated to some extent on this matter, and I hope that the present Minister will continue to do so. Is any money set aside for the project to which I have referred?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: This grant is being made to various bodies that undertake significant conservation studies. I do not know whether any suggestions have been made about how the money should be used. However, I will check that aspect for the honourable member and let him know what is intended to be done with it. I do not know whether money is held in store waiting for schemes to be advanced, or whether there is a waiting list for people seeking this sort of grant. I imagine that there could well be a waiting list. The department will undoubtedly make recommendations to me on how the money should be spent. I will ascertain whether the line relates to the problem of birds damaging fruit.

Mr. EVANS: I refer to the allocation for the Waste Disposal Committee, which has a great job to do. Last year, the committee spent \$10 276, and this year its allocation is \$7 000. Will the Minister ascertain how near the committee is to finalising its recommendations, and whether the Government intends during this fiscal year to introduce legislation to set up the authority? If it does, I hope that it will be called not a waste authority but a resource recovery authority. "Waste" tends to imply that, when one has something for which one has no more use, it should be thrown aside and regarded as useless. However, many materials are of much value to society and can be used for energy or other purposes. If such an authority was called a resource recovery authority or something similar to this, it would suggest that we were trying to recover and not throw away such material. Will the Minister ascertain how far the committee has gone, and whether it is intended to introduce during this fiscal year a Bill to set up the authority?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I cannot say offhand whether that is intended. This money is intended to cover not only the committee's costs but the report's publication, so the committee must be getting close to finality. In any event, I will check and let the honourable member know.

Line passed.

Marine and Harbors, \$11 535 000.

Mr. EVANS: There was an announcement today that boat licence fees and other associated licence fees for the operating of a boat have increased. Can the Minister say how many people have licensed vessels or taken out

operating licences? Why was the Government forced, so early in the life of the legislation, to increase the fees substantially by 50 per cent?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Marine): Provision was made in this legislation for an assessment of the costs of operating the Act, and that assessment was conveyed to the Government and to the Governor. The Government had to raise the funds required for that cost from registration or licences. There have been increased costs, but the honourable member may have overlooked that the licence to operate a vessel is a once-only operation. I think initially we expected about 60 000 people to become licensed, and I do not think we reached that figure.

I asked this morning how many vessels had been registered, how many licences had been issued, and what number would be licensed each year. The number of licences issued each year will drop dramatically, and that will have a significant bearing on revenue. It could amount to tens of thousands of dollars. The move is to increase the licence fee from \$2 to \$3 and the registration fee from \$5 to \$7. That will remain until a review necessitates our moving it again, to meet the requirements of the Act. Many people suggested that the Government would use this as a revenue-raising matter. It cannot do that and it is not trying to do that, but it is required under the Act to raise sufficient revenue to run the operation.

Mr. EVANS: There is a need to start programming for more boat ramps and marina facilities, particularly for deep-keel and other yachts. I think about 350 000 people are associated with the boating industry. We have a reasonably large coastline and we do not seem to be providing the marinas, mooring facilities, and boat ramps for those people. Is the department considering increasing the number of facilities, especially for the benefit of owners of deep-keel yachts, most of which do not have mooring facilities?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I think the next one to come into operation will be at North Haven. That has not yet been completed, but I believe that plans for completing it are about to be sent to the Government by A.M.P. It may be possible to temporarily moor some vessels in that area, but I accept that there is a sad lack of facilities of this type.

Last Friday, I was handed a report from the Coast Protection Board, compiled by consultants, for the board commission to look into this matter. Many suggestions have been made but costs have not been put on them, and that is an important factor. In addition, this morning I discussed with Mr. Griffiths, the Director of Marine and Harbors, the need to set up a small task force in the department so that we can determine our responsibilities as a department as opposed to those of the Coast Protection Board.

The board seems to be looking at boat ramps and the like, and any structure that affects the seabed is more the responsibility of the Marine and Harbors Department. In the past, the department has been interested only in the commercial aspects, either fishing or the normal activities of shipping. I have asked that this be done quickly, because probably we will have to set aside a certain amount each year for this specific purpose. I think it important to formulate a programme and an amount in our Loan Estimates so that we can go ahead and introduce facilities.

There has been far more pressure than was thought a short time ago. I was amazed at the number of pleasure craft that had been registered. Earlier I told Mr. Jim White, who has now retired from the department and who headed this operation up, that I did not believe his

estimate of 25 000 by Christmas time and had a bet on it with him, but I had to pay the bet. That is the best and most up-to-date information that I can give.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I refer to the item for the Director, and it is also tied up with maintenance of wharves, etc. I have asked the Minister about the use to which the new container terminal was to be put. The terminal was opened at a cost of about \$10 000 000.

I think Mr. John Griffiths was going overseas to try to get trade for South Australia. Some weeks not one ship uses the terminal, and the highest number using it in a week has been two. The receipts from that would not pay the interest on the construction cost. I am interested in the Director's finding on his overseas trip about attracting shipping to South Australia, and I am also interested in what prospect there is of any increased use of the terminal. I think there has been an increase from the trouble in Victoria, but it seemed to me that the container terminal would be as big a white elephant as the passenger terminal.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Deputy Leader could not mean what he said then. I stated here recently that I could not believe the shortsightedness of the Opposition about this facility. I am pleased that the Government decided to proceed with the facility. I just want to make it clear to the honourable member that, if it was not there now and if it was not constructed when it was, the port of Adelaide would die—it is a redevelopment of the port of Adelaide.

Only this morning the Director of Marine and Harbors gave me a lengthy report from the department's commercial agent in relation to the activities in which the department should be involving itself in order to attract trade to Port Adelaide. This is a new development. As I said, the department was taking a new thrust in that it had never previously interested itself in the commercial aspects of the activity but had gone more for the building and upgrading of ports. There was an engineering bias, and this is changed.

Only this morning the Director told me that, because various shipping lines (and I will not mention names, for obvious reasons) are going into new and longer ships which will not be able to negotiate the Port River. They are now negotiating to use No. 6 berth and, if it was not there, we would not be able to attract those ships to Port Adelaide.

I am saying that shipping is still changing. It was in the light of that sort of eventuality that this decision was taken. That proves the decision to be right. Further, 24 ships have used the facility in the past 29 weeks. One could say that that is not a very good use, but it is consistent with the study made and the evidence presented to the Public Works Committee, which agreed to the Government's proceeding with the construction of this wharf.

If the honourable member has Questions on Notice, I shall certainly obtain a full report for him. However, I will not forecast the future for him other than to say that the wharf will be used, and used more extensively, in the future than at present, for the reasons I have just outlined.

Mr. MATHWIN: I support the comments of the member for Fisher regarding the increase in boat registration and licence fees. When the legislation was introduced the Government was warned by members on this side, and by me especially, from my experience in local government. A licence fee of 50 cents applied for about 10 years, and that scheme operated well under the Brighton council. The Minister said that these fees were not intended to raise revenue, but in a short period the fees charged to the owners of pleasure boats are being increased. This is not good enough.

Mr. Arnold: It's the thin edge of the wedge.

Mr. MATHWIN: True, and the Minister is aware of it. The Minister could not believe that local government could more efficiently licence these boats. I am disappointed about this increase in fees.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have already answered that aspect for the honourable member for Fisher.

Line passed.

Minister of Marine, Miscellaneous, \$235 000.

Mr. EVANS: The sum of \$220 000 is allocated for refund under the Mobil Lubricating Oil Refinery (Indenture) Act, 1976. Can the Minister explain the position?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The payment to be made to Mobil Lubricating Oil Refinery concerned the 1976 indenture and includes estimated refunds of \$110 000 not paid in 1976-77.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: For port sites, investigations, etc., \$5 000 was allocated and nearly \$100 000 was spent in 1976-77. Will the Minister give some explanations of what the investigations involved?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall obtain that information for the honourable member as I do not have it offhand.

Line passed.

Transport, \$8 525 000.

Mr. TONKIN: I refer to the contribution towards transport research projects. Was the payment of \$99 703 the total sum spent in 1976-77, and is the \$100 000 proposed to be spent this year, on NEAPTR, or are other studies involved? If they are, what is the breakdown of the research that will be undertaken?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Transport): I do not have the breakdown of the sum involved, but I shall obtain it and let the Leader have it.

Mr. CHAPMAN: As \$12 000 is allocated for oversea visits by the Minister, his wife and officers, can he say when he intends to go overseas and what studies he intends to undertake?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member looks at last year's vote he will see that \$12 000 was provided and was not used. The same approach has been taken in this present year.

Mr. Chapman: Are you going overseas?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I hope to go, and provision is made. Whether or not it will be used remains to be seen.

Mr. GUNN: Earlier today we heard a diatribe of nonsense from the Minister about the lack of funds provided to this State for the planning and construction of the Stuart Highway. He alleged that the whole problem in relation to planning for this important project was the current Commonwealth Government's fault. The Minister knows that that is not true. Some of the funds under this line would come from the Commonwealth Government. The Minister knows that he is at fault, but he alleged that Senator Jessop, Senator Kilgariff and I were at fault.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I know how strongly the member for Eyre feels about his hobby-horse, but I do not want to debate it now, because it has nothing to do with this line. The honourable member is referring to funds within the Highways Department and to Federal funding which does not appear even in the Revenue Budget.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can the Minister state what progress has been made on research into a replacement for the motor vessel *Troubridge*? I have a long-term interest in a transport link between Kangaroo Island and the mainland, and I have heard on the grapevine that there has been a

problem in relation to the planning and design of a replacement vessel.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I had a report prepared on a replacement for the *Troubridge*. I think the honourable member was given a copy of the report, which made certain recommendations.

Mr. Chapman: I would be delighted if it could be confirmed.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: So would I. Unfortunately, it appears that some of the advice, tendered in good faith, is not as sound as it should have been. It appears that the calculations have created some difficulties.

Mr. Chapman: In relation to the vessel or the ports?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The vessel. We are at present considering how the problem should be approached. Only yesterday I suggested that we ought perhaps to consider doing the same type of thing as we are doing with the new type of rail cars: instead of designing a rail car and putting it out to tender and asking for prices, it was suggested that manufacturers be asked to provide details of what they could supply and at what price. That might have been a better way to tackle the question of replacing the *Troubridge*. We may have to approach it in that way. The matter is still actively under consideration.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Are the basic vehicular concept and the basic design principles still being maintained by the department? Will the time table referred to in the report be adhered to? Or, as a result of the problems to which the Minister referred, is it likely that the replacement date will be postponed and, if so, to what extent?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I cannot give the honourable member the specific information he wants. I fear that the proposed time table may not be met. Like some of the other information we were given, which now appears to be not as accurate as one would have wished, the information regarding the life of the present vessel may not have been as accurate as one would have wished. We worked on the advice that the vessel would cease to be economic in 1981, but subsequent advice suggests that the present vessel could operate well beyond that year.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can the Minister assure the Committee that, notwithstanding the current problems being experienced, the Government firmly intends to own and maintain the vehicular ferry link (or that concept) between Kangaroo Island and the mainland in the foreseeable future?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: We have nothing in mind at this stage concerning any change. If Adelaide Steamship Company would like the *Troubridge* back, we will sell it back at the price that we paid for it. Of course, we are committed to ensure that Kangaroo Island has an adequate level of transport. On that score, it is very unlikely that there will be any change. Of course, every now and then people make suggestions as to how they could operate the service, and such people have never been turned away.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Regarding the Minister's statement that offers are made from time to time in relation to providing a seaway service, can he say whether his department currently considers that any free-enterprise services are being seriously recognised and, if they are, which services?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It is not really my department's problem to consider them seriously or not. Our attitude is simply that, if anyone wishes to run a service across the strait, provided they can go to the Minister of Marine or the Director of Marine and Harbors and get the required certificate and the berthing facilities, the Transport Department is not concerned at all.

We would still continue to operate the *Troubridge*. Indeed, the joint service is still going with the ketches, although on a lesser scale. Also, the *Philanderer* ran across the strait for a long time, and its operator said that he was going to take over the whole of the operation. It was left to him to do that but, unfortunately, he was unable to do so. We have a responsibility to provide a service and, if someone else can come in and run a service, provided that he meets with the requirements of the Marine and Harbors Department, it is really not the department's business.

Mr. TONKIN: Has the Minister further considered the introduction of an all-night bus service in Adelaide? When this proposition was put up a few weeks ago, he said that it was not going to be much good, that it would not in any way help the road toll by helping drinking drivers, and that it had been tried on new year's eve but it was not very successful. I remind him that, on January 3, 1973, he said that he was having the possibility of an all-night service investigated by his department, with a skeleton all-night bus service, and transport leaving about once an hour, thus helping the number of drinking drivers on the road. Has the Minister had any cause to change his mind again, and what is the current stage of that progress?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The matter was examined in 1972, and what the Leader has stated is, I think, a fair statement of fact. The reason for examining it was that, if the service were patronised by people who should not be driving their vehicles, it would contribute considerably to a reduction of the road toll. Unfortunately, however, no evidence could be produced to suggest that that would be the case. Certainly, in Victoria and New South Wales, where, I think from memory, there is a skeleton service, it is poorly patronised. All of the information at our disposal indicated that it was unlikely that the service would play a substantial part. Indeed, one tangible point was the new year's eve service, about which I am bitterly disappointed because it was so poorly patronised. I think that the Government may well have seriously to consider not even running the service on new year's eve, because of the cost involved compared to the number of patrons. That is the hard, cold fact of life.

Mr. TONKIN: I should be reluctant to give any support to a proposition that the new year's eve bus service be abandoned, and I should be most unhappy if this matter were not kept before the department for consideration at all times. I am certain, knowing the departmental officers as I do, and having the greatest respect for them, that they will undoubtedly bring forward this proposition if it is at all feasible, and I hope it becomes so.

The Minister will remember that the promise of an east-west Bee-line bus service was contained in his Party's 1975 policy speech. It was suggested then that the transport link provided would be not only between Victoria Square and the Adelaide railway station but also between Victoria Square and the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The Minister has said that public transport between Victoria Square and the Royal Adelaide Hospital is available on the St. Peters, Paradise, and Newton bus services. However, has there been further development to provide this east-west Bee-line service?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Although the Leader did not specifically ask for the night service to operate, I shall be pleased to ask my officers to review the position. Regarding the east-west Bee-line service, I do not know what document the Leader has referred to, but the point I was expressing is that a service was available, although it is not the type of service that the Bee-line would provide. When the programme was drafted, redrafted, and redrafted again to implement improvements with the delivery of new buses, several factors had to be

considered. I still strongly believe that there is a greater need to provide extensions of bus services into areas in which there are no services than to provide an east-west Bee-line service. Also, the circular line will provide a much needed service and it has a priority above that of the east-west Bee-line service. No-one is more disappointed than I am that the east-west Bee-line service is not operating, but there is a story there that I will not go into. I do not have the time table for the commencement of this service, but it will be well into next year before it operates.

Mr. TONKIN: I thank the Minister for his comments, but has he considered recently introducing a 10c charge on the present Bee-line service or, conversely, has he considered making travel within the city section free of charge on any bus service? Perhaps he would consider having no charge on that part of bus services that operate from Victoria Square through King William Street and North Terrace to the hospital. It seems that there are some inconsistencies that need to be resolved, and I would be interested to hear the Minister's comments.

All honourable members will recall the dial-a-bus episode, a long and involved chapter dating from January 30, 1971, when it was said that Adelaide would be one of the first cities in the world to develop viable alternatives to the over-use of the private car in the city. The Minister has had a tremendous enthusiasm for the system, an experimental demand activated bus system in the metropolitan suburbs. "Dial-a-prayer" was the term used, I think by the member for Salisbury, for the dial-a-bus system. I understand the remark has gone down in the history of this place as one of the most apt interjections ever made.

In a summary of future transport needs for this State, the Director-General, Dr. Scrafton, said only last year that, among other things, Adelaide could see more dial-a-bus experiments. I am not opposed to any development as long as it is practical and will help relieve the tremendously grave transport problems we are now facing, but there is a connotation about the term "dial a bus" which will put most people's nerves on end. The idea that this system could be introduced again and experimented with does not appeal to many in this community. What plans has the department for further experiments?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If I were to ask the Liberal Premier of Victoria for a report on the dial-a-bus experiment that is to start under the Victorian Government on Monday next, I wonder whether that would interest the Leader. I know nothing of that experiment but, from what I have read in the press, it may well be the type of dial-a-bus experiment which the Transport Department initially proposed to launch in South Australia: a dial-a-bus experiment based on a specific locality, rather than trying to cover the whole suburb, which proved to be the rather over-ambitious idea of the gentleman who made the approach to us.

The Transport Department is always watching new developments. We keep an open mind and we are always interested to see whether any new development can be applied to Adelaide and how it can be done. Although no dial-a-bus experiment is imminent, that does not mean that at some future stage we might not wish to do it. We have a new experiment in transport, similar in some ways to dial-a-bus, in the community bus experiment launched recently at Campbelltown. It has been a significant success. We should not close our options to anything; that is the attitude the department and I are following.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitten): If the Leader is to continue asking questions on this subject, perhaps it would be better to do it under the line "Miscellaneous" on page 81.

Mr. TONKIN: With great respect, it comes under "Contingencies, Contribution towards transport research projects." I do not mind which line we do it under, but I have more questions for which I would like replies. I am pleased to hear that the Minister does not have a closed mind on this matter. I was going to refer him to the Victorian dial-a-bus experiment to be carried out there soon. It is, as the Minister pointed out, more of a community feeder dial-a-bus service than the dial-a-bus service that was proposed and tried out in this State a while ago.

I should like to correct an impression that was given by the Minister; a stance he has adopted before. I have no doubt that the private operator of the dial-a-bus service was, to quote the Minister's words "perhaps over-enthusiastic". I have no doubt that the Government encouraged him to experiment and to undertake the experiment. The Government or the Minister is not entirely without blame in that regard when one considers the findings of the expert committee that reported about 12 months before the introduction of the scheme that any dial-a-bus system in Adelaide to be conducted on that basis would be unsuccessful.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: He was provided with that report.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, and he was encouraged and given every assistance to get established. The Government, by its support afterwards, demonstrated clearly that it felt responsible for what had happened in that episode. I believe that there is a place for a dial-a-bus service in this city, but it would be based on a feeder bus service and a community cross-country bus service. In a small localised area a dial-a-bus service could be effective provided always that people had access to a telephone to dial the service. Therefore, I believe there is probably some scope for a combination dial-a-bus, community feeder and cross-country bus service. That is what I hope that the Research Division of the Transport Department will consider next. I look forward to further experiments in that field.

In July this year the Minister stated that thousands of cars and trucks in the Government metropolitan vehicle fleet could be converted from using petrol to using liquefied petroleum gas. The Government is investigating whether the conversion is feasible. I remind the Minister that he made virtually the same statement in 1971. I believe insufficient gas or facilities were available then. What is the situation and when are we likely to see the majority of Government vehicles converted to use natural gas?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain an up-to-date report for the Leader.

Mr. TONKIN: Can the Minister say what is the future for the present fare structure on public transport? I know variations have been made recently to that structure, and I approve of them. Those reductions have been made especially in the southern areas of Adelaide.

I congratulate the Government on taking this step; it is one of the few major achievements in transport it has managed in the past seven years. There seems to be a tendency now to look at more than the multiple tier system at a two-tier system, or a flat rate of fares. In many cities in the world they have a single-fare system. Adopting a single, overall flat rate fare, using a single coin, preferably, and using automatic dispensers, would cut down not only the wages, but more particularly the time of travelling. Much time is taken up on public transport waiting in a queue and then queueing to get into a bus. Then, the journey is interrupted by the bus having to stop at every bus stop during rush hours to take on more passengers.

This is obviated to some extent by conductors selling

tickets at busy bus stops, but it does not help people who have to board the bus outside the city area. If we are going to make public transport an attractive proposition we must make sure people can have travel from their homes to the city in good time. One way out of this is to enable people to buy tickets or tokens beforehand. We have heard of express buses, but I am referring to the moderate length journey. If people can buy tokens that fit into a slot, or buy tickets beforehand from sellers in the suburbs or authorised agencies, it will significantly reduce travelling time taken between outlying suburbs and the city because that queueing and fare-paying time will be obviated.

Although I agree that express buses will in the short term attract patronage to public transport, if that travelling time can be cut we will attract people to public transport, too. If this has not been researched it should have been and I hope the Minister can now come up with some positive results. It is becoming difficult to get people to travel on buses. Air-conditioning the buses will not be enough; it is the time factor involved that is important.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Has any money been made available for the development of electric cells to be used in electric vehicles? If so, how much has been allocated for that purpose?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There has been an allocation to the Flinders University to cover the whole project.

Mr. WILSON: Has any of the money allocated for research been allocated for the Metropolitan Adelaide Data Based Study? I am ignorant of the purpose of that study, although I am sure that the Minister would be pleased to enlighten me. When is a result expected from that study, and does it relate to the updating of the 1962 Metropolitan Development Plan?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I suppose the answer to the last question is "Yes". It is certainly an exercise designed to keep up to date all the data that is necessary for planning activities. The Government is actively engaged in the baseline study in relation to transport, particularly in the area for which the Minister of Planning is responsible, taking into account that the expansion of Adelaide must be monitored so that the required facilities can be provided in areas where people are going and so that they are not wasted or used out of turn.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I refer again to the contribution towards transport projects and especially to that being undertaken at Flinders University. Will the Minister say what type of research has been conducted regarding the development of electric cells or batteries and, if he does not have that information with him, will he obtain it for me? Although I understand that the electric car project has received the recommendation of all experts who have examined it, a question exists regarding the development of a battery. I understand that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, for instance, has far more sophisticated batteries. Should we, therefore, look overseas for battery technology where millions of dollars are being spent rather than try to compete with our trifling expenditure of thousands of dollars?

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

Mr. CHAPMAN: I refer to the line relating to compulsory blood tests and private doctors' fees at country Government hospitals. I understand that some time ago the Government appointed a committee to investigate which centres were suitable to be designated as centres for such blood testing. Can the Minister say, first, whether the blood tests referred to are those of drivers involved in traffic offences or of persons who are apprehended as a result of traffic accidents, and secondly, whether that committee has concluded its task? If it has, did its report

indicate which hospitals other than Government hospitals, particularly in the country, would be suitable for the purpose of carrying out these blood tests?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The sum of \$1 500 that has been allocated is for private doctors' fees in country hospitals. As the honourable member expected, I do not have with me the details regarding the continuation of the committee's activities. However, I will obtain that information and let the honourable member have it.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I hark back to the statement made by the Premier in 1975, when he made clear in his policy speech that a modern building, housing the State Transport Authority, an international hotel, restaurants and shops, and including seating arrangements for 8 000 people, would be built. The Minister of Transport referred to that policy speech announcement many times. Indeed, I have here references which indicate that on at least four occasions the Minister was quoted in the media as supporting the State Government's proposal as announced by the Premier. Indeed, the Minister went on to cite a number of instances where architects were drawing plans and designs in relation to the establishment of this scheme.

For example, there have been frequent statements about Adelaide railway station and at least two proposals for development. It is obvious from the material that several proposals do not seem to have got off the ground. Can the Minister say what the Government has in mind about the developments to which I have referred?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I cannot readily recall how many proposals the honourable member has referred to. However, I had discussions with the South Australian Railways Advisory Board, a forerunner to the State Transport Authority, and the board commissioned Hassell and Partners to produce a concept of redevelopment of the whole area. The report was made fairly public and I am sure a copy is in the Parliamentary Library. That report envisaged a series of buildings, including a convention centre near the Morphett Street bridge.

The report was put out for public comment for several reasons, not the least being to see how much attachment there was for the monstrosity that is the present Adelaide railway station. I do not know who built it. Undoubtedly, when it was built it was a fine Taj Mahal that ought to have been built in India. It is unsuitable for today's standards. There are few buildings in which public servants suffer worse facilities than those at the station. They work under disgraceful conditions.

We have been able to rehouse most public servants in decent accommodation. We have taken them from the old Foy's building that a former Government bought and we have taken them from the old Hindmarsh Square buildings, and so on. I would be delighted if the present railway station was demolished and replaced by a suitable modern building. I think the most appropriate use of the old station would be for it to remain the headquarters of the State Transport Authority and the headquarters in South Australia of the Australian National Railways Commission, rather than use the Norwich Insurance building.

Mr. Chapman: What is preventing the Government from proceeding with that proposal?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Funds. The State Transport Authority has appointed a subcommittee to review the question of accommodation, to find out whether there is a feasible way to finance the erection of a new building.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I seek the Minister's comment on the matter raised by the Premier in the 1973 policy speech when he stated:

We will undertake the introduction of express routes using reserve bus lanes.

That sounded a good move at the time as it would not only identify the bus lanes but would also speed up buses. Some buses now travel at about only 24 to 32 kilometres an hour, yet in an *Advertiser* report as early as November 2, 1971, the Minister said that, following information received from Washington, buses in such a system could travel at between 96 km/h and 112 km/h in their own speed lanes. I do not suggest those speeds for dial-a-bus or metropolitan buses, but there is an urgent need to speed up metropolitan bus services to get the best use from them. I understand the only express bus lane in the metropolitan area is linked to the north side of Botanic Road between the garden wall on East Terrace and Hackney Road. That is the only area where plans referred to by the Minister as early as 1971 have been adopted. Will the Minister comment on the situation in respect of bus lanes?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am not sure from what document the honourable member is quoting.

Mr. Tonkin: Ha, ha!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Obviously it is the work of the research area that compiles dossiers on things that have been said at certain times, but whether they are in context or not I do not know.

Mr. Tonkin: They are totally accurate.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am sure that they are accurate—

Mr. CHAPMAN: On a point of order, I have tried my best to every reasonable extent. The Minister is being unreasonable in his reference to my comments. The implication in his statement is that I am not quoting him properly—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CHAPMAN: —that what I am saying is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order. That the vote be agreed to—the member for Glenelg—

Mr. TONKIN: On a point of order, and I am being serious. There is a time and place for levity in this Chamber. I do not believe that, having sat a member down on a point of order, which has occasioned levity, the Chairman should try to rush a vote through. I do not intend to reflect on the Chair: I merely point out that that was the effect of your action. I do not think it becomes you, as Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the Leader that I ruled the point of order out of order and then I took the normal course. No honourable member was on his feet seeking to speak on that matter. That will be my practice, which I think is proper and which I will adopt. If honourable members wish to seek information they should indicate their intention when the opportunity arises.

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

Mr. MATHWIN: Regarding the Minister's remarks about Adelaide railway station, I point out that many railway station buildings in other countries are a disgrace. Last financial year, \$18 000 was allocated for additions to road safety centres, but only \$14 was spent. For what purpose was the \$14 spent? Is this year's allocation of \$22 000 to provide for additions to the Oaklands Road centre, or is it for another road safety centre in another district?

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the line be agreed to.

Mr. MATHWIN: I ask the Minister for a reply. He has not moved his bum.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member's comment is unparliamentary, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. MATHWIN: I withdraw it, and I now say that the Minister did not move his posterior. Will the Minister reply to my questions?

Mr. CHAPMAN: In 1970, the Labor Party announced in its policy speech that it would withdraw and revise the Metropolitan Adelaide Transport Study plan on the ground that its proposed implementation was ruthless and did not take into account newly developing mass transport technologies. A subsequent article published in the *Advertiser* of January 30, 1971, stated:

The transport corridors, to be incorporated in the Metropolitan Development Plan and displayed in public soon are:

- South: Noarlunga freeway alignment.
 - North-West: Port Adelaide freeway alignment.
 - North: Salisbury freeway alignment.
 - North-East: Modbury freeway alignment.
- Necessary connections around the west and north of the city: the alignment through Hindmarsh, across the north of North Adelaide and connecting to the north-east corner of the city.

He announced that the Government would legislate to set up a rehousing compensation committee to deal with resettlement of families who suffered because their houses were needed.

I am confused about the series of reports made at that time. Further, another report in the *Advertiser* of January 30, 1971, quoted the present Minister as saying:

Adelaide will not be committed irretrievably to the freeways set out in the MATS plan. In the next few years Adelaide could see the evaluation and trial of such transport systems as dial-a-bus, aero-trains, linear induction trains and automatic vehicles. This will mean the immediate preparation of plans to improve time tables.

The reports indicated that the Government was fair dinkum in proceeding to implement the MATS plan responsibly. A report in the *Advertiser* of March 29, 1976, stated:

The South Australian Government has officially abandoned the MATS plan for the city of Adelaide and north-eastern suburbs. From today a team of sociologists, urban planners and traffic engineers from the Transport Department will undertake a fresh 18-month review of total transport concepts.

The preparation of the two major planning documents covering metropolitan public transport and passenger and goods transport for the State generally was proposed at that time. A report in the *News* of the same date stated:

The South Australian Government was still buying land on freeway routes recommended in the MATS plan, the Transport Minister, Mr. Virgo, said today. This was an indication the freeway system of the MATS plan for metropolitan Adelaide has not been ruled out.

I was not in Parliament when the MATS plan was introduced, but I have found it extremely difficult to understand whether or not the Government is adopting, if not all, a part of that plan which was announced here some years ago. Can the Minister provide a straightforward statement showing what the Government has in mind with respect to that plan? Can he explain whether the Government is still purchasing properties along the routes to which I have referred? Further, what has the Government ultimately in mind regarding the adoption of the plan, if it is to be adopted at all?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Obviously, I am not able to tell the member for Glenelg what was purchased last year by way of additions to road safety centres for the amount of \$14 shown in actual payments. If he is serious—

Mr. Mathwin: Of course I am serious.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Then that shows the small-mindedness of the honourable member. I shall attempt to get the information for him. Turning to the dilemma of the member for Alexandra—

Mr. Chapman: I was kind in my request for information and I don't welcome that sort of nasty remark from you, Mr. Minister, or anyone else.

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

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Obviously, the honourable member is putting a construction on it that was not there. He indicated that he did not understand the position, that he had not been here, but that he was hoping to get some clarity on the issue. He is in a dilemma. I shall be pleased to touch on the subject briefly. In the time available, I doubt whether I will be able to provide the full story that he should have. I refer again to the suggestion I made to him a couple of weeks ago. I should be delighted to make available for him and for anyone else on the Opposition benches, as has been done in the past, the services of the Director-General of Transport, so that the Government's transport policy can be explained in the minutest detail. Obviously, that cannot be done when we are debating the Budget. In 1968, when the then Government brought down, with a fanfare of trumpets, the MATS plan as the answer to a maiden's prayer—

Mr. Evans: I think it was in 1969.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That may be so, but it is irrelevant; it was about that time. The report was publicly debated at that time and there was no doubt where public opinion stood. The present Government, when in Opposition, said at the 1970 election that, if elected, it would withdraw and revise the MATS plan. I think the honourable member referred to a press statement I made in January, 1971, when, after about seven months in office, the Government determined its attitude towards the MATS plan. We said then that we would not proceed for a period of at least 10 years with the freeway and expressway proposals contained within the MATS plan where substantial demolition of private property was involved. However, we said that we would not abandon the routes that had been designated within the MATS plan, but that they would be retained as future possible transport corridors so that the transport planners would have the greatest possible flexibility. That policy, announced in January, 1971, has equal application in October, 1977. We are still pursuing that line.

Because of the publication of the MATS plan, thousands of private properties were placed under a cloud. The sale of those properties in normal circumstances was either impossible or possible only at lower prices. The Government believes that people should not be so disadvantaged simply because a Government decided to publish a plan which did not proceed. The only fair course that could be pursued was that, where people were unable to sell their properties in the ordinary market, the Government was prepared to purchase them. We have followed this policy persistently since 1971, and we intend to continue to do so.

Mr. MATHWIN: Although the Minister's reply to my question regarding the \$14 was somewhat sarcastic, he knows that there was more to the question than that. Will the Minister say whether the \$22 000 proposed for additions to road safety centres is to build additions to the centre at Oaklands Road?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Yes, it is.

Mr. MATHWIN: The sum of \$26 500 is proposed for maintenance of grounds. Is this to be for maintenance of the grounds of the Oaklands Road centre?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Yes.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I thank the Minister for his outline of that part of the MATS plan, including the planning for the future development of the motor traffic corridors in and around the metropolitan area. I should like some further

information on the Government's plans in relation to electric train transport, as was reported quite extensively during 1971. Later, another splurge followed in 1973, about the Government's plans for rail travel. In the *Advertiser* on June 7, 1971, the Minister was reported as having said that automatic or computerised electric trains with feeder services were the best long-range plan for Adelaide. Does the Minister believe that that statement still stands? He considered that Adelaide eventually would decide in favour of automatic or computer-operated electric trains. I am not asking for lengthy replies but, so that I can study the detail and understand what the Government has in mind, a simple reply would be desirable. On November 2, 1971, the *Advertiser* reported the Minister as having forecast that an electric railway was practicable and that exclusive bus lanes would provide a rapid transport system for metropolitan Adelaide.

In the early 1970's, there was a fairly consistent line regarding electrified transport for the use of commuters in the built-up and metropolitan areas. On June 2, 1973, a further report stated that part of the Government's plan to make rail travel more appealing to commuters would include the electrification of some railcars. That statement stated that it was hoped that the Christie Downs extension would be electrified by 1975, and that double-decker trains could be operating on the Adelaide to Christie Downs line by July, 1975. That statement was made on July 27, 1973, when the Minister said that such a service would be introduced in the \$22 700 000 project to electrify the entire Adelaide to Christie Downs railway service. The report went on to state that the Government planned to have 36 cars, 18 power units and 18 trailers operating by the middle of 1977.

They were fairly consistent reports in the media at that time. Undoubtedly, there was good reason for those statements. In the few years that I have been here, especially in recent months, when the Government has been challenged on its promises the format answer has been, "The Feds have not given us the money," or that they blame Nixon.

Mr. Mathwin: What happened in Jones's time?

Mr. CHAPMAN: No such criticism occurred when Charlie Jones was the Minister. I am not interested in passing the buck or in the political backlash involved; I am interested only in shortening these questions as much as possible without referring to too many press releases. I hope so far that I have demonstrated to the Minister that the Opposition has a considerable amount of material that indicates what the Government has in mind but, because the time has expired for the implementation of these promises, I have no alternative but to ask the Minister why the projects have not at least been proceeded with in a practical way. Whatever the answer, I would accept it and appreciate it.

Mr. EVANS: I should like information relating to the Minister's comments regarding freeways having a detrimental effect on the value of people's property, and that having this sort of thing hanging over one's head is unfair. I would agree with the Minister that that is true, but it is wrong for him to suggest that because the Government has not proceeded in total with the MATS plan that that is not the case today and that the threat does not stand. I believe that that was the sort of suggestion he was making. Some people living at Winns Road, Coromandel Valley West, whenever they put their house on the market, face the problem of carrying out the requirements of the Land and Business Agents Act to ascertain from each department what plans are in train for development in their area. The Highways Department always states, "We are not sure whether we will go ahead

with the widening of Winns Road, but we might." An intending purchaser would take that as reason enough to offer the property owner less for his house because the intending buyer might lose part of that property later as the result of a compulsory acquisition order.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: To which line is the honourable member referring?

Mr. EVANS: I am referring to the administration of the State Transport Authority.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The line we are considering has nothing to do with Winns Road or any other road. I would suggest that the honourable member direct his comments to the appropriate line.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member should stick to the line.

Mr. EVANS: As the Minister had some leeway in commenting about freeways, I thought I might have some leeway, too. Regarding the suggested railway station at Bellevue Heights, I would ask the Minister whether, in the research and programming of the State Transport Authority—

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That matter relates to the Loan Estimates not the Revenue Budget.

Mr. EVANS: I am asking whether research officers have considered the proposal to develop a new railway station at Bellevue Heights. No money has been allocated for it, but people are employed in the department researching what facilities should be provided. What stage has that research reached?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That question is more applicable to the Loan Estimates. However, any information I can get for the honourable member, I will supply to him. Regarding electric trains, I do not deviate one iota from what I said before. I believe that Adelaide must have an electric railway service. That concept is enshrined within the railway transfer agreement, whereby provision was made for the separation of the two systems so that eventually we can reach that absolutely essential goal.

Mr. Chapman: What's the reason for the hold-up in the meantime?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I have been trying to avoid saying this because I know it will upset the honourable member, but there is only one reason why we have had to put the electrification proposal in the pigeonhole to gather dust—the withdrawal of Federal funds.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I had no intention of raising the balance of the press reports of which I have a complete and detailed record, but as a result of that reply I have no alternative. On July 27, 1973, the Adelaide to Christie Downs electrification project was referred to again, and it was stated that the line would be completed by 1975. The Minister stated that it would be introduced in a \$22 700 000 project to electrify the entire Adelaide to Christie Downs service. A follow-up report appeared in the *Advertiser* of July 28, 1973, as follows:

High-speed electric double-decker trains could be servicing the new Adelaide to Christie Downs railway line by mid-1975.

At least he was consistent, even though he was consistently way off-beam. That report continued by stating that they would be part of a \$22 700 000 project. The Minister then got down to more detail and said that the trains would be capable of travelling at 70 miles an hour and that they might be air-conditioned. A report in the *Sunday Mail* of September 9, 1973, stated:

"Almost certain" the electrification of the Adelaide-Elizabeth rail line was announced yesterday by the Transport Minister, Mr. Virgo.

The Minister said this was to follow the electrification of

the Adelaide to Christie Downs line. I was a member at that time. These were pre-election and post-election statements.

In the *News* of September 10, 1973, he said:

The first priority will be the completion of the Christie Downs line with the electrification of either Elizabeth or Port Adelaide, probably Elizabeth.

In 1974, Mr. Virgo said that the electrification of the Adelaide railway system would cost \$15 000 000. Somewhere along the line he had lost \$7 700 000. In 1975, on the eve of the anticipated completion date he was still talking about the development of Adelaide's urban transport system over the next five years. The Premier hopped on the waggon on that occasion and said it was hoped to have the first diesel train on the Christie Downs line late that year and to have the first electric train running by 1977, but there is no sign of that happening.

Since the Labor Government has come into power it has been talking about electrification, but nothing has happened. As with so many transport policies, there has been a lot of talk and little action. Lack of Federal funds in that instance is no excuse, because the Federal Labor Government was in Canberra during that period. Is the Minister going to say it was the lack of funds under the canopy of Charlie Jones, the former Federal Transport Minister, that prevented the Government's proceeding with the project? He shakes his head with embarrassment at any mention of Charlie Jones.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You missed an important quote, and you are quoting out of context, as usual.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I am quoting as the media reported it.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: What did the media say in November, 1975?

Mr. CHAPMAN: I am only up to July, 1975. I do not know whether the media misreported the Minister or the Government between July and November, 1975, but on July 2, 1975, the Premier was quoted in the *Advertiser* as saying:

It is hoped to have the first diesel train on the Christie Downs line late this year—

completely backing up the 1973, 1974 and early 1975 statements by the Minister. There has obviously been a blatant disregard of its promises by the Government. It may well be that Cabinet has told the Transport Minister to do what it says. I have no idea how Cabinet works; perhaps the Minister tells Cabinet what to do.

What I am interested in is facts and what we can fairly present to the public so that it knows where it is going and has some idea what to expect in future for its money. Clearly, from the documented detail I have referred to tonight, from 1971 to 1977 the public has received many promises of projects which, in the main, have not even been commenced. If I am wrong, will the Minister tell me about the electrification system and advanced forms of transport he has talked about that have been commenced?

Mr. BECKER: The Motor Registration Division staff has an allocation of \$4 086 000. I notice from the Auditor-General's Report that the staff of the division in July, 1976, numbered 458 and in June, 1977, 480. This is another Government department carrying out a public service under a tremendous work load. The majority of people in the State appreciate the decentralisation of that department. Does the increase in the provision on this line include the establishment of further branches in the metropolitan area and provision for staffing of offices for testing applicants for drivers' licences? If so, could the Minister indicate where the proposed new branches are to be established?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The main reason for the increase is the addition of examiners, because the

department is taking over from the police the task of licence examinations. Provision is made for an additional 10 examiners to be employed. Although the information I have does not indicate it, I suspect that the provision of an additional four staff members is for the next branch office being opened, from memory, at Mitcham. I will check that information and give the honourable member a written reply indicating the expansion of our decentralisation programme for this financial year.

Mr. WILSON: I was interested in the Minister's philosophy regarding the Bee-line bus service. However, I draw his attention to perimeter parking that occurs in the Unley and North Adelaide areas. Has the State Transport Authority investigated the possibility of extending the Bee-line bus service to such areas? Although I realise that a cost would be involved, the people concerned find it difficult to get from the perimeter parking areas into the city because, by the time the regular buses come through these areas, they are usually full. This means that these people must either walk into the city or put a folding bicycle into their car boot.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The limit of the Bee-line bus routes has been examined previously. It is evident that the success of this service depends on the shorter route; if the service was extended, it would not achieve the desired object or the success that we now enjoy.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Earlier, the Minister said that he would answer my questions. Will he now do so?

The CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member seeking information?

Mr. CHAPMAN: Of course. I am not here for the fun of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out that this is not Question Time. Although this is a technical point, the honourable member is seeking information and not asking questions.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I am sorry, Sir, but I have difficulty in determining the difference. Is the Minister fair dinkum about his electrification plans, as outlined since the early 1970s? As the time for the commencement, if not completion, of certain schemes has expired, what has the Minister in mind regarding such schemes?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The honourable member has repeatedly asked the same question simply to keep the debate on this line going until 10.30 p.m., as he has been instructed by his Leader to do. For the second time, at least, I inform the honourable member that I have not deviated one iota from the attitude I have expressed publicly many times. The honourable member has referred to those matters that he sees fit to use, and apparently has chosen to ignore those that do not suit his purposes. In November, 1975, the then Federal Minister for Transport (Hon. C. K. Jones) promised South Australia that a Federal Labor Government would provide funds for the electrification. However, only one month later Mr. Nixon knocked that on the head, so the honourable member should talk not to me but to Mr. Nixon.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I do not intend to refer to my Federal colleagues, nor do I know what they promised or did not promise. If not during the month of November, 1975, then certainly on March 28, 1976, the Minister, in conjunction with his Director-General, Dr. Scafton, made a whole series of detailed statements about what the Government had in mind. However, that does not detract from the fact that the Government had failed to uphold its promises not just through the period after 1975, when there was a change of Ministers, but for four or five years before that.

There seems to be one great vacuum period for which the Minister is either unable or unwilling to give me an

answer regarding why the Government did not proceed with what it promised the South Australian public. Anyway, on March 28, 1976, the Minister again said that South Australians could see more dial-a-bus experiments, bus lanes, and a general upgrading of existing public transport during the next decade. My complaint is that I cannot ascertain when the Government intends to proceed with those schemes. The Government has for far too long banded this subject around year after year, giving forward dates of completion and implementation, but not achieving them.

Mr. BECKER: Does the line relating to the contribution towards transport research projects include provision for research into cycle tracks and, if it does, are there any plans to construct a cycle track along Anzac Highway or Tapley Hill Road?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The provision of bicycle tracks comes under the line "Bicycle track fund".

Mr. Becker: So, it does not now come into the contribution towards transport research projects?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That is so.

Line passed.

Highways, \$18 223 000.

Mr. EVANS: I refer to the matter about which the Minister corrected me earlier. There is a doubt in the department's mind regarding not only Winns Road but also other roads that has cost many people much money. True, a person may own a house worth \$45 000.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: How does that relate to this line?

Mr. EVANS: It involves the administration of the Highways Department. If the Minister wants an example, I will give him one in writing.

The CHAIRMAN: If we are to open up the debate to discussion of all roads in South Australia, there will be no end to the debate. Will the honourable member state the point he is making and give the reference to the item?

Mr. EVANS: The item refers to administration, accounting, supply, and clerical staff. I have checked the matter to which I have referred with various people, and a letter dated October 3 states:

A few months ago we sold our home at Eden Hills as we built at Heathfield. Our purchasers, Mr. and Mrs. X, sold their home to a Mr. XX, whose home at Edwardstown is being acquired by the Highways Department. Since late July/early August, the Highways Department have been considering the acquisition. It took over a month for them to have the house valued and now Mr. XX has accepted their valuation. He has moved into the X home, and they into our home on a rental basis while we wait for a settlement. Even at this late stage we still have no settlement date from the Highways Department though it has been indicated that it should be early November. Due to the long and protracted delays caused by the Highways Department, firstly in valuing the property and secondly in settling, bridging finance will cost us an estimated \$1 000 interest. We seek your help in having the settlement speeded up by the Highways Department.

I contacted the department on October 12, and it was still awaiting Ministerial approval. We have not overcome the problem of people suffering, and it is difficult for people deeply in debt to have to find another \$1 000 interest through no fault of their own. The departmental processes are just too slow. Will the Minister consider this kind of situation? The threat over highways extends throughout the State wherever the department has a proposal that it might put into operation.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The barb in the honourable member's explanation was that the Highways Department had told him that it was awaiting Ministerial approval

before it could proceed. It is difficult for me to rebut that, because the member has not given me the facts. I find it extremely difficult to believe that the department would have made a statement in that context. I again stress that the facilities of my department are available to any member for examining any matter. If the member wants assistance for constituents, the way to get it would be by writing to me rather than raising the matter here in terms of Mr. X or Mr. Y. If the honourable member writes giving me the detail, I will give him full information.

Mr. EVANS: I did not check on which Minister was holding the matter up, and I know that the matter also involves the Legal Services Department. I thought that I could speed up the process by raising the matter here rather than by writing a letter. Members know that it takes about a week or a fortnight to get replies to letters to Ministers. I will give the letter to which I have referred to the Minister. A telephone call should have been able to resolve the difficulty immediately.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I refer to the item under "Administration" referring to the Deputy Commissioner, who acts as manager of the seaway link to Kangaroo Island, and I commend the officers of the department for the co-operation given to my community in the management of that service. Some months ago there was a need for additional services and the Minister said that, if we had the business, he and his department would be pleased to do business with us.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: My question refers to the corner just below Eagle on the Hill, on the Mount Barker freeway, where many accidents seem to occur. Under "Engineering administration", I refer to the design of that corner. Will the Minister give an undertaking that his officers will again examine the reason for accidents occurring at that corner? A semi-trailer carrying 18 tons of glass turned over there today, and apparently another vehicle turned over there yesterday. Three or four other semi-trailers have gone over on the corner.

Mr. VENNING: I refer to the same item. Unfortunately, the Minister was not able to visit the northern part of the State a few months ago with Mr. Johnke. It was an excellent day, I appreciated the way we were entertained and the inspection of roadworks. I refer to a road between Merriton and Port Broughton.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This debate is not going to deteriorate into questions about every road in South Australia. The member for Davenport may have got around that ruling, but this debate will not be reduced to a debate about every road. If the honourable member can link up his comments I will allow him to continue.

Mr. VENNING: The Highways Department has started on this road. I am referring to the same line as the previous speaker. This road is in bad repair, is dangerous, and—

The CHAIRMAN: I will allow the honourable member to continue, but he is referring to funds from the Highways Fund and not coming from the Budget.

Mr. VENNING: Although the Minister is trying to worm his way out of this matter, he is the Minister responsible for the highways, the Minister of Transport and everything else thrown in. We have done our best to get the Minister to visit the area, but after everything was arranged he got the shingles and could not come. I hope the Minister will consider this road and allocate more money to it.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out that there will be no latitude allowed in future in regard to construction or repair of particular roads.

Mr. GUNN: I seek information about the allocation of \$455 000 for the collector of road charges, assessors and clerical staff and traffic inspectors. I hope that this will be

the last year this line will appear in the Budget. Even in 1965 the Leader of the Labor Party promised that Labor, if elected to Government, would abolish road tax on Eyre Peninsula. The Labor Party was advised by its then legal adviser that it was possible to abolish it on Eyre Peninsula and not elsewhere in the State. The Labor Party has failed to honour that promise, although it has had 10 years to put it into effect.

This tax affects people in outlying areas, especially in the northern and western parts of the State. No matter what the road condition, they must pay road tax. People living furthest from Adelaide pay the most road tax without receiving any benefit. Does the Minister intend to initiate and take action to remove this unfair, unjust and discriminatory form of taxation? The Minister has stated throughout South Australia that the tax will go, and I ask him to implement the promise made by the Labor Party in 1965.

The CHAIRMAN: That the vote—

Mr. GUNN: I cannot let the opportunity pass. Will the Minister say what is the Government's intention about this matter? Does he not know? As this is an important matter it is not good enough for the Minister to just sit and smile. In 1965, the Minister was Secretary of the A.L.P. and probably had much to do with making that election promise. The Committee has been asked to approve over \$400 000 to provide the machinery to collect this tax whilst the Government employs people to hide behind bushes and the like to collect millions of dollars. Has the Minister ever filled out a road tax form? The administration of this tax is tedious and unnecessary, and there must be a better way of collecting revenue. What proposals has the Minister in this area?

The CHAIRMAN: That the vote be agreed to—

Mr. GUNN: It is a poor state of affairs if the Minister cannot tell the Committee what he has in mind. I have risen three times to obtain this information. The Minister has made statements throughout Australia, usually blaming the Federal Minister. This afternoon he gave completely incorrect information on another issue. If he can make press statements, surely he can provide information to the Committee.

Mr. Chapman: What about his suggestions to the Ministers' conference?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GUNN: True, the Minister was going to raise matters at the Ministers' conference. What happened then?

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The meeting was held in camera.

Mr. GUNN: I do not believe that is correct, because other statements are made by the Minister when meetings are held. The Minister has often made statements in relation to what happened at such meetings and viciously attacks the Federal Minister. Now, when it does not suit his purpose, he is unwilling to give information to the Committee. What course of action does the Government intend to take? This problem has been brought to my attention regularly, and only a fortnight ago I was approached by the Eyre Peninsula Carriers Association about it. The tax should go. It cannot be justified. The Minister should say what he has in mind.

Mr. VENNING: Has the committee dealing with road charges reported to the Minister and, if it has, what are its recommendations?

Mr. BECKER: Regarding the item "Administrative, accounting, supply and clerical staff, traffic inspectors and other employees", does the increase from actual payments last financial year of \$3 147 128 to a provision this year of \$3 959 236 mean that the department will be engaging extra staff, and will this create an opportunity for the

Highways Department to engage young, qualified people and train them? The Auditor-General's Report, at page 151, states:

My last report referred to continuing inadequacies in financial management and control systems.

Several committees were appointed to consider financial control. The Auditor-General's Report also states:

The probable date for implementation of the system is now October-November, 1978, although in October last I was advised of a completion date of December, 1977, subject to the availability of suitably qualified and experienced staff. The setting back of the completion date, and on the experience of the past year, the likelihood of further delay is a matter of great concern.

No doubt the Minister is concerned about these matters, too.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It means that in the main the staff required were engaged in the latter part of the last financial year. The engagement of staff is reflected in a full year's charge in this financial year, together with provision for normal increases.

Mr. RODDA: What stage have plans reached for the road to Coomandook?

The CHAIRMAN: I have already stated that there will be no questions about individual roads or highways. If the Chairman was to allow such questions, any member could ask any question about any road in South Australia. Frankly, it just cannot be included in this kind of debate.

Line passed.

Minister of Transport and Minister of Local Government, Miscellaneous, \$39 918 000.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Regarding the allocation of \$84 000 for the Bicycle Track Fund, where will the bicycle track be installed?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Local government has been informed of this allocation because it is a subsidised scheme. No decisions have been made as to where tracks will be built. A special committee will make recommendations.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can I take it that there are no applications in hand for subsidised funding or direct grants?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am not aware that any decisions have been made, but they could well have been made.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can the Minister indicate any areas from which he knows an application has been received?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: No.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Regarding the item "Contribution towards operating costs of m.v. *Troubridge*", can the Minister explain the term "contribution", can he say what percentage of the losses incurred in the *Troubridge* operation is met by the department, and where does the balance of the funding come from? I point out that the allocation of \$220 000 is only about 25 per cent of the total losses incurred.

The CHAIRMAN: Once the honourable member resumes his seat he cannot continue his remarks until the Chairman gives him the call.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The Local Government Association has had a working committee considering the new regulation relating to the impounding of dogs. Has the Minister seen the committee's report and, if he has, what action will he take to implement some of the recommendations? If he has not seen the report, why has he not seen it? Further, if the Minister does not intend to adopt the recommendations why not?

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Minister reply to my question about the *Troubridge*? He was about to get on his feet when the member for Davenport rose.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Government made a decision last year, I think, about the division of the operating losses of the *Troubridge*. I do not have the details with me, but I will get them for the honourable member. Regarding the question of the member for Davenport about the impounding of dogs, the matter is currently being considered by the Government, and the honourable member will be informed of our policy in due course.

Mr. WOTTON: An amount of \$300 000 is to be allocated for transfer to a deposit account to be used for the purchase of land for public parks, and so on. I have been approached by several groups concerned with roadside vegetation, particularly in relation to the Lincoln Highway. I have received a letter from the Northern Naturalists Society.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The matter of roadside vegetation is not in my portfolio. It is concerned with the Environment Department, and that vote has been passed.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: To whom will the Keith Hockridge Memorial Scholarship be awarded?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The scholarship is awarded annually to officers of local government. I think it involves one oversea trip a year at Public Service rates for a maximum period of 13 weeks. Perhaps I should get the exact details for the honourable member. To my knowledge, only one scholarship has been awarded up to the present to perpetuate the memory of the late Keith Hockridge. That scholarship was awarded to Mr. Harry Richards, the Town Clerk of Port Augusta.

Mr. BECKER: The amount for the Litter Control Council has been reduced by \$50 000. The litter campaign conducted last summer was reasonably effective. If we are to undertake any campaign to remove litter effectively, the Government will have to spend considerable amounts of money. It will be a long campaign and, if it is to be done properly, it will have to be a concerted effort. The reduction in the allocation concerns me. In periods when there is little activity on the part of the Kesab organisation, litter builds up, and I am disappointed that there has not been a strong and continuing campaign. It should be done on a monthly basis to keep residents and visitors aware of the situation.

In my area, much litter can be seen around the airport and along the beaches, on the roadsides, and in public parks. Local government is involved in considerable expense in cleaning up; the West Beach Trust, for example, must employ people to remove the litter. The situation on Tapley Hill Road, on the western side of the Adelaide Airport, demonstrates the type of litter seen in my area. A greater effort must be made to improve public education. Will the Minister say why this reduction has occurred and whether the Government will back up Kesab and continue a concerted effort to control litter in South Australia?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I shall get the information.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I have one final matter to refer to.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Thank you.

Mr. CHAPMAN: The Minister is thanking me, but a few moments ago he told me that he could not discuss any information about road tax. There is a line under "Miscellaneous" which refers to the collection of fees and costs payable to the officers in doing so. In *Hansard* on August 2, 1977, I directed a question to the Minister concerning road tax.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the cost of road tax collection is in the Highways Department line, which has been dealt with. It is not competent for the member to raise the matter now. He knows that.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order.

Mr. MATHWIN: The sum of \$1 000 is to be allocated for claims in relation to a bus accident at Tumut Ponds. I take it that that is the Cooma accident in which some Brighton senior citizens were involved. I thought the matter had been concluded. Is it expected that there will be further claims in that area? An amount of \$5 000 is to be allocated for a course for senior local government administrators. Is this the course which is open to administrators from local government and which is available yearly in Canberra?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I imagine that is so, but I shall get information concerning both matters.

Mr. BECKER: Will the Minister obtain for me a list of the local government authorities which have applied for assistance in the purchase of land for public parks, recreation areas, and so on, for which an amount of \$300 000 is proposed this year? The 1977 report of the Auditor-General states, at page 232, that the whole of the sum allocated in the past financial year was expended. Since 1943, the allocation has totalled \$5 551 000. The city enjoys the benefit of the allocation of this money. I understand that many applications for assistance are received and that some council areas are obliged to defer projects pending the establishment of priorities. What is the number of applications pending and what is the total amount sought? Is the allocation sufficient?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I shall get the information. Line passed.

Labour and Industry, \$4 192 000.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Whence is the cost for the Long Service Leave (Casual Employment) Board to come this year? Have fees decreased or are the fees involved on another line?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT (Minister of Labour and Industry): The cost will come out of the fund itself.

Mr. Dean Brown: Whence will the fees for the board come?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: They will be paid out of the levy.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: What type of terminal leave payments are involved, to whom are they paid, and what is the nature of the payment?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Terminal leave payments provide for officers who will retire this fiscal year.

Mr. Dean Brown: What sort of payments are involved?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Long service leave payments.

Mr. Dean Brown: Any other payments?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am not aware of any.

Mr. Dean Brown: What about press secretaries?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I do not know of any press secretary who will retire this year. In fact, my press secretary would not be entitled to long service leave, because he has been with the department for only about five years.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Under the vote for the Premier's Department the Premier's personal staff, because they are classified as A grade journalists, would, for various reasons, receive terminal leave payments irrespective of whether or not they were entitled to long service leave payments. Are any other payments under that line involved besides long service leave payments?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The only payments I can recall to which any officer in my department would be entitled would be long service leave payments. So far as I know, my press secretary is staying with me. I do not see how he could be involved in that type of payment.

Mr. BECKER: With the increased activity in licensing certain businesses and because certain legislation is pending, will the department engage additional inspec-

tors? Does the allocation for the purchase of motor vehicles provide for the annual replacement of motor vehicles?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The situation is that 54 vehicles will be purchased, because 42 existing vehicles need to be replaced and 12 additional vehicles will be purchased in accordance with Government policy. The first question asked by the honourable member has some validity because all the legislation that is introduced by me that is policed by my department necessitates an increase in the number of inspectors.

Mr. EVANS: The Chief Secretary said that the printing of the *Government Gazette* had been split into two sections and that the cost of printing the industrial section would be included in the lines relating to the Labour and Industry Department. I cannot find such a reference. It is only fair that the Minister should have the opportunity of saying whether his department is responsible for the cost of the industrial section of the *Government Gazette*. If it is, how much will it cost and where is it included in the lines?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The department is responsible for the industrial section of the *Government Gazette*. As I cannot put my finger on the information requested, I will get that information for the honourable member.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I do not know whether to direct my question to the pseudo Minister who sits on the front bench or to the real Minister who sits on the back bench.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Has the Minister yet replaced the Assistant Director, Planning and Research, and, if he has, who is occupying the position? I seek information from the pseudo Minister concerning the tasks—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the honourable member that when he addresses the honourable Minister he should refer to him as the Minister of Labour and Industry. That is the second time the honourable member has referred to the Minister as the pseudo Minister. If he does it again, I will ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: What activities will the Assistant Director carry out? Some of the work carried out by the previous Assistant Director involved the Youth Work Unit, which is to be commended. He was also on several committees relating to industrial democracy. Perhaps the Minister could outline why it has been necessary to create a new division. I had the impression that the previous division was created simply to give a certain person a job. How many staff will there be in the new division? It surprises me that the division will probably have no more than six staff members. How many staff will actually be involved?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Provision has been made for the Assistant-Director, Mr. D. C. Gribble (who is acting in the position now), and the research staff. Provision for those officers was previously included under the Industrial Relations and Training Division. I have no idea at this time who will be the new Assistant Director. If I knew, I would not tell the honourable member, anyway. Surely the person chosen for the position is entitled to be the first to know.

Mr. Dean Brown: I asked whether you had replaced him.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The honourable member asked who he was. I have not replaced him or chosen anyone for the job. The position has been re-advertised and when a suitable applicant is found he will be appointed and will have exactly the same duties as the previous incumbent.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Why have administration expenses, etc., increased from actual payments of

\$461 000 this year to about \$770 000, an increase of almost 50 per cent?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: This sum provides for minimum expenditure to maintain current levels of activity, for a \$45 000 allowance in relation to three additional positions and, of course, for inflation.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I do not believe that is an adequate explanation. Can the Minister have his officers investigate why there has been such a substantial increase? The \$45 000 does not cover the huge increase. Is the Minister intending to go overseas this year? If so, where does he intend to go?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I will get that information for the honourable member. I have no intention of going overseas this year, or next year.

Line passed.

Minister of Labour and Industry, Miscellaneous, \$22 287 000.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I see a grant of \$6 000 to the Institute of Labour Studies. Why has that grant been made? Does the bulletin that is issued need financial assistance to maintain it, because I know the price has been increased. Perhaps the member for Ross Smith could indicate whether he intends to resign from the board involved in this matter.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The grant was to assist in expanding research activities of the institute at the Flinders University.

The CHAIRMAN: The reference to the honourable member for Ross Smith was completely out of order.

Mr. BECKER: Last year there was an expenditure of \$7 000 000 for advances in grants for unemployment relief projects. The sum proposed for this year is \$22 179 600. The Auditor-General in his report said that the control of the youth supervisory committee was administered by the Community Welfare Department. He went on to say:

Clubs are located in areas of high youth unemployment, but the establishment of a club which can only accommodate 30 to 40 persons in an area where the youth unemployed exceeds 1 000 indicates the limited effectiveness of the scheme. A survey taken during the year revealed that job hunters clubs were attracting, overall approximately 6 per cent of the unemployed youth in areas in which clubs had been established. The youth supervisory committee regards this figure as satisfactory.

I think this is a worthwhile scheme. Will there be an increase of funds to help upgrade this assistance, and can we improve on the figures quoted by the Auditor-General? Perhaps the Minister of Community Welfare could obtain a report on the expansion of the programme, as well.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The unemployment relief scheme was transferred from the Lands Department during 1976-77. The Premier has announced the allocation of \$14 500 000 that will be available for approved projects, in accordance with Government policy, to February, 1978. There is a surplus of money that will be spent after Christmas. The youth schemes will be maintained. We have catered for small clubs rather than large in the hope that eventually the economy will improve and they can all be picked up.

A programme will be released next week called CITY, which I think the honourable member will be pleased about. It is an advancement on what we have been doing and raises more opportunity and flexibility for young people to be encouraged to participate in some job activity. If the honourable member wants more information about that I will be pleased to supply it to him.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Will the Minister get his officers to forward details of all the major State unemployment relief

scheme projects that have so far been approved for the current financial year?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I have no objection to providing the House with that information.

Mr. BECKER: The allocation of \$72 301 for the upkeep of pensioners' gardens in the year ending June 30, 1977, was worthwhile. Will the Minister obtain a report whether the scheme will continue?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am pleased that the honourable member has raised this question, because a few months ago I went out to see one of these houses before the Housing Trust moved in. This scheme was part of a proposal by the Community Welfare Department to obtain funds under the unemployment relief scheme. I had a long discussion with the lovely old lady concerned and, although her property was in shocking condition, this woman could do nothing about it, as she was 78 years of age, and had no husband or sons alive. Six hours later, when the trust had moved in, the lady cried. She was so pleased that, for the first time in many years, her property was in a clean, decent condition. This scheme will be continued provided that the Minister of Community Welfare, who supervises it, keeps putting up propositions, which, I am sure, will be approved by the Unemployment Relief Committee.

Line passed.

Community Welfare, \$26 424 000.

Mr. WOTTON: Will the Minister explain the reason for the rise of \$5 000 to \$20 000 in the average annual cost of accommodating each child in the department's residential care centres? At page 66 of his report, the Auditor-General states:

Payments by and on behalf of the department increased by \$4 439 000 and receipts by \$554 000, resulting in the net cost to Consolidated Revenue for the year being up by \$3 885 000 to \$21 334 000. The increase in net cost was mainly for general administration, operating and training, up \$2 008 000, financial assistance, up \$873 000, and children's residential care centres, up \$686 000. The average annual cost per child for children accommodated in the department's residential care centres was \$20 000, an increase of \$5 000.

Will the Minister explain the reason for that increase?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE (Minister of Community Welfare): I do not know whether I would be in order answering that question, as the honourable member has referred not to the lines but to the 1976-77 Auditor-General's Report.

Mr. Wotton: My question related to the allocation for residential care centres.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: That line refers to the overall salaries for supervisors, deputy supervisors, residential care workers, clerical, domestic and general staff. The reason for the increase is the higher salaries which are now payable across the whole range of positions and which have been determined by wage fixing authorities. This contributes to the increase in the cost per child. Also, there has been a reduction in the number of children in these centres.

Mr. MATHWIN: I refer to the allocations for treatment centres and residential care centres, which relate to juvenile crime. During the past seven years for which the Dunstan Government has been in office, the rate of juvenile crime, particularly violent crime, has increased markedly. Indeed, during that period there has been a 140 per cent increase in rape offences, giving South Australia the worst record in Australia in this respect. We must not forget that legislation introduced by the Dunstan Government removed from courts and vested in the Minister the power to place children in and remove them

from institutions. Such power was then delegated to the department. The soft, lolly-pop era then began.

More than two years ago, when mass abscondings from institutions, particularly McNally Training Centre, were becoming more numerous, I started questioning the Government on these matters. An examination of the report of the Royal Commission that inquired into the administration of the Juvenile Courts Act and other associated matters reveals that in the 15 months to September, 1976, 1 912 offenders of all ages, 70.5 per cent of whom were juveniles, were arrested for breaking offences. My concern is, therefore, obviously justified. Of those 1 912 arrests, 8.4 per cent involved juveniles who had absconded or who were on some form of leave, which had been granted by the Minister, from these holding institutions.

In addition, the Police Commissioner, in evidence before the Royal Commission, said that in 1974-75 juveniles were responsible for about 58 per cent of the really serious crimes of homicide, serious assault and rape. He said that these proportions were about the same in 1977. The Royal Commissioner's report recommended (correctly, I think) many changes to this incredible legislation, under which certain powers were removed from the courts and placed in the hands of the Minister and his department. The Royal Commission recommended in its report that this situation be changed and that the power of sentencing and release of offenders should lie with the court, and not with the Dunstan Government.

That Government has, under its "enlightened" legislation, not only protected a small percentage of hardcore repeated offenders, but has also aided and abetted these minority offenders to influence the behaviour of many juveniles towards the Saturday night gang-bang car ride and bash syndrome. This sort of practice has been accelerated by the type of legislation introduced by the Dunstan Government.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitten): Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the line.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am alluding to the line, which deals with supervisors, residential care workers, clerical, domestic and general staff.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I want to raise a query and a point of order. The heading on the page is "Salaries and wages and related payments" and item 00.15 refers to the salaries and wages and related payments for that range of staff in treatment centres. I realise that Committee stages are useful in these areas, but I was hoping that there would be some sort of link up with what I understood to be the purpose of the item.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order and ask the honourable member to deal with the line more specifically.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am referring to the cost and to the payment of residential care workers. Later I will ask the Minister whether his department intends to pay higher salaries to them, whether he intends to provide extra staff, and when he will reply to me about the report, which he has twice refused to bring into this Parliament or to release, referring to the areas of staffing at McNally, in particular. A meeting of residential care workers recently demanded that the report be released, as it would assist them in their approach to the Government as regards staffing, pay, and the ratio of residential care workers as to inmates in these institutions. I bring this case forward and produce the figures to show the Minister where additional salaries or extra staff should be provided.

Evidence given to the Royal Commission provides illuminating figures and information for the Minister to add to the secret report that he has failed to produce. He

must release it at some time, for the benefit of not only the residential care workers in McNally but also the inmates. In the evidence given by Mr. McAuley, the following question and answer occur:

I am thinking about these statistics you have in Appendix A1, the first one, there were 1 912 offenders of all ages arrested for breaking offences; 70.5 per cent of them were juveniles. It would be unsafe to draw an inference from that that 70 per cent of all breaking offences were committed by juveniles, wouldn't it? . . . There are a lot of variables and unfortunately we are never going to be able to solve the problem of who committed the unsolved crimes. There is a very significant aspect of these figures that during a 15-month period 8.4 per cent of all the people who were arrested for breaking offences throughout the whole of the State and irrespective of their age were persons who had either absconded from juvenile institutions or were on some form of leave.

This proves to me, if not to the Minister, that some areas in McNally are short of either staff or trained staff. I have asked the Minister whether the many resignations from McNally have occurred because people have been beaten up there, and I expect that the Minister knows the answer. It is about time the Minister saw sense regarding release of the report, which has been asked for not only by me but also by public servants and residential care workers in Vaughan House, and McNally in particular. I have a report from Mr. Althuisen, who went at the request of the Royal Commissioner to investigate institutions throughout Australia.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: He was made freely available to the Royal Commissioner.

Mr. MATHWIN: I should hope so. Is the Minister trying to make himself a good guy because he was able to release this person? There are many areas in the report to which I could refer.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the honourable member come back to the item.

Mr. MATHWIN: I again ask the Minister about staffing at residential care centres.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Whether the matters referred to by the honourable member have any substance is debatable. Regarding the secret report and the honourable member's statement that the Government or the Minister must release it now, he must know that that is not the way with such reports. I am not saying that it will not be released. The time table on that matter has been canvassed many times and the residential care workers know the time table that has been proposed.

At present there is no agitation amongst residential care workers. The only agitation is in the breast of the honourable member who, for some reason, keeps stirring about this matter. Some of the recent information he has provided to this Chamber by medium of his "informant" is not up to date, because the residential care worker representatives and representatives of the Public Service Association are seeing the Premier and me during the coming week.

On this occasion I have managed to get in before the honourable member's "informant". The honourable member also referred to treatment centres as holding institutions, but that is the problem with the honourable member: he does not understand the purpose of treatment centres. His whole philosophy is based on punishment and retention, which is not the philosophy of this Government. The policies of this Government in the juvenile area, which he has been scathingly criticising, are the envy of the rest of the world. There is irrefutable evidence that the kinds of policy being pursued in this State are those which

are designed to provide for rehabilitation, and that rehabilitation is occurring.

The honourable member referred to abscondings, and I indicate that 99 abscondings occurred from McNally, Vaughan House and Brookway Park in 1976-77, a fall of 32 on the previous year. Presumably, I have read some of those figures he spoke about, and we have been able to effect some improvements. Abscondings have been reduced, especially if one takes note whence the abscondings took place, as there have been few actual abscondings from the centres. Even the honourable member would agree that there has to be a period during which offenders, whether they be juvenile or otherwise, are given the opportunity to prepare to re-enter society.

Mr. Mathwin: You're doing exactly what—

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: As it is clear that the honourable member really does not wish to hear reasoned argument and reasoned reply to the diatribe he presented, I do not want to take up the time of other honourable members, who may have matters to raise.

Mr. WOTTON: I seek information about Aboriginal reserves and residential care centres. What is the current situation in respect of the administration of Aboriginal reserves by the State? Which reserves are administered at present by the State? Is it intended to enlarge existing reserves or take over further areas? If it is, in what areas will those reserves be established?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The philosophy in respect of reserve land for Aboriginal communities in South Australia is the reverse of taking over areas by the Government. The land will be returned to the various communities at their request when they apply for it. There are two approaches, one has been in existence for a long time; that is, the Aboriginal Lands Trust, which is the holding body for much reserve land in the southern areas of the State. The honourable member will probably be aware that recently there has been interest in obtaining land and land rights by other groups of Aboriginal communities in South Australia, especially in the northern areas, many of whom grouped themselves together and have called themselves the Pitjantjatjara nation.

The Government has recognised this need for those people and has established a working party, under the chairmanship of Mr. Chris Cox, a magistrate, who has the job of touring all Aboriginal settlements in the North and the North-West, and finding out from them so far as possible what are their wishes in respect of land rights.

Mr. Wotton: Is that working party working to a time table? When is it expected to report?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: It is hoped that it will report back to the Premier and me in time to introduce legislation in about the middle of next year. One task of the working party is to recommend on the type of legislation. It is a good co-operative effort, which I commend to all honourable members, because the working party is hearing from groups in other States and the Northern Territory, and the Commonwealth is continually consulting. Mr. Viner has agreed to co-operate, and the understanding that has been achieved through this approach will lead to useful legislation in this area.

Mr. WOTTON: Can the Minister provide information and a list of actual Aboriginal residential care centres or hostels in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Yes. In the metropolitan area we have Kali Hostel, which until recently was operative and which now is closed. That was a smallish hostel for Aboriginal boys in the teenage area. It was located on Cross Road in the district of the member for Mitcham, and on some occasions it was the cause of his making certain representations. I refer also to Klemzig Home, Largs Bay

Family Home and the Ceduna Amenities Centre. The Ceduna Amenities Centre was constructed partly by the Aboriginal community together with advice and assistance and, in the main, with Commonwealth funding and some State funding.

Mr. Wotton: Can you obtain a full list?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Some of that information is from memory, and I shall certainly obtain a full list for the honourable member.

Mr. CHAPMAN: First, does the Government recognise the contribution made by the Aboriginal Lands Trust in its advisory role since its appointment years ago? Secondly, the Minister referred to a working party, but I understand that the working party to investigate the wishes of the Pitjantjatjara community is an all-white working party. The Minister shakes his head, but I have correspondence from an Aboriginal member of the Lands Trust who has expressed concern about the Government's decision to establish a working party and ignoring members of the trust in making appointments.

The matter has been raised in this place before in the form of a question, but I have not received a reply as to why the Government appointed the working party and ignored members of the Aboriginal Lands Trust. They have been invited to attend as observers. It has been referred to as a slap in the face. Why did the working party not include members of the Aboriginal Lands Trust with the full voting rights they claim they deserve? Those members would have much to contribute.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The Government recognises the valuable work done by members of the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and the Government did not intend to offer any slight. A number of visits to Adelaide were made by elders of the Pitjantjatjara tribe from various parts of the North and North-West. Their view was that they were living within the law, and they believed that the question of land rights in that context was a different matter from the question of land rights for Aborigines in general. The Government tried to do the next best thing, in the face of opposition from the northern elders: to work with other persons who were responsible and respectable persons but in respect of whom, as they were not living within the law, there was this objection if they had the same status. Since the land rights issue in the North and the North-West was very pressing, it was thought that the Government ought to proceed. In an endeavour to compromise, some misunderstanding occurred.

Subsequently, I visited the Aboriginal Lands Trust at the invitation of the Chairman, and a discussion took place. In the words of the Minister of Labour and Industry earlier today, consultation beats confrontation every time. We were able to reach an understanding. Perhaps there is still a lingering feeling. Written invitation was offered for observer status to prove the Government's good faith, and there was nothing that the people concerned could not be privy to. The trust took time to deliberate, and it has not said that it will never provide an observer but, up until now, it has not taken up the offer. I reassure members that there was no intention to slight anyone: it was simply a matter of trying to meet the wishes of different groups of Aborigines.

Mr. EVANS: Mr. Acting Chairman, I draw attention to the state of the Committee.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr. MATHWIN: Regarding the item "Aged residential care centres", will any of the provision of \$1 719 840 be allocated to Seaforth Home?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: No. The item refers to administrative and operational expenses at Magill Home,

Wami Kata Home on Davenport Reserve, and Oodnadatta pensioner units.

Mr. MATHWIN: Regarding the provision of \$14 000 for oversea visits of officers, is this to be used to cover the outstanding balance of the cost of the trip made by Mr. Cox, who went to America for 13 months on a study tour with his family?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: No. Speaking from memory, Mr. Cox's visit occurred during another period which ran between two financial years. The present allocation is for a similar level of activity, and it is usually provided for a number of officers. Provision is made for senior departmental officers to undertake oversea trips either for study purposes or to broaden officers' professional knowledge and experience. It is expected that the level of activity in this area will be the same as in the last year. Mr. Cox himself contributed a considerable sum toward the cost of his oversea trip. He was very grateful for the opportunity to broaden his experience.

Mr. MATHWIN: Is the amount of \$291 800 to be allocated for expenses incurred in normal operation and maintenance in part to cover damage at McNally Training Centre; is this type of repair done by the Public Buildings Department or by any firm or firms in private enterprise?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: These are provisions and expenses incurred in normal operation and maintenance of certain places. They are administrative and operating expenses of Kumanka, Stuart House, Allambi, Davenport House, and various cottage homes with small groups of children scattered throughout the metropolitan area. Private enterprise would be involved in various supplies, but it is not related to the repair by the Public Buildings Department of any damage.

Mr. WOTTON: How many children are under the care and control of the department at present, and are sufficient foster-parents available to cater for present needs?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The department is providing care and guardianship for about 1 450 children in South Australia, 760 in direct foster-parent situations, about 500 under the care of guardians, and 200 are receiving care in non-Government homes. The department is always actively engaged in trying to obtain suitable foster-parents, an operation conducted from almost every district office. If the honourable member has anyone in mind, I am sure the department would be pleased to know.

Mr. MATHWIN: Is the pocket money provided for children graded and, if so, is it graded according to the age of the child and what is the range of pocket money allowed for such children?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The range varies according to age. I will get the details for the honourable member.

Mrs. BYRNE: What is the maximum age to which children are kept in this way? If a child was particularly bright, would that child have an opportunity, for instance, to go to university while still being cared for in this way?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: One of my more pleasing duties each year is to authorise maintenance and assistance in that area. I am pleased to be able to do it on behalf of the people of South Australia.

Mr. MATHWIN: The sum of \$6 200 000 is to be allocated for financial assistance to sole supporting parents. I presume that this would be allocated to single parents or sole parents, male or female?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Yes. The figure I gave recently in the House was of the order of 91. There have been further applications and approvals.

Line passed.

Minister of Community Welfare, Miscellaneous, \$8 933 000.

Mr. WOTTON: What proportion of the amount of \$248 000 to be allocated as a contribution towards administration and maintenance of housing will be spent on new houses and what proportion on maintenance? Where will the new houses be built? What is the present policy of the Government regarding cultural assimilation?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The provision of housing for Aborigines is a responsibility accepted by the Commonwealth. If I were playing the game that was played earlier, I might say that South Australia's funds were cut by 47½ per cent this year. As I am not playing that game, I will not pursue that matter. The total amount involved is used for reimbursing the Housing Trust for its losses on the administration and maintenance of Aboriginal housing.

Mr. WOTTON: How many houses?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I shall get the information for the honourable member. I can recall the number on the waiting list, but not the exact number of houses. A considerable number of houses have been constructed over the past few years or, in some cases, purchased and upgraded for use by Aboriginal people being assimilated into the community. The Government's policy is to have the matter of housing for Aborigines in the hands of Aboriginal people, and it has set up a housing board with a majority of Aboriginal people on it.

Mr. Evans: How many are waiting?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I think 525.

Mrs. ADAMSON: The sum of \$292 000 is to be allocated for grants to women's shelters. What criteria have been laid down for the distribution of grants; does the amount allocated equate reasonably closely to the amounts requested; has the Government received any requests from religious organisations for such grants, or do requests come entirely from lay groups; are the grants tied to particular purposes, such as salaries or rent, or do the managing bodies have discretion as to the use of the grants?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: This is one area in which the Commonwealth Government this year has provided a reasonable amount of finance. It has been claimed by members opposite that credit is never given from this side, but I am giving that credit. The amount paid for women's shelters is reasonable in the circumstances.

Mr. EVANS: What is the percentage?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: It is a complicated series of sums, and I prefer not to explain it. I will provide the information. One aspect of funding for women's shelters is still under discussion between the department and the Commonwealth. There has been a requirement from the Commonwealth for a commitment by the State. This has been met, and the State has provided a further sum because committee groups wishing to commence women's shelters do not have time to approach the Commonwealth; some approach the Commonwealth on a direct basis. It is a fairly mixed-up situation. The Government is satisfied with the response from the Commonwealth and we should be able to manage the programme this year.

The honourable member asked whether we received requests for assistance from religious organisations. I have not sighted any. Until recently I was up to date with them, but there may be one on its way through the system that I have not seen. Women's shelters operating or about to operate would total about 11 now, and in every case they have come from groups of interested persons in the community who have got together because they have seen a need, have made plans, have become incorporated, and have gone through the usual steps.

Mrs. ADAMSON: I thank the Minister for that information, but he has not replied satisfactorily to a couple of the questions I asked. What criteria are laid down for funding, and does the sum allocated equate reasonably closely to the sums requested?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The figures I have would indicate, in relation to another question the honourable member asked but did not pursue, the kind of breakdown with respect to funds made available to shelters. The allocation for the Adelaide Women's Emergency Shelter is \$35 120 for salaries and \$21 660 for operating expenses. Obviously, a fair degree of flexibility is involved. The South Australian Mutual Assistance Association (Naomi) has an allocation of \$48 000 for salaries and \$18 520 for operating expenses. My note indicates that four shelters have been listed and that six other women's shelters are not supported by the Commonwealth because they did not have time to qualify. An increase has occurred in this area in the past several months. Another shelter is just starting up and would not have been operating for a sufficient time to appear in the information I have. That would make a total of 11 shelters.

Regarding criteria, the matter is further complicated by other factors. The honourable member was not a member of this place when these matters used to be aired almost daily across the floor. The criteria requirement has been complicated because originally the funding was provided by the Hospitals Department. Subsequently the Hospitals Department believed that the shelters were a welfare operation and the Community Welfare Department was, shall we say, processing grants. Since then the Hospitals Department, because funds are coming from the Commonwealth to the Community Welfare Department, has handed over that function.

The criteria I require are that the organisations are *bona fide* in normally becoming an incorporated body (which is contained in the constitution of the shelter), that the aim of the shelter is to provide shelter, assistance and other things for women, and that proper financial accounting should apply. Because I believe that women are best employed in working out the way women's shelters should operate, I caused several interested people from the various shelters to come together to set up a women's shelter committee. Each shelter that operates is represented on the committee, except for one, which has chosen until now not to become a member of the committee. The committee liaises with Marie Steiner, whose job it is to work out effectively what should be a better basis for funding women's shelters.

The honourable member, being a woman, would understand that there has been an evolution in women's shelters and in the ideas people have in trying to operate them as any other activity would operate. A future requirement for funding would be an agreed constitution between the department and the shelter concerned. That matter is close to agreement. It is important that where an agreement cannot be reached it shall be referred to the women's shelter committee. Just as professional bodies function to regulate their behaviour, the best people to regulate the behaviour of women's shelters should be women representatives from those shelters. I have been working to achieve that end, and at the same time to keep my nose out of what is a women's activity.

Mrs. ADAMSON: I am grateful for that information. I believe I do understand what has occurred in the development of women's shelters. I see a further need for shelters as they are linked closely to the gradual breakdown of the authority and influence of the family unit in society. That is why I asked whether the amount allocated equates reasonably closely to the amounts

requested. I see the need for shelters growing at a fast rate.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The amounts available this financial year are satisfactory to meet requirements.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: What arrangements are made to audit the accounts of women's shelters? The Minister pointed out how guidelines have been set down for the initial funding of women's shelters. There was fairly clear evidence in the case cited in this Chamber that funds were being misappropriated in at least one women's shelter. As a result of that evidence the appropriate Minister in Canberra was contacted to check the State's role on the issue. The fact of life is that the State is responsible. It is under those terms that large sums of money are made available by the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: Moneys from the Commonwealth must be handled properly by the State.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: My understanding of the information given directly to me from Canberra is that the State has not only a responsibility for ensuring that the appropriate sum goes to the shelter, but also to ensure that the money is not being misappropriated within the shelter. What audit is carried out to ensure that the practices that were clearly going on in one women's shelter do not recur? The Minister did not go that far in his explanation to the member for Coles. The Minister merely indicated that he decides whether or not a shelter will receive funds. As taxpayers are contributing those funds I want to ensure that they are not misappropriated in the fashion that occurred in at least one shelter.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: The honourable member's idea of evidence and my idea and what a court would call evidence, are vastly different. I agree that many allegations were made and that the allegations will probably never end regarding the operations of shelters. Many voluntary and paid activities tend to cause people to fall out sometimes. It happens in football clubs and all sorts of places. Sometimes the allegations can be substantiated and at others they cannot. Shelters are required to submit audited statements.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I am puzzled whether it will be part of the Minister's explanation.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: You cannot get an audit for last year's accounts; we are talking about this year.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I understood the Minister to say that before any more funds were made available to that shelter an audited statement would have to be submitted to the department. In other words, funds were to be cut off if that statement was not produced. I recall when this matter was raised and the Minister said no sworn statement had been made. Statutory declarations were made, copies of which were sent to the Minister. The person making the accusations was told court proceedings might be taken. It is obvious no members of the public, unless they have means, is going to institute a court action.

I was threatened by the woman running the shelter with court action on the basis of what I said in the House. The person making the complaint made the allegations outside the House and put her name to them, but no court action was taken against her. More was said in her statutory declarations than was said in the House. I am convinced there were improper actions in that case because of the evidence I heard from a number of people who had worked at that shelter. It was not just a matter of a squabble. There was evidence of a husband charged with assault in relation to a refrigerator.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: Allegations were made.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: There were statutory declarations produced, but that did not lead to any action.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: I said that I had not seen any

sworn statements at that time and you subsequently produced them in the House.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: The Minister received the sworn statements the next week, but there was no change of stance. There was clear evidence of malpractice. It was in the public interest to see that that money was not misappropriated. What has the Minister done? What is the current situation in relation to a satisfactory audit on the spending of these considerable sums of taxpayers' funds? My interest is not in inhibiting the activities of well-run women's shelters, but I am interested to see that taxpayers' funds, which flow from the Commonwealth, but which the State is responsible for, are not misappropriated, as they were in the case of that shelter. Does the department require an audit before funds are made available, or not?

The Hon. R. G. Payne: How do you audit funds before they are used?

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I thought we had reached a satisfactory situation where the Minister said funds for future activities were dependent on a satisfactory audit of the past three or six months activities.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: You see, now your own recollection is not accurate, and that is the sort of thing you are calling evidence.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: That is a stupid statement. I am saying that the Minister said that at that time in relation to that shelter. If my recollection is not clear as to whether it is three months or six months, that is not relevant to the point I am making. The Minister now seems to indicate that even that requirement has been waived or not acted on. What is the current situation in relation to funding, particularly of this women's shelter?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: No requirement has been waived. I may have been guilty of careless semantics when I said it would be the requirement. The requirement was that audited statements of the year's activities would be received by my department. I only heard this afternoon that a statement has been sent in. That is the position. Surely the honourable member is not going to suggest that in the case of any activity that is operating with people in care is to be cut off just like that. Of course funds are made available on a short-term basis because audits, in many cases, are not required to be submitted until August 31, when talking about a financial year ending in June. I do not understand the Deputy Leader's taking that attitude. The requirement was there, the document has reached the department and presumably will be in front of me tomorrow. I cannot say any more than that. I think the funds are made available on a two-month basis at the moment. A department has to equate a need for protection of funds keeping in mind what the funds are for; the care of women in distress, who need help now, not in two months time. The safe limit, which I am sure any reasonable person would agree with, is that it is on a short-term basis until audited accounts are presented and examined.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: My understanding of what was said was that there would be no funds available until an audited statement was to hand from that particular shelter. If the Minister is interested enough he would be well advised to check in *Hansard* what he said on that occasion, because if that audited statement has only just come to hand after all this time there is a clear conflict between that and what was said when the matter was last discussed in the House.

Mr. EVANS: Is the \$30 000 for Aboriginal Lands Trust grants for any specific project? If it is for several projects, is one of them the Colebrook home site at Blackwood? Something useful should be done with that land because it

is becoming a bush fire and pest hazard. It is a derelict site that is not being used. If part of that money is not for Colebrook, could the Minister arrange for some money to help improve that site so that it will be used?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: This is the normal operating grant provided for the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and it is not related to the property referred to by the honourable member. I will examine the matter that he has raised.

Mr. WOTTON: Will the Minister provide me with a detailed list of the sundry grants allocated by the Community Welfare Grants Advisory Committee for the past 12 months?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I will try to do that.

Line passed.

Tourism, Recreation and Sport, \$3 321 000.

Mr. EVANS: I refer to the line relating to tourist advertising and promotion, the allocation for which has hardly increased in line with the inflationary trend. Is this all the money that is to be used for advertising and promoting tourism, or does the Minister know of other departments that will be using money in this vein to supplement the sum provided for advertising and promoting tourism in South Australia?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: According to my information, this allocation provides for advertising at the same level, in real terms, as occurred in the previous year.

Mr. EVANS: Will the Minister ascertain for me how many times the Tourist Development Advisory Council has met? The sum of \$1 900 is allocated for it this fiscal year, and I believe that the council has already started meeting. Also, has the council in any of its reports recommended that a casino should be developed in South Australia? I understand that several council members favour the development of a casino here.

I refer also to the subsidy allocated to organisations for the employment of recreation personnel. For the first time, \$8 000 has been allocated for this purpose. Will that sum go to councils that employ recreation officers, or will it go to other organisations and, if so, to which organisations will it be paid?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: The subsidy will be payable to colleges of advanced education, local government and voluntary organisations to assist in the employment of recreation personnel. I will refer the other matter to my colleague and obtain a report for the honourable member.

Mr. EVANS: Now that the sealing of the Eyre Highway has been completed, will an advisory centre be set up at Ceduna or some other suitable town on the Eyre Highway to help tourists travelling to and from Western Australia and, by that method, redirect people around the coast road through Port Lincoln and up to Whyalla? This area could be developed as a great tourist attraction, from which South Australia would have a great opportunity to bleed a dollar from tourists travelling through the State. An advisory centre at Ceduna would be a great advantage to people travelling in both directions through Ceduna. I refer also to the subsidies allocated for the development of tourist resorts. A total of \$354 647 was actually spent last year, and \$500 000 is allocated for 1977-78.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: This increase has been provided to assist in upgrading caravan parks and other tourist resorts. I do not know the exact number to be assisted, and probably the department does not know either at this stage, because this provision is for the current financial year only.

Mr. EVANS: Will the Minister ascertain for me who obtained this assistance last year?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I will ascertain that

information for the honourable member. Regarding the honourable member's other suggestion, I can see that it could have merit. Having been to Eucla last year, I recall that the Western Australian Government had a caravan there to provide information about Western Australia. This would undoubtedly have some value. On the other hand, I should think that far more people would be travelling from the Eastern States and South Australia to Perth than vice versa, so that the return to South Australia would not be so great. Much of the traffic would travel through in non-office hours, anyway, so that much expense would be involved in manning it properly. I will refer the matter to my colleague.

Mr. EVANS: Does the whole of the Ayers House operation come under the department's control and, if it does, how much rent is received annually by the Government for the restaurant facilities? This large business venture receives a certain amount of Government money through Government dinners, entertaining by press officers, and so on. It is therefore important that the Committee is told how much rent is paid for the facility now that it must be a stable and viable proposition.

I refer also to the allocation for operating expenses, minor equipment and sundries. Although \$94 929 was actually spent last year, only \$27 000 is being allocated this year. I do not object to saving money, but there must be a reason for that large deduction.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: In reply to the honourable member's question regarding Ayers House, the \$3 000 allocation is for the payment of rates and taxes for the Government section of Ayers House. The National Trust and the restaurant pay their own respective accounts.

Mr. EVANS: How much rent is paid for the restaurant?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I do not know, but I will find out for the honourable member. The line "Operating expenses, minor equipment and sundries" relates to the running costs of the new division. There has been a rearrangement of finance between the administration and the two divisions, hence the reduction in this allocation. This has occurred not because of any saving or cutbacks but because of a reallocation of charges.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am disappointed that no allocation has been made for an oversea visit by the Minister, the Minister's wife where approved, or any officers of the department. The record in tourism in this State is poor. When tourism was in fashion, the Premier had it under his wing, but it has been given to a lesser light on the front bench. No advantage has been taken of the weather and other aspects of this great place in which to spend money and to have a holiday.

A big advantage is that we have several vineyards in and near the metropolitan area. However, we have seen the erosion of vineyards by the Government in areas south of Adelaide towards Reynella. We also had the encroachment by the Minister of Transport into vineyards at Morphettville Park, the oldest vineyards in the State, where he put up a bus depot. The Land Commission has taken over much property in the southern areas and it lends the property to people. They never own it.

It is time the Minister saw what was going on in other parts of the world, particularly the older world, where countries have had much experience in tourism and have raised money for it. Italy and Switzerland in particular have been in the business for many years. For Switzerland, it is the sixth highest source of income.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I am pleased that the honourable member appreciates the value of oversea visits by Ministers and their wives. In addition to the expenditure last year for a visit to a Pacific Area Travel Association conference in Hong Kong, the Minister went

overseas on an occasion when expenses were paid by the organisation. I believe that that was to Greece.

Line passed.

Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Sport, Miscellaneous, \$1 054 000.

Mr. EVANS: Provided that many exhibits were included in the price, I do not believe that \$250 000 was an exorbitant amount for the Government to pay. However, I am perturbed about the operating costs of the Birdwood Mill Museum, which seem to be about \$50 000 a year. Is that amount only for operating costs, or are maintenance and other factors included in it?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: The provision is towards the deficiency in the actual operating costs of the museum. The museum, which had been conducted under private management, was running at such a considerable loss that it seemed that it would have to be sold and broken up. The Government stepped in and avoided that, because it would have been a pity not only from the museum point of view but also from the tourist point of view. This is the amount provided in the agreement under which the museum was taken over. It had to have some guaranteed backing to survive, and this figure was arrived at.

Mr. EVANS: What local tourist associations received money last year and which ones will benefit from the increased provision of \$28 000 this year? The Murray areas have received most assistance whereas the South-East has been somewhat neglected. Will the Minister pass on to his colleague in another place the merit of adopting the Victorian system of regionalisation? The Victorian Government gives about \$250 000 a year to regions for tourist promotion, and councils and the business community give more than that, under the agreement. We need co-operation to move towards regions. I should like information about where the grants went last year and where they will go this year, as well as the amounts.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I will get the information about the grants last year. The amount allocated provides for a marginal increase in the rate of assistance, but it is also in consideration of provision of additional regional offices, so some of the criticisms made by the member may be rectified this year.

Mr. VENNING: I refer to the actual payment last year of \$18 900 as capital subsidies to country agricultural and horticultural and field trial societies, and to the fact that there is no allocation this year. What has happened about funding this year?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I am pleased to inform the honourable member that this provision is included in the departmental loan appropriations, and he will have an opportunity to scrutinise that on a later occasion.

Mr. NANKIVELL: As no funds were allocated in 1976-77 yet \$80 000 was spent on the tourist roads subsidy scheme, and as this year no sum is allocated, I am concerned because the Minister in another place has agreed to receive a deputation from the Lacepede council next week to discuss an application for such assistance. Are funds provided under another line from which funds can be appropriated, as occurred last year, or has the Government decided not to make further funds available for such expenditure?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I am unable to inform the honourable member on this matter, as I have no note of it. I do note that last year no provision was made for funds but that \$80 000 was provided. As I do not know the reason for that, I will find out.

Mr. MATHWIN: As \$30 000 is allocated to the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia, is that sum a grant to the association or an allocation in respect of a building?

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I understand it refers to administrative charges and not to building grants. I am not sure about that.

Mr. EVANS: Only \$1 000 is allocated to the South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields Trust. The trust has difficulty making ends meet, although it is undertaking a magnificent development. If \$1 000 is not all that has been requested, will the Minister ask his colleague to consider increasing the amount? As much money is expended on women's shelters and other projects to help women, more funds could be allocated to the trust, which does such a worthy job.

Will the Minister obtain the names of people who went on the non-representative soccer tour of Yugoslavia where \$5 000 was spent? I was amazed to see that sum come from this department, as I was told that it was a grant from the Premier's Department.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: I shall get whatever information I can for the honourable member.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: In referring to the capital costs and operating expenses of the contribution towards Birdwood Mill Museum, I point out that almost 12 months ago I indicated that the Government had purchased the museum at a price of more than \$300 000 and, amidst the jocular derision coming from the other side, I made the following statement:

It is believed that about \$250 000 in addition to the amounts to which I have referred would have to be spent on the museum and, as well as that, an annual operating cost of \$50 000 will be incurred.

Twelve months later if we add the 1976-77 actual payments with the proposed payments for 1977-78 we find that capital expenditure is \$250 000, and the operating cost is \$50 000, exactly as I predicted a year ago. When I make predictions, I get the normal abuse from the other side, suggesting that my information is wrong and is wild speculation, yet here is perfect proof that I was not just near the mark but absolutely spot on. Two similar attacks have been launched on me in the past two weeks, and I merely indicate to the Committee the accuracy of all of the statements I make in this Chamber.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS: The honourable member makes so many guesses, allegations and estimates that he has to be right sometimes, and we congratulate him on the odd exception.

Mr. MATHWIN: The allocation of \$30 000 to the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia is a marked improvement from the \$4 000 in 1970. I indicate to the Committee that last year on beaches where patrols operated not one life was lost, although the number of rescues dropped to 78, of which 42 involved power rescue craft, which are mainly provided by donors, and other donors provide fuel. The association has a membership in this State of 939, but that does not include the rapidly growing nipper organisation, which assists young people to become good citizens. The Government should show more sympathetic interest in the organisation.

I was present at the opening of the new club house, toward which the Government made a considerable contribution. The provision for assistance toward the organisation's running expenses, however, is very meagre, particularly in comparison with the allocations in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria. I hope the Government will consider further assisting our surf life-savers, who do such excellent work.

Line passed.

South Australian Health Commission, Hospitals Department and Department of Public Health, \$107 269 000.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw members attention to the fact that the votes "Hospitals Department" and "Department of Public Health" are now included in the above vote. This vote has only a total figure, and I refer members to Appendix 1 on page 3 for the detail. Members may question the Minister named on the right-hand column of that appendix, but any motion relating to the vote must refer to the figure \$107 269 000.

Mr. BECKER: I move:

That the vote be reduced by \$80 000.

I have been concerned for a long time about the handling of Hospitals Department finances. Last June I raised the question of expenditure on Flinders Medical Centre. That centre is a perfect example of how management costs and administrative costs can get out of hand in a large venture. This is reflected in the large provision being charged to Revenue Account. In 1972, the Public Works Committee approved the building of a 710-bed teaching hospital costing \$33 000 000 for the first three stages. The hospital was to be built in four stages. By June, 1976, the cost was \$63 700 000 for 492 beds plus supporting facilities. Completing the original project including another 216 beds will require more than \$23 000 000, making a total of about \$86 700 000. The Auditor-General has stated that the anticipated cost will exceed \$90 000 000, including professional fees for architects and quantity surveyors. These fees increased from \$2 800 000 to \$5 700 000, and they are included in the overall cost. So, it can be seen how costs are escalating. At one stage it was suggested that perhaps the hospital's size ought to be increased by another 300 beds.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. We are dealing with the Estimates of Expenditure. The honourable member seems to be basing all his remarks on the capital cost of building the hospital. In the Loan Estimates, which will be discussed shortly, capital expenditure for Flinders Medical Centre will be dealt with, and I would suggest that any argument relating to the motion ought to be confined to the Revenue Budget.

The CHAIRMAN: I am persuaded by the Minister's point of order, and I ask the honourable member whether he is talking about capital costs, or whether he is talking about revenue expenditure.

Mr. BECKER: Mr. Chairman, I was making some preliminary remarks prior to discussing the main point I wish to make. The Auditor-General's Report states that by June, 1976, out-patient services at Flinders Medical Centre were costing \$30 a visit, but we now find that those costs have increased to \$52 a visit. However, patients were not admitted to the centre until April, 1976. High maintenance costs were influenced by the purchasing of opening stock, equipment, and other preliminary expenses. I am concerned about the tremendous sums now being allocated for our hospitals and health services. We were led to believe that, with the new schemes being implemented a few years ago by the Federal Government, our medical services would not be such a heavy burden on Revenue Account. In dealing with the Hospitals Department, at page 153 of his report the Auditor-General stated that total payments of the department were \$184 200 000, an increase of \$38 900 000 or 27 per cent over 1975-76. Inflation was nowhere near that figure during that financial year. The staff at June 30, 1977, was 16 000, an increase of 1 000. We must bear in mind the commencement of the Flinders Medical Centre. In 1970, the staff was about half that figure. The Auditor-General states:

In previous reports I have commented on deficiencies in the financial management of the department. Some progress

was made towards overcoming the problems encountered, but further corrective measures are essential.

The department's deficit increased by \$20 700 000. The expansion and operation for a full year of the Flinders Medical Centre, opened to patients in April, 1976, cost \$13 800 000, while salaries and wages cost \$10 800 000.

At page 157 of the report, the Auditor-General states that the cost of supplies and services for the year increased by \$7 411 000 to \$51 638 000. Additional charges incurred by Flinders Medical Centre accounted for \$2 851 000. The Auditor-General gives the following figures: administrative expenses—workmen's compensation insurance premiums, \$1 263 000, an increase of \$305 000; telephone costs exceeded \$1 000 000; drugs cost \$4 842 000; medical and surgical supplies cost \$4 240 000, an increase of \$781 000; pathology charges amounted to \$6 966 000, an increase of \$2 071 000; while food supplies increased to \$4 670 000. Payments for pathology services for 1977 included \$548 000 undercharged by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science in 1976. One wonders how such an undercharge could have occurred, but it reflects what the Auditor-General has said in his comments on this department. At page 158, he comments on budgetary control, as follows:

I have previously drawn attention to inadequacies in the preparation of budgets and reporting thereon. The present pattern of budgeting does not relate costs to identified areas of functional responsibility. It merely presents cost information by object of expenditure and is therefore not designed for control purposes. The reporting function does not provide a base of information which reflects the activities over which responsible persons at each level of the organisation have control and does not highlight those activities which require corrective action.

On September 21, 1976, I asked the Minister a question in relation to the Hospitals Department, as follows:

1. What action is the Government taking to rectify the lack of an effective internal auditing arrangement within the Hospitals Department?

2. When will such effective controls be implemented and, if not, why not?

The Minister replied as follows:

1. Acting on the recommendation of the Auditor-General, the Hospitals Department plans to establish a policy audit group to supplement the traditional internal audit activities of the department that it considered will result in effective internal audit.

2. Three positions have been provided on this year's manpower budget to form the members of the policy audit group, and these positions will be filled as suitable personnel and funds are available.

Yet we have this comment from the Auditor-General on budgetary control. On page 159 of his report, the Auditor-General states:

The lack of an effective internal audit programme was commented on in previous reports. The objective of internal auditing is to assist all members of management in the effective discharge of their responsibilities by furnishing them with analyses, appraisals, recommendations and pertinent comments concerning the activities reviewed. The early establishment of a well-staffed properly supported and fully implemented internal audit programme will do much to assist management in the implementation of programmes and procedures tailored to meet the needs of hospitals when they gain a greater level of autonomy under the Health Commission.

That is my area of concern. We want to be sure that the organisation is operating at the most satisfactory level. As a matter of interest, I have traced the matter back to 1969.

In his report for that year, at page 79, the Auditor-General states:

In previous reports I have pointed out the need for the department to review the whole of the inventory procedures. The matter was first raised with the department in June, 1965, and again in December, 1966. A committee was formed in 1967 to consider the matter of inventories in hospitals but has never been called together. In June, 1968, and again in March, 1969, I asked to be advised as to the action being taken in this matter but have received no reply.

Several requests have also been made for information concerning departmental policy on hospital and medical treatment of staff at departmental hospitals which was under review. No reply has been received.

In 1970, at page 85 of his report, he states:

During the year the department's attention was drawn to certain unsatisfactory procedures relating to the payment of wages, and a request was made for the whole of the pay procedures to be reviewed. This is now being done. For a number of years I have referred to the need for the department to review procedures relating to inventories. Some initial action has been taken but as yet no effective improvement has resulted.

In 1971, page 80 of the Auditor-General's Report states:

During 1970-71 the department's attention was again drawn to certain unsatisfactory procedures relating to the payment of wages. Some corrective action was taken but was not wholly effective. For a number of years I have referred to the need for the department to review procedures relating to inventories but as yet little has been done. Some hospitals still have no adequate inventories of equipment.

In 1972, at page 79, the report makes the following comments:

During 1971-72 the department's attention was again drawn to certain unsatisfactory procedures relating to the payment of salaries and wages and to deficiencies in the internal check of salaries and wages and mental patients' trust money. These matters have still not been satisfactorily resolved.

It was three years since the Auditor-General had begun referring to that situation, but he was still commenting that the matters had not been satisfactorily resolved. His report continues:

For a number of years I have referred to the need for the department to review procedures relating to inventories and, although the department's attention has been drawn to this matter from time to time, little progress has been made.

In 1973, at page 110, the Auditor-General's Report states:

Last year I reported that some aspects of the department's accounting procedures were unsatisfactory. Corrective action has been taken in respect of the deficiencies in the internal check of salaries and wages and mental patients' trust money. While action has also been taken which has improved procedures applying to the payment of salaries and wages in most areas, some procedures have not yet been satisfactorily completed. It is expected that they will be completed in the coming year.

For a number of years I have referred to the need for the department to review procedures relating to inventories. Although no general departmental review of inventory procedures and policy has been carried out, some action has been taken to commence inventory procedures in a number of areas of specialised equipment. The department has also appointed an Equipment Officer whose duties include equipment inventory systems for all departmental hospitals.

The 1974 report, at p. 125 states:

The building of new hospitals, expansion of existing hospitals and provision of improved health and medical services have resulted in a continuing large increase in the number of employees paid by the department. As at June 30,

1974, the department was preparing the pay-roll for 12 264 employees—

now 16 000 employees—

It was considered that improved procedures and better internal control would result if the pay-roll was compiled by means of the computer, and in March, 1972, detailed design work commenced on the implementation of the scheme. To June 30, 1972, the department estimated the cost of design, programming, etc., at \$150 000.

However, considerable difficulties were experienced in the processing of input data to cater for the numerous award variations in both the rates of pay and conditions (many retrospective) and the variable times worked by the majority of the employees covering 24 hours per day, seven days per week. To date it has not been possible to implement the scheme.

A review of the computer programming is currently being made to assess if sections dealing with award complications relating to times worked and retrospective adjustments can be omitted, whilst still coping with the time-consuming tasks of wage calculations, taxation and other deductions, bank credits, cheques and pay-sheet balancing aspects. It is expected that a decision will be reached before September 30, 1974.

In the 1975 report, at p. 130, dealing with budgetary control, the Auditor-General stated:

In my 1974 report, I drew attention to the need for stricter control of staff establishments, improved reporting and cost comparisons between hospitals. In April, 1975, a further report was made to the department in which was emphasised the need for staff establishments to be properly formulated so that more meaningful estimates would be prepared against which actual performance could be measured. The department has accepted the need for such establishments, and proposes to appoint a manpower committee to uniformly assess and recommend establishments, rosters, etc., for each hospital.

That was a common phrase.

Mr. Chapman: Do you think members of the Public Accounts Committee are listening to this?

Mr. BECKER: I do not know about that. He continued:

On June 5, 1975, another report was forwarded to the department on budgetary control over services and supplies pointing out the need for written reporting giving reasons or causes of variation from budget and for cost comparisons between hospitals.

Internal Audit and Control:

The lack of effective internal audit and controls over many activities was commented upon in reports to the department during the year. With the growth in volume and scope of activities of the department the necessity for internal audit has increased.

Internal audit should inform management whether laid down procedures are being followed and are effective for control purposes, enable remedial action to be taken where necessary before a situation gets out of hand and carry out a continuous check on the collection of receipts, validity of payment and general accuracy of the accounting records.

The prime responsibility for the implementation of procedures for the control of public moneys rests with the department. It is essential that action be taken to review departmental procedures and implement effective internal audit.

The 1976 report, under "Budgetary Control", states:

In my two previous reports I drew attention to inadequacies in the preparation of budgets and reporting thereon. The budget should be a managerial plan expressed in financial terms and used as an instrument of control.

It beats me how the Auditor-General could continue to make these statements, continually finding that no real

managerial plan had been expressed in financial terms to control operations within the department. I often wonder how the department was managed. It seems to me that supervision at Ministerial level must have been extremely weak. The report continues:

It needs to be based on staff establishments—
We have seen that many times in the reports to which I have referred—

and standards properly formulated to meet the objectives of the department. Progressive reviews of actual performance against budget should be made and variations analysed and explained. In this manner it is possible to detect irregularities and inefficiencies as they occur. The department's budget is still largely based on past costs with allowances for rising prices and expansion—

In other words, it is a sheer rule of thumb job—

As such it has limited use for control purposes. Monthly statements of actual payments against budget are supplied but there was little evidence of written reports explaining variations.

Later, the Auditor-General stated:

Internal auditing provides an independent appraisal of management operation within an organisation. It evaluates the effectiveness of control, extent of compliance with policies and procedures and enables remedial action to be taken where necessary.

Many times over the years the Auditor-General has commented on this matter, but still nothing has happened, yet the allocation to the Hospitals Department grows significantly year after year. He continues:

The lack of effective internal audit was commented upon in my 1975 report. Further weaknesses in control raised during the year emphasised the need for the early establishment of an effective internal audit group.

Year after year since 1965, the Auditor-General has commented on internal auditing, budgetary control and the lack of inventories—the lack of everything. After considering what the Auditor-General has said, one could ask how the organisation ever managed. Was it just a rule of thumb job? Was it an absolutely educated guess? When such a large sum has to be taken from Revenue Account, and when taxpayers must now take out compulsory health insurance, the cost of which has increased tremendously for every family and individual in the State, those taxpayers are entitled to know what is happening with the financial management and internal control of the Hospitals Department.

Mr. TONKIN (Leader of the Opposition): The member for Hanson has raised what I believe is a valid and important point. When one considers the present structure of the line "South Australian Health Commission, Hospitals Department and Department of Public Health", one becomes extremely concerned because, when the lines were prepared in the past, some degree of detail was provided.

Under the South Australian Health Commission, Hospitals Department and Department of Public Health, there is one line of \$107 269 000. The member for Hanson has a valid point. We are looking at the whole question of accounting, internal auditing and internal budgetary control, all the things that the Auditor-General has been talking about for the last 10 years or more. The Auditor-General has had to make those comments persistently and repeatedly. There has obviously been little consideration of the points he has made. I raise the question I raised earlier; should the Auditor-General be given wider powers? Should he be required to institute a system of investigation and budgetary control of separate Government departments?

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You continue to—

Mr. TONKIN: I am pleased that the Minister of Mines and Energy interjected because it would pay this State to employ a few more on the Auditor-General's staff because they would amply cover their own salaries in the savings they would make in the budgetary control of this State, and it is time the Government woke up to that.

Mr. Becker: Do you think they want to wake up to it?

Mr. TONKIN: I do not think the Government could care less; that is the whole point. I realise that the question is not a comfortable one for members opposite, but the question of internal audit and control was highlighted by what has been laughingly called, "The pork chop affair", "The meat scandal at Northfield". However, no light-hearted attitude or name calling is going to disguise the fact that some \$80 000 worth of meat, 2½ tonnes, disappeared from one hospital.

I do not intend going further into that matter because I believe it has been covered. If the community of South Australia believes it is not an important issue, and if the members of the media do not believe that the theft of meat on a grand scale from the Government (because that is what it amounts to) is important, then that is the decision they must make. I cannot condone it. I suppose it is fashionable to call it "pilfering" and say that if it is pilfering it does not matter. It is like shoplifting; it is not stealing, it is only shoplifting. As far as I am concerned, this is larceny and theft on a grand scale.

What is even more important, and I am sure you, Mr. Acting Chairman, as a legal practitioner will understand my point, is that the Premier of this State, holding what should be a responsible position, has on a number of occasions misled the public of the State and this Parliament. This, I believe, is equally as important, or more important, and it is on this particular issue and matters that relate to this line. Honourable members opposite may laugh!

Mr. Slater: Who's laughing?

Mr. TONKIN: Your colleague in the corner is laughing his head off.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. TONKIN: If honourable members think that the question of the Premier's telling lies publicly and in this House is a laughing matter—

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Chairman; I object to the accusation by the Leader of the Opposition that the Premier tells lies. It is not only unparliamentary but reflects on a member of the House, and is entirely contrary to Standing Orders.

Mr. Chapman: But it's correct.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I ask for a withdrawal of that remark.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to consider his position in relation to what he said and I ask him to consider withdrawing any implication that the Premier told lies.

Mr. TONKIN: I think the best thing I can do is to read the details of the Premier's statements.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I asked the Leader of the Opposition whether he is prepared to withdraw any insinuation that the Premier told lies.

Mr. TONKIN: Perhaps I could put it this way; yes, I will withdraw that statement.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I take it that the Leader of the Opposition has withdrawn any statement that the Premier told lies.

Mr. TONKIN: That is exactly what I said and I cannot—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot understand for the life of me the boorish behaviour of the Minister of Mines and Energy. In all charity, I withdraw the remark and he seems to complain. All I say is that the Premier has been guilty of peddling terminological inexactitudes inside and outside of the House on a number of occasions. I will not in any way qualify the withdrawal I have made, but let me quote a statement that was made on 5DN that was widely published on September 5, 1977. The Premier was reported as saying:

A most rigorous investigation was undertaken by the Attorney-General. No major discrepancies of any kind were found.

It is a matter of public record that major discrepancies were found and that the Premier knew full well that they were found.

Mr. Whitten: Why don't you quote the whole of the text?

Mr. TONKIN: If the honourable member would like me to quote the entire text I will.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask members to refrain from unnecessary interjections across the floor. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. TONKIN: I point out one other extract from the interview with Mr. McEwen on 5DN on September 5, 1977, when the Premier stated (and I have a full transcript of the interview):

The matter went to the Public Accounts Committee and no impropriety was found by that committee either.

The same statement was repeated in the *Advertiser* the following day. Every person in this State knows that the Public Accounts Committee has not yet reported on that matter. The report in the *Advertiser* stated:

The Auditor-General's investigation showed that food costs per patient at Northfield were not excessive.

It is a matter of record, from information tabled in this House in the Epps report yesterday, that food costs at Northfield were excessive, yet this was the next terminological inexactitude put forward by the Premier. I turn again to the report on 5DN on September 5, 1977, where in a reply in the early stages the Premier said:

I did not see the report.

A few moments later he said:

I have been through Mr. Epps's report.

That was the complete opposite. Then when asked by the member for Goyder in the past two days to clarify the situation, the Premier said:

The honourable member is evidently not aware that there are two Epps reports.

Everyone knows perfectly well that there are not two Epps reports.

Mr. Dean Brown: I even saw the Minister of Mines and Energy look horrified.

Mr. TONKIN: He was laughing. There were not two Epps reports: there was an Epps report and a summary of it. Mr. McEwen, the interviewer on 5DN, got as far as saying, "The report established that some \$80 000 a year", when the Premier interrupted and said, "No, it did not." In an explanation given in the House recently, the Premier talked about an average figure being calculated. However, even if there were two Epps reports, and even if it was possible to consider the full report and the summary thereof as being two reports, both of those documents contained a figure of \$80 000, the figure arrived at by Mr. Epps in his investigations.

Once again the Premier indulged in a terminological inexactitude. Yesterday he claimed in the House that he had not made the statement recorded on pages 194 and

195 of *Hansard*. That is when the Premier was again asked whether he would consider tabling the original document. Indeed, I asked him that question (page 195 of *Hansard*), and the Premier said that he would not, because it would give evidence of who he was because of the information contained therein. In the House, the Premier prevaricated and shook his head, apparently having forgotten what he had said. The plain fact is that yesterday he said:

The document was forwarded to the Chief Secretary for the availability of the Auditor-General's Department and for any information that could be passed on to the police. No information that could have been of use to the Police Department in any investigation in this matter has been withheld from the police.

Yet the Commissioner of Police, in a letter dated September 12, 1977, addressed to the member for Alexandra, says:

No request was made to this department to investigate any of the matters raised in the report of the Auditor-General.

Mr. Chapman: Rather, he should have raised the validity of the Premier's statements publicly.

Mr. TONKIN: The Commissioner of Police is a very honourable man, and he is not able to make that sort of comment; nor would I expect him to do so. This whole sorry affair, two years old though it may be, involves a considerable sum of taxpayers' money. I do not intend to go further into the pros and cons of the entire sorry and sordid story. However, the people of this State deserve to have confidence in their Premier and, if a mistake had been made and something was wrong, to expect him to have the guts to stand up and say, "Yes, there has been theft and inadequate budgetary control, and we will do something about it. In fact, we did something about it, and found that there was impropriety. We found that the Auditor-General's Report showed that \$80 000 worth of meat was involved in a year".

The Hon. J. D. Wright: He didn't say that at all. Don't carry on.

Mr. TONKIN: I suggest that the Minister read the Epps report.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: I have read it.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the situation with which we are faced, and that is why the Opposition is so concerned about the repeated comments which have been made by the Auditor-General but which have been ignored by the Government from year to year. How can we expect honest, open government when we get this sort of reaction from our Premier who is supposed to lead the Government and, indeed, who boasts of open government? One cannot get past the strong impression that this has involved a cover-up. If this matter has been covered up, what else is there to hide?

Mr. Chapman: It makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Mr. TONKIN: It does, because this involved one hospital only. It is obvious from the evidence tabled in the House that the police were waiting for someone from a different hospital altogether when they caught the man from Northfield.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: How was it covered up when it was handed to the police for investigation? Is that what you call covering up?

Mr. TONKIN: The Commissioner of Police said that it was not referred to the police. That is the whole point.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I have been extremely lenient in this cross-fire. However, I ask the Leader to continue with his remarks and that the Committee proceed in a calm manner.

Mr. TONKIN: Thank you, Sir. The Minister's interjection shows clearly that Government members have no idea what has been going on.

Mr. Dean Brown: Yet he purports to represent the people.

Mr. TONKIN: That is what worries me. Although the Minister is responsible for handling this line, he obviously has no idea of what has been happening; nor, I suspect, does he want to know. I support totally the member for Hanson in any move which he cares to make and of which he has given informal notice. The whole affair is an appalling one. I am not sure which aspect is the more serious: the fact that the Government has been able to lose about \$80 000 worth of meat a year over a period (and I will not go into the length of the period) or that the Premier has deliberately covered up the whole business because an election was in the air. Those are the two things at which we must look. In my view, although theft on a grand scale is a disgusting thing at any time, the Premier's actions in this entire affair have been even more disgusting.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Mines and Energy): I rise briefly to defend the Premier's position in this matter. It is fairly typical of the Leader of the Opposition to carry on in the way that he has carried on this evening, distorting documents, repeatedly misusing words and using the kind of argument that was used, solely for political purposes, during the election campaign. The Leader tried to grandstand in front of the public at that time that this was a great meat scandal that would turn the election his way. Having done that, and being subjected to severe criticism within the Liberal Party, the Leader has now regurgitated all the misrepresentation that occurred previously, simply because he thinks that he must justify the whole action that he took previously.

Mr. Dean Brown: Look, you know—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Davenport has interjected numerous times. I ask that interjections cease.

Mr. HUDSON: If the member for Davenport or any other member has information that would lead to the prosecution of any individual, he should bring it forward. In fact, the only information we have had regarding any individual at all in this matter led to a successful prosecution. There is no evidence whatsoever to show that there are people who could be prosecuted by the Government but who have not been so prosecuted.

The investigation by the Public Accounts Committee was commenced on December 2, 1976. Why did the member for Mallee and the member for Alexandra take 10 months to say anything about the matter? Did they raise anything in the House about it?

Mr. Chapman: We were not allowed to.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Did they do anything? It was brought out for the election, and it related to something that had occurred in 1975-76. The people were asked to believe something that might have occurred, that something might have led to the loss of \$80 000 in 1976, not that did occur, was still going on. The Health Commission Act provides for the strongest possible audit by the Auditor-General of the activities and accounts of the Health Commission and of health centres and hospitals.

True, in most areas of Government more detailed auditing may be necessary, and that will require extra staff. In some cases, the requirements of the Auditor-General, if enforced too rigorously, are such as to produce inefficiency. I will give an example. Under previous audit rules, when goods were supplied by a firm to a large number of schools, the Education Department was not allowed to pay an account of that firm until all schools had notified the department that the goods had been received.

We took that up with the Auditor-General, because

business after business complained that they were not being paid on time. We took up with the Auditor-General that, as with any reputable businesses, the Education Department should pay on the invoice, check on the receipt of the goods later, and adjust if necessary.

Ultimately, that was agreed to, but in government there is always a balance to be achieved between the necessary auditing and control to ensure efficiency and honesty and, at the other extreme, excessive auditing and control that can lead to inefficiency and, in instances of the kind I have mentioned, to financial damage to businesses outside. This Government is concerned with maintaining honesty and, if any honourable member has a scintilla of evidence that could point the finger at any individual regarding pilfering and theft, he should bring it forward.

Mr. Dean Brown: That's just like Nixon sounded over Watergate.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I ask for a withdrawal of that. It is an offensive remark by the member for Davenport and is contrary to Standing Orders.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I ask the member for Davenport whether he is prepared to withdraw the remark, which I heard, comparing the Minister of Mines and Energy with the Watergate scandals.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I compared him with Nixon, not with the Watergate scandals. Can I ask you whether you think it is unparliamentary? I would not have thought it was.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: We are in Committee and I, as Acting Chairman and in line with the precedent set by the Chairman, have adopted a very tolerant attitude, but I clearly heard the member for Davenport insinuate that in some way the Minister was comparable to the culprits in the Watergate issue. I ask the honourable member whether he is prepared to withdraw that remark.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: If it will facilitate the continuation of this debate, this pathetic debate by the Minister, certainly I—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I ask the honourable member for Davenport whether he is prepared to withdraw the remark.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Yes, I withdraw the remark that likened the Minister of Mines and Energy to Nixon.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! That was not the question I asked the honourable member. Is he prepared to withdraw that portion of his remark that likened the activities of the Minister of Mines and Energy to the activities of Nixon in the Watergate scandal?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Yes, I withdraw it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The position in the whole matter we are discussing is that the Government's record with respect to any dishonest or improper actions brought before it has been such that it has prosecuted and taken appropriate action in all cases. Have members opposite any evidence in relation to individuals to put forward so that can occur on this occasion? One can only assume that they have not.

Mr. Tonkin: We have lots of evidence of what the Premier said.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I would not rely on an account the Leader gave of what the Premier said. His reputation for selective quoting is such that his account is simply not reliable.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Leader's ability to quote fairly is also open to question.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! There are far too many interjections across the Chamber.

Mr. TONKIN: I rise on a point of order in the same spirit as other points have been taken this evening and I

ask the Minister to withdraw the imputation that I am guilty of quoting inaccurately for my own ends in this Chamber.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I withdraw any imputation that the Leader has deliberately misquoted or misrepresented remarks by the Premier. I simply say that I am not prepared to accept the Leader's account of events that has been given, because I know that, if there is any semblance of dishonesty connected with the Government, the Premier requires immediate action about it. I again say to members opposite and the public generally that the specific events that led to a prosecution occurred in 1975-76. That is the only evidence I know about that which would enable anyone to put a finger on any particular person, and if members have any other evidence, they should bring it forward. Why will they not bring it forward?

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Because they haven't got it.

(Midnight)

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: They have not, and all we have to put up with this evening is grandstanding similar to that which went on during the election campaign on this matter, because the Liberal Party was desperately looking for some issue. The member for Mallee became so embarrassed that he would not stay in Adelaide. He would not appear on television in relation to the matter, and I do not blame him for that, even if it meant that he missed out on appointment to the shadow Cabinet afterwards. Whether that is the case or not, I do not know, but it would be interesting to hear.

It is my view and that of the Government that auditing must be carried out by the Auditor-General in as efficient a manner as possible to ensure that moneys are properly spent and to ensure that, to the extent that it is possible for the Auditor-General to track down misappropriation of funds, it is done. If there is any evidence that the Auditor-General should require extra staff, I would certainly support, as I am sure the Government would support, the provision of such staff.

The increase in the net cost to the State for the Health Commission, which is the basis of these dreadful imputations of waste of money that the member for Hanson was talking about, is an increase of 9 per cent—one-eleventh. The net increased cost to the State is from \$98 367 000 in 1976-77 to an estimated net cost of \$107 269 000 in 1977-78. The increase in costs of the Auditor-General's Department is also 9 per cent. The percentage increase in net hospital costs is exactly the same as the percentage increase in the cost to the State of the activities of the Auditor-General, in circumstances where there has been a large increase in hospital services provided in this State, hospital services that are fully supported by the majority of people in South Australia. So we will certainly get significant increases in expenditure in relation to health and hospitals. Those increases are fully justified.

The expenditure on Flinders Medical Centre, which was original estimated at \$40 000 000 in 1970 and which is now likely to finish at about \$90 000 000 is the kind of inflation of costs that one would expect over such a period, in view of the general increase in costs in the building industry that transpired over that seven-year period. That position is not extraordinary. Any member of the Public Works Committee will know of the kind of increases in costs of schools that have occurred during that period. The cost of the Flinders Medical Centre and its building is entirely in line with those general increases. I reject entirely the attack by the Leader of the Opposition on the Premier, and the Government.

If members opposite can provide any evidence in relation to dishonesty by individuals, I wish they would bring it forward so that action can be taken.

The Opposition's case was a fabricated one in the beginning. It was fabricated for election purposes and it is being repeated now because Opposition members have to make it look as though what they said during the election campaign was genuine. The Opposition is now stuck with the consequences of its own grandstanding.

Mr. CHAPMAN: At no time were we floundering for an issue. Further, at no time can one pick issues on such a pre-election occasion—they occur. This resulted from a long-term development within the Public Accounts Committee that caused both the member for Mallee and me to resign from that committee. I will not go into further detail.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: Tell us about the documents.

Mr. CHAPMAN: I remind the Minister of Labour and Industry, when he refers to the use, availability or access to documents, that every member of that committee has a complete copy of all evidence and material available to the committee. Each member has his own filing cabinet to which he has continual access. That has been the case since the commencement of that committee in this place. On any day, committee members have access to their files, and there is nothing special about that.

Indeed, when the Chief Secretary was Chairman of that committee and resigned, he took his documents from that committee, insisting that they were his documents and that he was entitled to them. The Leader of the Opposition has made statements concerning inaccuracies in the statements of the Premier, and I support every point he has raised. Those allegations were not based on assumptions, because the Leader was citing reports in *Hansard* and transcripts from interviews in this place and elsewhere; there was nothing in that statement tonight that has not been checked and rechecked in respect of the Premier's statements. The Minister of Community Welfare has said that the police had the information, and he asked why they did not act. Clearly the Minister has not looked to the material on this subject as he is not abreast of the situation.

On September 8, I asked the Commissioner of Police the following question:

Were you invited to investigate the Northfield wards and the missing material raised by the Auditor-General and, if so, when?

It was a carefully prepared question, to which the Commissioner replied:

No request was made to this department to investigate any of the matters referred to in the report.

This demonstrates another inconsistency raised by the Leader who referred to a report stating that the Premier said that, in fact, the matters had been drawn to the attention of the police. I have no reason to doubt the Commissioner and, until this matter came to my attention I had no reason to doubt the Premier, but both cannot be correct. The two statements are directly opposite to each other. If I give unqualified acceptance to the Commissioner's statement, I have no alternative to supporting the Leader in his criticisms of the Premier's inconsistent remarks. It was the Premier who raised the subject again after the election; he did so at a press conference in an attempt to clear himself. When a radio reporter got a bit close to the bone, the Premier could not take it and he walked out. That episode was reported in the *Advertiser* on the following day.

Do Government members intend to ignore the grandstanding that has gone on since the election, to

protect their own Leader? He is the one who is in trouble: all we have done throughout is to continue to refer to documented facts. When the Premier fails to stick to the facts he deserves every bit of criticism he gets from the Opposition. When he deliberately misleads people, as he has done particularly since the election, he will cop it from the Opposition. We make no apologies for it, and we will not back away from our responsibility to draw attention to inconsistencies.

Mr. BECKER: I was not impressed by the rebuttal of the Minister of Mines and Energy. He pointed out that there can be a situation where excessive auditing can impair departmental efficiency. The Minister quoted an example relating to the Education Department where it was found necessary for accounts to be paid by invoice, rather than the departments waiting until all accounts were presented for payment. The Auditor-General's Report, dealing with sums allowed with imperfect vouchers, states:

Education Department: Approval was given to the department by the Treasurer, in January, 1977, to continue payment of certain accounts without first obtaining the certificate required by Audit Regulation 44 as to service or supply.

That means that there was inefficiency in the Education Department about which the previous Minister of Education knows very well. For 12 years the Auditor-General has annually referred to inaction by the department in connection with providing proper internal auditing. Is it any wonder that the current Minister of Health has been moved sideways? He has lost the portfolio of Chief Secretary. So, the Government is playing down the role of the Minister of Health because he has allowed the supervision of his department to deteriorate; there is only one thing for him to do: resign!

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes (14)—Mrs. Adamson, Messrs. Allison, Becker (teller), Dean Brown, Chapman, Evans, Goldsworthy, Mathwin, Nankivell, Rodda, Tonkin, Venning, Wilson, and Wotton.

Noes (22)—Messrs. Abbott, Bannon, and Max Brown, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Drury, Duncan, Groth, Harrison, Hemmings, Hopgood, Hudson, Klunder, Langley, McRae, Olson, Payne (teller), Simmons, Slater, Virgo, Wells, Whitten, and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Arnold, Eastick, Gunn, and Russack. Noes—Messrs. Broomhill, Corcoran, Dunstan, and Groom.

Majority of 8 for the Noes.

Motion thus negated.

Line passed.

Minister of Health, Miscellaneous, \$37 373 000.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I understand that Minda Home is about to have a restructuring of its board and its management. Instructions seem to have come from the Minister, having received the endorsement of Cabinet. This reflects the lack of acceptance of the Government's policy on industrial democracy when it needs to force that policy on a charitable body in the community. The Premier is prone to say such things as "The people at the hospital wanted this sort of change". I have a letter sent by the Minister of Health in November, 1976, as follows:

As discussed at our meeting on November 23, 1976, officers of my department who conducted inquiries into the matters at Minda Home Inc. relating to the petition presented to the Premier by the Miscellaneous Workers Union, made the following recommendations in their report which were endorsed by Cabinet.

(a) Structure of the board of management:

The rules of Minda Inc. should be amended to change the structure of the board of management.

The recommended structure is designed to give broader representation to all interested and involved parties concerned with the care and welfare of the residents of Minda. These recommendations are:

- (1) That the Minister of Health nominate an additional Government representative;
- (2) That the staff of Minda be represented on the board by an elected member of the resident care staff on a non-supervisory level, and a member from the professional staff employed at Minda;
- (3) That two representatives be elected to the board by parent organisations;
- (4) That the remaining members of the board be elected by the Minda Association;
- (5) That the board continue to consist of 10 members.

(b) Eligibility for membership of Minda Association, the body electing the board of management:

It is recommended that the rules of Minda Association be amended to remove any restrictive provisions. In particular, rule 6 (a) and (b) and rule 34 (a) and (b).

(c) Utilisation of funds raised by public appeals and subscriptions:

A close examination of the complaints made subsequent to the petition on the misuse of funds from this source reveals that there is little or no basis for complaint.

(d) Assistant Director, Resident Care (Mr. Crawford): It is recommended that in response to Mr. Crawford's inquiries, every effort should be made to facilitate his early retirement.

It would be appreciated if your board would carefully consider these recommendations with a view to their adoption and let me know at your earliest convenience your decisions and any progress that you have made.

I believe that is a very pertinent letter. The Government does not own Minda Home, but merely acts as one of the contributors to its running. This year it will contribute \$1 400 000, but the Commonwealth Government contributes a sizable amount, too. It is unfortunate that the Minister of Health should take it on himself that Minda Home must adopt, at least in modified form, the industrial democracy policy of the State Government. It shows the extent of the Government's desperation to get bodies in this State to adopt the policy. It is being forced on them. The Minister here must try to justify why Cabinet should have the nerve to force Government policy on a voluntary organisation in the community, I suppose with the ultimate threat (without saying so) of cutting off funds if the recommendations are not adopted.

Mr. MATHWIN: The contribution to the Royal District Nursing Society this year is to be \$929 000, an increase of about 12 per cent on last year's amount. The area of Glenelg, Marion and Brighton has the greatest percentage of people over retirement age of any area in Australia, and the calls on the society are great. Some people must have a nurse calling twice daily, and others several times a week. Contributions are voluntary, and the average donation by the patient is about 95c a visit.

When one couples that with the cost of a nurse attending a home, which I guess is between about \$4 and \$5 a visit, a large sum is unaccounted for that must be provided by the Government and by the different branches of the society. True, some branches have capital investments that bring in an income but, over the years as services provided by the society have improved and more people have taken advantage of them, the income from those investments has

deteriorated rapidly. Several branches will soon be in a difficult position. I do not know whether the sum of \$929 000 estimated in Appendix IV will be sufficient in the forthcoming years. I ask the Government to consider the situation facing the society and to increase the allocation in future because of the need for this service and the use it is getting. Further, why has the grant paid to the Glenelg Community Hospital fallen from \$11 337 actually paid last year to \$2 699 proposed this year, which is a colossal drop?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I do not have that information with me, but I undertake to get it for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Housing and Urban Affairs, \$2 381 000.

Mr. EVANS: Will the Minister's department conduct an inquiry to ascertain what are the true costs of building in South Australia and who is and who is not stating facts in relation to housing costs in this State? I am convinced that the figures the Premier and the Minister for Planning have been using are inaccurate. Whether that has been done deliberately or accidentally, I cannot prove.

For this purpose I refer to figures issued by the Bureau of Statistics, starting off with a base of 100 for the cost in each State.

In 1974-75 Sydney had a figure of 189.4, and now has a figure of 249.7; Melbourne was 178.4, and is now 234.9; Brisbane was 187, and is now 260.5; Adelaide was 195.4, and is now 267; and Perth was 172.4, and is now 249.5. South Australia's building costs have increased at a greater rate than any other State.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Not since 1974-75.

Mr. EVANS: No, it started off at a base of 100 in 1966-67. It cannot be disputed that our building costs since the mid-1960's have increased at the fastest rate in Australia, if the Bureau of Statistics figures are accurate, as I believe they are. Likewise, the average commencement value of housing in South Australia is the highest, except for Hobart. I will quote the figures for the March quarter because they are the latest figures I have: Sydney, \$25 300; Melbourne, \$29 700; Brisbane, \$24 200; Adelaide, \$30 400; and Perth, \$28 100.

The bureau makes the point that when analysing changes in the average cost per square metre it should be borne in mind that an average for a particular quarter will be affected by the mixture in the size and cost of houses commenced in that quarter. That accounts for changes in the mixture of houses and materials, and reflects the actual cost paid by people for their houses. The bureau's figures for the cost per square metre for the March, 1977, quarter are as follows: Sydney, \$189; Melbourne, \$202; Brisbane, \$181; Adelaide, \$215; and Perth, \$192. Adelaide, at \$215 a square metre, has the highest cost.

We, as a State, historically always had more solid construction houses (full brick or full stone) than has any other State, and it is acknowledged that this is the dearest method of house construction. The Minister for Planning often refers to a document relating to various types of materials used in house construction throughout the Commonwealth.

That document states:

Dwellings are generally of brick, brick veneer, weather-board or asbestos cement (known as fibro) construction. In most areas brick veneer is by far the most popular type. That is the case today in South Australia, but historically it was not the case. I make that point because we have moved from the most expensive type of housing to a cheaper type, but become the most expensive State in which to build. The document continues:

The outward appearance of a brick veneer house is the same as full brick. However, the inner frame structure is of

timber and inside lining is of plaster board or similar material. This type of construction is ideally suited to the Australian climate and, of course, costs a good deal less than a full brick home.

In the mid-sixties, when we started off with that base rate of 100, we were building a greater percentage of solid brick homes than any other State. Since then our percentage cost increase has outstripped that of every other State, but we have moved at a greater rate than any other State to the cheaper type of construction.

The Commonwealth Savings Bank document admits that it is the cheaper type of construction. To back the statement that we have moved to a cheaper type of construction, I refer to the Master Builders Association's preliminary submission to the Committee of Inquiry into Housing Costs (a Commonwealth inquiry that has been set up), as follows:

Brick veneer construction in South Australia has been rising significantly over recent years to the point where it is now fairly close to the Australian average percentage. At the same time solid masonry construction has been falling from a high percentage relative to the Australian average to a level which is now much closer to that average. The construction of asbestos cement buildings as a percentage of total houses in South Australia is reasonably close to the Australian average and, although of minor significance, timber construction in South Australia has been trending upwards towards the Australian average. Overall, the mix of houses built in South Australia at the present time is reasonably close to the Australian average.

There is no benefit in the Premier, either deliberately or accidentally, saying that the type of mix of building materials in South Australia is much different from the Australian average; it is not.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: It is in Adelaide.

Mr. EVANS: It is not. What the Minister for Planning is now going to say is that within the Adelaide metropolitan area we do not use as many transportable houses—that they are used in the outlying areas—but that the other States do not use the transportable or timber-frame houses in the outlying areas; they use them in the metropolitan area. If he is going to make that sort of statement he is sinking to the depths that he accuses other people of doing at times.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You don't have to say that.

Mr. EVANS: If the Minister checks, he will find that I am right. He can use the facilities available through his department and come down with what I believe would be a genuine report. If that report is rigged in any way then I am prepared to attack it at that time. The Master Builders Association is not setting out to harm anybody with the submission it is making to the Commonwealth inquiry: it is merely trying to show that it is concerned about the cost of housing in this State. On August 5, outside the House my Leader made a statement about the cost of housing, which is reported in the *Advertiser*, as follows:

Outside the House Mr. Tonkin said a top-level inquiry should be held immediately involving everybody connected with the industry from builders to unionists. "A Liberal Government will institute immediately such an inquiry, if the Premier continues to ignore this damning situation," he said. The State secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union (Mr. F. V. Gosden) said yesterday his union would welcome the top-level inquiry involving builders and unions that Mr. Tonkin had suggested. He said the union did not doubt the statistics Mr. Tonkin quoted.

The union is concerned and is prepared to appear before an inquiry. Mr. Gosden said that he did not think the labour costs were significant, but that he thought material costs were the highest component in the cost of building a

house. The Premier reflected, quite seriously, on a man who I believe is of high repute: Mr. Trowse, of the Housing Industry Association. I am sorry to say this when the Premier is not here. Other members heard the comment, although I cannot say where it was said or I will be ruled out of order. He made the comment when someone in debate was quoting remarks made by Mr. Trowse. A report on the matter states:

On August 10, 1977, the Housing Industry Association was quoted as saying that over protective consumer legislation is the major factor in making South Australian building costs the highest in any mainland State. It costs about \$3 000 more to build a house in Adelaide than in Sydney. Mr. Trowse said up to \$1 000 extra was being paid on each dwelling in SA because of legislation relating to workmen's compensation, long service leave, builders' licensing and defective premises. Statistics show that material costs in S.A. are the highest of any mainland State. If we look particularly at the cost per square of the final construction costs, that indicates fairly clearly that SA is unfortunately the dearest State, except for Darwin and Canberra, which can be accepted as quite peculiar locations.

I point out that the Housing Industry Association is a separate body from the Master Builders Association. The Premier accused Mr. Trowse's statements of not being factual. I quote from the Master Builders Association's submission to the Commonwealth committee of inquiry, as follows:

That direct legislation cost items represent approximately six per cent of the cost of a house and land package of \$35 000:

Under the heading of "Direct Legislation Cost Items", we have grouped the Building Act, the Builders Licensing Act, the Pay-roll Tax Act, the Workmen's Compensation act, the Long service Leave (Building Industry) Act, and the Stamp Duties Act. In total these legislation items are assessed to cost the purchaser of a \$25 000 house more than \$2 000.

The Master Builders association has included in its list some Acts that the Housing Industry Association did not include. Indeed, it referred not to the Housing Industry Association's figure of \$1 000 but to a figure of \$2 000.

It is also stated that a house worth more than \$25 000 tends eventually to cost \$32 000 to \$35 000 for the total package. That is a fair assessment of the sort of price range for houses of this type. The submission continues:

Apart from the legislation highlighted in the previous section, the dwelling builder in South Australia is concerned with at least the following enactments: the Building Act and regulations in matters other than direct fees payable, the Real Property Act, the Local Government Act, the Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act, the Planning and Development Act, the Waterworks Act, the Sewerage Act, the Health Act, the Electricity Trust of South Australia Act, the Electricity Suppliers (Country Areas) Act, the Gas Act, the South Australian Land Commission Act, and the Noise Control Act.

The submission goes on to explain that it could not be assessed at that time how much extra builders had to charge for a house to cover all this legislation. Undoubtedly, the cost of such legislation in this State is high. I realise that some such costs would also exist in other States. However, those in the building industry here believe that we have over-legislated, thus causing the price of houses to increase significantly compared to the situation in other States. I think the Federal inquiry will eventually make that sort of finding. The Master Builders Association concludes its submission as follows:

Housing costs in South Australia have increased significantly in real terms during the present decade. Since 1971, housing costs, in South Australia, in terms of 1966-67

constant dollars, have increased from approximately \$7 500 to \$10 500—an increase of approximately 40 per cent. The average dwelling commencement value in South Australia during the same period of time, expressed in terms of the number of weeks of average male weekly earnings, has risen from 112 weeks to 152 weeks—an increase of approximately 36 per cent.

We are therefore saying to our young people who want to buy a home, "Whereas in 1971 you had to work 112 weeks to do so, you must now work 152 weeks." That involves an increased work load of 36 per cent. That is significant, and is not something about which we should forget or say that it does not mean much. The Minister should ensure that an inquiry is conducted within his department to ascertain why we have started to price houses out of the range of young people. It is this Government's administration that has given rise to this situation.

The Commonwealth Bank's proposal does not state that its figures should be regarded as a relative comparison of house building costs in each State. Nor does it argue that its figures are accurate. Indeed, I could quote an example to show where the figures cannot be accurate. I refer to page 11 of the bank's document, where it is stated:

Brick and brick veneer dwellings are the main types of houses being erected. Average area of houses is approximately 105m², and construction time is approximately four to five months.

The bank is saying the average size of a house built in Adelaide is 105 m², which is ridiculous because it is more than 130m². Also, the price of houses in Adelaide, a city of 1 000 000 people, cannot be compared with the price of those in Melbourne or Sydney, much larger cities of 3 000 000 people.

Also on page 11 of the document, the bank states that full brick construction is being used in the more expensive houses only. It is obvious that the bank has not checked the fittings in completed homes when working out the cost of each square metre. That price can vary, of course, depending on the quality of carpet, or the electric or gas range that is installed, and so on. Also, the electrical fittings installed in houses in Sydney are generally more luxurious than the average fittings installed in houses in Adelaide. We need to be conscious of this sort of thing.

The Bureau of Census and Statistics has proved beyond doubt that we have had the greatest price increase since the mid 1960's. Indeed, at present we have the highest building costs for each square metre involved. Although South Australia once had the biggest percentage of high-value construction, that is, solid brick and solid stone houses, we now have a lower standard of construction, including brick veneer, timber and fibro-cement. Despite this, we are still in the highest price bracket.

In early August, Carmel Travers reported on Channel 9 about whether Mr. Dunstan's figures, Mr. Hudson's figures, or the Liberal Party's figures were correct. She asked Ken West, of the Master Builders Association, which figures were correct and he said that the Liberal Party's figures were the most accurate. I am sure that the figures given by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and by the Institute of Quantity Surveyors and Engineers have been accurate. Carmel Travers said that the Government's figures were misleading.

All political Parties have stated that a house is the most important purchase in a person's life, and we should know the costs of housing. It is wrong for anyone to play politics on housing, particularly when a Government has just won an election and has the opportunity to say, "We have been playing around with figures, we have not been giving the proper information, and we see that there is a problem to

find housing in a suitable price range." Houses in this State are the most expensive on a square metre basis.

Will the Government say that the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Master Builders Association and the Institute of Surveyors and Engineers do not know what they are talking about, but the Government knows? If the Minister will consider this matter seriously, we can get somewhere in rectifying an industry that is in a serious situation and a position in which young people are struggling to own their own houses.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister for Planning): The member for Fisher's comparison of figures related to capital city comparisons. His comparison on type of house and product mix is State-wide. In Adelaide, the percentage of brick and brick veneer houses, taken together, is higher than in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane, while the overall State mix may be similar. Builders tell us that, when they try to get an asbestos cement house off the ground, it does not sell, although it can be erected more cheaply.

Devon Homes had an attractive asbestos cement house, but that firm has not been able to repeat it, because it was not acceptable. There are other problems about getting councils in the metropolitan area to approve timber or fibro houses. In the country areas, the loading on building costs almost invariably is sufficiently high in most cases to cause timber or some form of construction other than brick to be used. For cost reasons, timber houses are common in country areas of the State.

I have had the Housing Trust figures checked and I will bring them down. With the appropriate allowance for design and administration costs, brick veneer houses being erected by the Housing Trust come out at \$180 a square metre.

Last year, we had over-heated house building in South Australia, with a record number being completed. Profit margins increased, and that increased the cost. Profit margins in that industry are flexible. More recently, the house building industry in New South Wales has been depressed. Profit margins there have fallen and that has helped to keep costs down. This year the house building industry in South Australia is in difficulty, and currently there is a reduction in profit margins that will show up soon.

Regarding cost brought about by legislation, in every case of legislation that the honourable member has mentioned, other States have legislation equivalent to that here. A significant number of builders has avoided workmen's compensation through having subcontractors who supply some material as well as labour and can be classified as not employees. The extent to which compensation costs are entering the industry has been significantly reduced in the past few years by the growth of subcontracting.

Official figures show that the largest element in the cost of buying a house over the past five or six years is the effect of interest. About 60 per cent of the increased payment for houses is caused by interest. That is largely a consequence of inflation and, if inflation comes down, hopefully interest rates will fall. Everyone, including the honourable member, has something to prove on the cost argument. I will bring down the Housing Trust figures.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Bring down the Jennings figures.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am not responsible for Jennings and I will bring down the Housing Trust figures that I have quoted already. The honourable member can do what he likes about those figures, which are genuine and which are not consistent with figures from the Bureau of Census and Statistics. Today when I spoke with an officer from the bureau he said that certain figures were

obtained from Adelaide, but that he would have to ring me back about the details, but I have not heard.

Mr. Tonkin: That's a gross reflection on a capable department.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am merely saying that there is nothing necessarily sacred about the bureau, which can make a wrong basis of estimation. I point out that the figures quoted by the Leader and the member for Fisher of \$215 are not borne out by the figures from the South Australian Housing Trust using private builders to build houses.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I refer to line 0010. The speaker should not do that. Will the Minister provide detailed information about what staff will be appointed to the department in the current year. What are their positions and what are their salaries? Earlier this year I asked a question on this matter, and on April 15 the Minister sent me the following reply:

During the debate on the Appropriation Bill you asked the Treasurer, "What persons would be employed in the Policy Division of the new Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, what are their qualifications and what are their tasks?" The functions and staffing structure of the Policy Division are at present being discussed with the Public Service Board. At this stage complete finality has not been reached.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: "Administrative, accounting and clerical and general staff" includes the salary of staff transferred from the office of the Minister of Mines and Energy previously shown under the Mines Department. Staffing costs were shown last year of \$110 000, but actual costs may have been about \$120 000. Further, \$204 000 included administrative staff formerly shown under the State Planning Office. Officers were transferred from the Environment Department. Totally the number of new appointments in respect of accounts and running our own administrative services would be four or five. The bulk of this change is due to transfer of staff from elsewhere. The Administrative Services Division is handling its own accounting and servicing function, but previously it was handled elsewhere, and some staffing changes arose as a consequence.

Regarding the Policy Division, that staff is still being appointed, but it is expected to involve 23 people. Some will be appointed from the State Planning Office. The total additional cost we cannot yet determine but, as soon as detailed information is available, I will provide it to the honourable member.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Regarding payments to consultants for services, does that refer to the employment of the Monarto Commission to go through the Adelaide Hills or is it for consultants used in other areas?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: We have dealt with the Adelaide Hills under the Premier's Department lines. Some of that money could be paid to the commission for consultancy work otherwise it would be paid to private consultants. This vote is to cover a fluctuating requirement to ensure that all work is carried out without having to employ extra staff merely to meet peak work loads.

Mr. Goldsworthy: You didn't spend such funds last year.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: It came under the State Planning Authority and the Urban Development Coordinating Committee.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The Minister is the first person to accuse me of making exaggerated claims, but earlier this year I referred to job advertisements in respect of the newly created department. I indicated that senior staff appointments being advertised would cost the taxpayer in

a full year between \$325 000 and \$346 000. The positions varied in salary from \$13 900 to \$19 877.

It was going to cost the taxpayers about \$330 000. In his inaccurate reply, the Minister referred to the "exaggerated distortions of Mr. Brown". I have added up the salaries, excluding the salary of the Director-General, and they come to \$669 000. I said earlier that \$346 000 was the maximum for senior staff, yet the Minister had the hide to claim that they were "exaggerated distortions of Mr. Brown". I accuse the Minister of not only starting to sound like Mr. Nixon but actually giving the appearance of being Mr. Nixon.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Which Mr. Nixon?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! As I understand it, earlier this evening the Acting Chairman required an honourable member to withdraw similar remarks to those that have just been made. To be consistent, I ask the honourable member for Davenport not to make any similar references to the Minister.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Standing Order 154 states:

No member shall digress from the subject matter of any question under discussion; and all imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections on members shall be considered highly disorderly.

I ask that the member for Davenport be required to withdraw his remarks.

Mrs. ADAMSON: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Surely it is unreasonable—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! One point of order needs to be disposed of before another point of order can be taken. I uphold the Minister's point of order and I ask the honourable member for Davenport to withdraw the reflection on the Minister.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Saying that someone sounds like Nixon is not unparliamentary. The Minister has made incredible accusations in this place. He is one of the most abusive members.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member for Davenport to withdraw the imputation and the reflection on the Minister. It is for the Chair to determine whether there is a reflection, and I have determined that there is. It is well known what the reference to Nixon implies.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Where is the reflection that apparently has hurt the Minister so much?

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair does not have to explain to any honourable member why the Chair makes a judgment. I have made the judgment that it is a reflection, and I ask the honourable member of Davenport to withdraw it.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I said that the Minister sounds like Nixon.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. I am asking the honourable member for Davenport to withdraw. I am not asking for any explanation. The honourable member will withdraw; otherwise, further action will be taken.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Which reflection am I to withdraw?

The CHAIRMAN: I have ruled that the reference that the Minister sounds like Nixon is a reflection and an imputation on the Minister, and I have asked the honourable member for Davenport to withdraw, and I require him to do so.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I shall withdraw that.

The CHAIRMAN: I am asking the honourable member to withdraw unconditionally.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I have.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member for Coles.

Mrs. ADAMSON: It seems to me unreasonable that a

member should be required to withdraw when he has likened another member to a former President of the United States of America. I cannot see that that is unparliamentary in terms of Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: We have seen one of the most incredible pieces of biased chairmanship that this place has ever seen.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Is the honourable member reflecting on the Chair?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: No. I am reflecting on the way in which a remark I made was classified as unparliamentary. This place has heard many worse remarks made. I have accepted your ruling, Mr. Chairman, and withdrawn the remark. It seems that the standard for unparliamentary remarks depends on the person who makes the remarks, and I think that is most unfair and most unparliamentary.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member said that he did not intend to reflect on the Chair, but he has done so, and I ask him to withdraw the reflection.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I withdraw the reflection.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Standing Order 169 is consequential on Standing Order 154. When considering what is unparliamentary we have previously had recourse to Erskine May. Words are quoted in Erskine May as being considered unparliamentary; for example, "liar". Referring to someone as being comparable to a historical character is certainly not referred to in Erskine May as unparliamentary. Once the Chairman has determined that objection has validly been taken to an expression by a member, we have recourse to Standing Order 169, which provides two alternatives; one alternative is that the member explains his use of words to the Chairman's satisfaction, and the other alternative is that the member may be required to withdraw the words. The honourable member for Davenport was given no opportunity to explain his use of the words. I believe that the Chair's original ruling was not consistent with the normal practice and procedures of this place. I can understand that you, Mr. Chairman, were leaning on the earlier ruling, in the cause of consistency. We could possibly get into ludicrous situations in the future, if relating someone to a historical character is regarded as unparliamentary.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not rule that the statement of the honourable member was unparliamentary. I said that it was a reflection, an imputation, which is quite different. There are many historical characters that members would not like to be compared with. I believe the Chair has been incredibly tolerant during the Committee stages and I fear that, because of that, some honourable members have tried to take advantage of it. I am sure the ruling was quite correct. I cannot uphold the point of order of the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I think I have made the point. The Minister, in his usual abuse and denial, was proved quite inaccurate, as always. The facts did not substantiate any of the bland almost slander that he throws at anyone who dares criticise his department or what he does.

I should like to know, and I think the Minister owes this to the Committee, in view of the motion that has been on the books of this place since earlier this year, why the Minister, at the conference of Ministers of Mines and Energy, supported so strongly the view on mining of uranium.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Bloody—

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: So far as the expansion in expenditure is concerned, I have already explained—

Mr. DEAN BROWN: On a point of order, Mr.

Chairman, I ask the Minister of Transport to withdraw that remark.

The CHAIRMAN: What remark?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: He called me a lying bastard, and I think that is an insult, so I ask him to withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair did not hear the remark but I shall ask the Minister, if he made that remark, to withdraw it. I did not hear it, and I do not know whether the Minister made it. If he admits making such a remark I ask him to withdraw it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I do not know how the honourable member heard it. I have an idea the member for Mallee might have heard something and passed it on, and between them all—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister did not make the statement?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: On a point of order—he did make the remark, and I ask him to withdraw it. If I have to withdraw other remarks, the Minister should have to withdraw his when it is worse.

The CHAIRMAN: The difference is that I heard the honourable member make his remark and I heard no remark at all from the Minister, so I am unable to rule on it. I shall look at the *Hansard* report on Tuesday next, and if in fact it is reported that the honourable Minister made that remark I will require him to withdraw it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: By way of explanation, I said it had nothing to do with the lines.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: On the expenditure side, I have already explained how more than \$300 000 of the administrative, accounting, clerical and general staff appeared elsewhere in the Budget previously. I had already explained (but apparently the member for Davenport did not understand) that, in the development of the Policy Division and the making of appointments to that division, a process that is going on at present, some of the appointments will come from the State Planning Office and there will be a reorganisation of the State Planning Office, so that some of the expansion of the Policy Division will be associated with a reduction in the State Planning Office.

Until the reorganisation is complete, it is not possible to quantify that properly. We hope to see that there will be in the combined Policy Division and State Planning Office line some saving at the end of this year that may be of some substance. Of the appointments made to the Policy Division, three or four had come from the State Planning Office. The positions that had come from the State Planning Office had been associated basically with the old Metropolitan Planning Team, and those positions will not be replaced. The overall effect of the creation of the Policy Division will not be a net increase in staff equal to the numbers of the Policy Division; it will be associated with the reduction in the State Planning Office.

I made certain remarks not correctly reported by the member for Davenport at the meeting of Ministers of Mines and Energy that took place some months before the policy decision taken by this Parliament, for which the honourable member voted, and the policy decision taken by my Party. I complained, after the honourable member's previous effort, at the next meeting of Ministers of Mines and Energy that certain allegations had been made about what I had said at the previous meeting, and all the Ministers there denied that they had been the source of any remarks being transmitted to the member for Davenport.

I am quite satisfied with the policy of the Party and the Government as it stands. I think that, if we were to go

ahead with uranium development in circumstances where there is so much dissatisfaction and worry about it, we would be causing greater difficulty and trouble. The member for Davenport caused me no embarrassment whatever. He caused some embarrassment to some Liberal colleague who had apparently misreported me to him.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: If the Minister's argument on staffing were to hold water (because he argued that staff had been transferred from the State Planning Office to the Policy Division), one would expect that a large chunk of the increase of \$264 000 for the Policy Division would have come out of the State Planning Office staff arrangements. Let us look at the cost of wages this year.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You did not listen.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I did. The Minister said staff were transferred from the State Planning Office to the Policy Division and that those in the State Planning Office would not be replaced. One would expect a substantial drop in staffing costs of the State Planning Office, but that is not the case. The cost was \$1 100 000 in 1976-77 and the same amount in 1977-78. There must be an inflation factor, and so in real terms there has been a marginal drop, but not nearly the drop one would expect to account for the \$264 000 increase in the Policy Division.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: When the Budget was drawn up, people who were going to be successful in getting positions within the Policy Division and who were previously employed in the State Planning Office were not known. Whatever saving there was to be within the State Planning Office wages line was not known, and was therefore not put in the Budget. There would thus be, to the extent that anyone in the Policy Division was previously employed in the State Planning Office and that position in the State Planning Office was not filled, double accounting in the Budget.

The normal expansion in salaries in any line takes account not only of inflation but also shows the impact for a full year of staff appointments that took place in the previous year. Staff numbers increased in the State Planning Office in 1976-77 and the full year's effect of that is normally expected to show up in 1977-78. The sum of \$1 122 000 is something like \$200 000 below what it would have been normally.

Line passed.

Mines, \$7 605 000.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: My question relates to "Drilling and Mechanical Engineering" and other lines, and I ask how much work is now being done by officers in the department on developing a feasibility study for a uranium enrichment plant in this State. In reply to a question I asked earlier this year, the Premier stated that planning for such a plant was still proceeding. He said that it was important that South Australia should keep up with the latest technology in this field. I had the distinct impression from what the Premier said that, if the State Government suddenly decided to change its thinking about establishing an enrichment plant, it could go ahead with such a plant whenever it wished. The Minister should indicate how much work is being done by the department and how many officers are involved in that work. Perhaps he could give an indication of the average work load being conducted in this area on a continuing basis.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Under "Drilling and Mechanical Engineering", none.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: How is the allocation under "Energy Branch" to be spent? What does remedial action at Radium Hill entail?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Energy Branch is to be established this year consisting initially of about five

officers. It will be responsible for servicing the Advisory Energy Authority that will be established.

Mr. Goldsworthy: That's getting \$250 000?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Advisory Energy Authority will have as one of its committees the Energy Research Advisory Committee. It is that committee that has been allocated \$250 000, and it already exists. It is intended that a general energy authority should be established so that several other issues in the energy area can be dealt with on a relatively more independent basis than might otherwise be the case. The servicing and requirements of the energy authority will be carried out through the Energy Branch of the department. In effect the department will become a Mines and Energy Department.

Regarding remedial action at Radium Hill, tailing stands must be checked. The radioactive reading at Radium Hill is virtually a normal background reading, but a regular check is kept and provision is made for possible expenditure under this line. Last year the same sum was provided but only \$309 was spent.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Earlier I raised the question of whether expenditure on "Drilling and Mechanical Engineering" related to a uranium enrichment plant. I now ask the Minister whether any allocation has been made through salaries in lines in relation to "Survey and drafting", or "Australian Mineral Development Laboratories, Payment for services" and, if there is no allocation under those lines, whether there is an allocation under any of the other lines with which we are dealing now where people would be undertaking a feasibility study for a uranium enrichment plant or conducting technical work on such a plant, or whether there are any other allocations that would go to outside consultants for uranium material work in relation to such a plant.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Provision is made under "Mines Department, Miscellaneous", but we are not dealing with that line now.

Mr. Dean Brown: Any other?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Director of Mines is a member of the Uranium Enrichment Committee. I suppose he attends meetings and, theoretically, it could be said that part of his salary relates to that matter. The payment to Amdel is for service provided by Amdel. That relates not to uranium but to other questions and partly to help meet the deficit commitment, as has been the case in more recent years. Although that is the situation, nevertheless, Amdel resources are available in the uranium area, because that is an area of its expertise. No explicit provision has been made for that purpose.

Mr. BECKER: What is the worth of Amdel? Page 342 of the Auditor-General's Report states that the total net loss for the past five years for the laboratories has amounted to \$1 525 000. On page 343 of the report we are told that, because of the continual depressed demand for the laboratories' services over recent years, action was taken in 1976-77 to improve the financial viability of the organisation and that management consultants were engaged in December, 1975, by the guarantors to investigate and report on the activities of the organisation and to recommend appropriate action.

The report further states that, in December, 1976, a consultant who was subsequently appointed Acting Managing Director in May, 1977, was commissioned to advise on the use of the laboratories' services and to implement those recommendations. Staff requirements were reviewed and 22 positions were declared redundant at an estimated cost saving of \$310 000 a year. The Auditor-General made the comment that, of the total provision of \$343 600 for long service leave, only \$94 500

was represented by investments outside the undertaking. Considering the financial situation of Amdel, it seems, on the surface, not to be operating efficiently, and I wonder whether we are getting good value for the money we are spending, bearing in mind that the State and Commonwealth Governments are involved in the project. How long should we continue to prop up this operation?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The reorganisation of Amdel has occurred recently and we will see, along with expansion in the mining industry, greater work for Amdel that will make it viable. The Commonwealth Government and the mining industry, together with the State Government, have agreed on a new basis of guaranteeing work for the laboratories. The State has been the main source of work, and the allocation made in this year's Budget involves \$682 000 worth of work from the Mines Department and \$250 000 worth of work from other Government departments. It is an important organisation since it is the only research organisation in this area outside the C.S.I.R.O. and the Bureau of Mineral Resources.

Effectively, it is a service organisation not only to this State but also to the mining industry generally. It does work for the Commonwealth as well as for mining companies on a commercial basis. Necessary reorganisation of Amdel has occurred. Whenever the mining industry's activity declines, problems are created for an organisation such as Amdel, whose capacity depends on obtaining sufficient work. We are fairly confident that the situation has been rectified.

Line passed.

Minister of Mines and Energy and Minister for Planning, Miscellaneous, \$404 000.

Mr. EVANS: Has any consideration been given to the reclamation of oil in energy research? We had a reclamation factory operating in Adelaide which had a long history of misunderstanding and lack of recognition, which brought about its close. There is a need in this State for that type of facility. Waste oil is presently used in a plant at Port Adelaide where it is mixed with a fuel oil and burnt. I believe the Premier's Department was in contact with a man in August who is capable of setting up and managing such a plant. Has any consideration been given to that kind of facility being established? There is a market for this sort of oil after reclamation, instead of its being burnt, tipped out at the dump, or poured down toilets causing problems to the sewerage system.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: This is being looked at by the Environment Department and by people from my department and the Electricity Trust. Some oil is reprocessed through the refinery, but waste oil tainted with chemicals cannot be reprocessed in that manner. There are reprocessing arrangements in other States. It requires a certain amount of throughput before it can become viable. The matter is being investigated at present as to what can be done and whether it will be economically viable.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Is there a new inquiry into the objectives and methods of controlling private development?

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Mr. Hart's inquiry.

Mrs. ADAMSON: What does the Minister mean by the reference to the objectives and methods of controlling private developments?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The current methods are those that apply under the Planning and Development Act, either through local government control or the State Planning Authority. There have been many complaints about this, and the question whether or not better methods can be obtained is being investigated by Mr.

Hart. He has been taking submissions from many interested people, councils, Government departments and agencies. He will need to do a certain amount of travelling.

One of the suggestions we are looking at applies in the United Kingdom, and it may be that he will need to travel there. That would take place this summer (in the UK winter) and he might be away for a few weeks. Basically, this is looking into the whole question of how we improve the manner in which the community as a whole imposes a control system on applications for private development, especially of an urban nature.

Mr. BECKER: Is the \$250 000 for energy research for solar energy research? What encouragement has been given to look again at wind power? I understand a report was prepared for the Government some years ago that said that South Australia was ideally situated for wind power. Much time and effort was put into that investigation. Has that report been looked at again as an alternative power source?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The committee looks into research into alternative forms of energy: it is not only solar research. I think on the Thursday before the State election the Energy Research Committee held an all-day workshop on wind power. It had a number of applications for assistance to research wind power research projects. It was not satisfied in relation to those submissions, so it got together everybody interested, including Mr. Mullett, a former employee of the Electricity Trust, and the man who organised the study undertaken some years ago. They were together for a day and made certain recommendations about the way in which future submissions in relation to wind power should be drawn up.

Mr. WILSON: Will we receive a report of the deliberations of the Uranium Enrichment Study Committee?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: That committee produces reports, a couple of which have been published previously and which are available in the library. I am not prepared to give an undertaking that any report of that committee will be published; it depends on the nature of the report and whether or not disadvantages may arise, in terms of establishing a uranium enrichment plant, as a result of publication. In each case where a report is prepared publication is considered.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Can the Minister outline what sort of work that committee is currently doing? Is it continuing what it has done previously, or is it now preparing detailed analyses to put to the Commonwealth Government? Will the Minister say when he believes that the Federal Government will make a final decision on a uranium enrichment plant and whether South Australia is likely to be the State that gets that plant?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I cannot make any predictions about when a uranium enrichment plant is likely to be built in Australia or about which State is likely to get it. Certainly, with the resolution of the House and the policy of the Government as they are, one would not find such a plant being established in South Australia. That should be obvious to everyone. The Government has taken the view, however, that the matters associated with this potential project should still be studied. The bulk of the money provided here is used to employ Mr. Ben Dickinson, the former Director of Mines, as a consultant to the committee.

When the people from URENCO were here last week, they had discussions with members of the committee. The committee's main association in this matter has been with the Atomic Energy Commission and directly with

URENCO, the consortium involving the British, Dutch, and West German Governments.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Will the Minister say whether he sees any scope in the next 10 or 15 years in Australia for more than one uranium enrichment plant, or will there be only one such plant? If he thinks the latter will happen, what should South Australia do to ensure, should a plant be built, that this State gets it, particularly as it would help a region like Port Pirie and Port Augusta?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: There is likely to be only one plant producing centrifuges for a uranium enrichment plant. However, there could be more than one uranium enrichment plant. The biggest part of the capital costs associated with uranium enrichment by the centrifuge method relates to the industry that is established to produce the centrifuges themselves. The plant is built up gradually over a period, and there is a continuous production of centrifuges in an industry nearing the size of General Motors-Holden's at Elizabeth. That must be done on some degree of scale, and there would certainly be room for only one plant on that nature. However, that centrifuge production point could service possibly up to four uranium enrichment plants throughout Australia.

Line passed.

Schedule passed.

Clauses 1 to 9 and title passed.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Mines and Energy) moved:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Mr. TONKIN (Leader of the Opposition): It is clear to me and to most members, even though no-one on the Government back benches (excluding the member for Todd) asked any questions or was interested in what was happening, that Ministers are not sufficiently informed about their departments and their details of expenditure.

Many times Ministers have to read what has been written for them and they cannot give more information than is there. Last Tuesday afternoon and last Wednesday 153 questions were asked of Ministers and 86, or 56 per cent of them, could not be answered. Regarding the 67 that were answered, the answers varied from fair to middling. There is a need to look at the whole system of dealing with what is one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before the House.

Mr. Becker: We should get competent Ministers.

Mr. TONKIN: One way is to get competent Ministers. Secondly, we should look at the committee system, to have the Budget examined and to have available heads of departments and other officials. That would keep the Government much more careful. It is bad enough that the Budget has been introduced late, but it has been forced through again, and that is typical. In previous years, the Budget has been forced through with late-night sittings, because the Government has wanted to get it through with the least probing.

We would sit on committees and have them meet when Parliament was not sitting. On an important issue like this, we would sit in the mornings. We have spoken many times of poor accounting and of the pertinent comments of the Auditor-General. Because Government departments are not adequately represented by their Minister (and I am not suggesting that every Minister can know every detail of his department), poor accounting methods are perpetrated. The committee system of examining the Budget in detail would help Ministers, and heads of department and other officials would be kept on their toes and kept to account.

Governments departments are presently not being kept responsible to Parliament and, therefore, to the people. Parliament is not exercising the degree of control that it should control through Ministers. The Government is

responsible to Parliament, and through Parliament to the people. In my view, as a Parliament, and because of the system, we are not discharging our full responsibilities to the people of this State.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Mines and Energy): I will pass on the suggestions of the Leader. I presume he means that the Committee would no longer sit as a Committee of the whole House but would divide up into committees to consider parts of the Budget. I will pass that suggestion on to the Premier and the Deputy Premier and see what they want to make of it but, if the Leader wants the Government to examine the way in which answers are given, he should also examine the kind of questions that are asked. If he goes through many questions he will find that they were either asked more than once or impossible to answer on the spot. The kind of comments made by the Leader are quite gratuitous in relation to much of that.

Additionally, on behalf of the Ministers and members on this side, I should like to say that most people on this side of the House are appalled at the quality of the stuff

the Opposition puts up, and are really appalled when we get the performance we had after dinner, when the debate was kept going so that when the Leader got back the item he wanted to have a go at was still under debate.

Mr. Becker: That's not true.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: That was common knowledge. No-one else could otherwise explain the garbage that went on. It was deliberately designed that way. If the Leader wants to make remarks about the Government and Ministers, he will get some critical remarks back about the way his side of the Parliament performs. I merely want to say that there is plenty of room for improvement.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 2.13 a.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 25, at 2 p.m.