

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, February 23, 1978

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Commercial and Private Agents Act Amendment,
Criminal Injuries Compensation,
Subordinate Legislation.

PETITIONS: PETROL RESELLERS

Mr. **MILLHOUSE** presented a petition signed by 31 residents of South Australia, praying that the House would reject any legislation that could cause petrol resellers to trade seven days a week until 9.30 p.m.

The Hon. **HUGH HUDSON** presented a similar petition signed by 55 residents of South Australia.

The Hon. **D. A. DUNSTAN** presented a similar petition signed by 129 residents of South Australia.

Mr. **MATHWIN** presented a similar petition signed by 53 residents of South Australia.

Mr. **BECKER** presented a similar petition signed by 59 residents of South Australia.

Mr. **HARRISON** presented a similar petition signed by 62 residents of South Australia.

Mr. **ABBOTT** presented a similar petition signed by 58 residents of South Australia.

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: WINE INDUSTRY

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. **D. A. DUNSTAN:** I gave an undertaking to the member for Chaffey that I would get him a full reply on the question of the wine industry and the questions that he has asked upon it. I have that reply for him now. The Minister of Agriculture has constantly made representations to the Federal Government over the past several years to have adjustments made to both excise duties and import quotas in order to remove the present competitive advantage enjoyed by imported wines and spirits, and so restore to the domestic product the markets it has had in the past.

In January of this year the Minister addressed Agricultural Council on this matter and received personal assurances from the Federal Minister that he was aware of the present inequities in the tax structure and that the Federal Government would have to look at some form of compensation for wine-grape growers affected by the present estimated surplus.

The Federal Minister went on to tell Agricultural Council that quotas on imported whisky were lifted because of the threat from importers of whisky that they would be forced to retrench workers in their bottling plants. As the Minister of Agriculture has pointed out many times, those workers would be hastily absorbed into the Australian brandy industry as bottlers if the present domestic market share enjoyed by imported spirit reverted to Australian brandy. Figures show that the increasing

share of the domestic market being taken by imported whisky is directly relative to the decline in demand for Australian brandy. In addition, 20 per cent of domestic consumption of brandy is made up by imported brands.

He has also made clear to the Federal Minister that an even greater amount of prospective unemployment is possible within the Australian wine industry if the Federal Government continues to refuse the advice from the South Australian Government, the wine industry and the recommendations from the T.A.A. inquiry to restore competitiveness to Australian wines and brandies through a readjustment of excise and an imposition of quotas on imported wines and spirits.

Only last week the Minister telexed Mr. Sinclair asking him to reconsider urgently the decision not to act in favour of the Australian industry but to "look at the matter again after June 30, when this year's harvest will be over". Mr. Chatterton has also written to Mr. Sinclair detailing the position facing wine-grape growers who are already in a depressed plight owing to this season's coming surplus.

In this most recent letter Mr. Chatterton asks whether, if the Federal Government will not act immediately to restore the supply/demand balance in the industry, it will consider underwriting exports of grape spirit to an extent that would enable grapes to be processed and sold on overseas markets with some assured return to growers. In addition, the S.A.D.A.F. submission to the I.A.C. hearings in Adelaide recently called for import restrictions and tax changes designed to stimulate the market for domestic wines and spirits.

As for the matter of limitation of plantings, in an answer to a question in another place this week, the Minister of Agriculture explained that a limitation on plantings of vines (while necessary in the long run) cannot be considered to be an answer to the present problem in the short term. Limitations would have to be agreed to by all States involved in wine-grape production (Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia) and would have to be related to projected production and type of variety. Limitation on area alone would be useless. The Minister gave the example of 1977 when, in South Australia, 732 hectares of vines were marked for grubbing and 745 ha was planted with new vines. While this appears to be a net increase of only 13 ha planted, in production terms it allows a quite significant increase in tonnage over the next five to seven years. The vines grubbed out would represent only a small tonnage, as the major reason for the pulling out would be uneconomic production, while the new plantings could promise a production many times greater than the old vines.

I am pleased that the member for Chaffey has recognised the inability of the State Government to take responsibility for the present surplus situation. We have put a great deal of money and support into the industry in this State; in fact, only last year we financed an emergency grape pool to the extent of \$323 500, and we are still carrying this load, as it has been impossible to sell more than a fraction of the spirit resulting from the pool. Even now the S.A.D.A.F. is involved in negotiating to try to develop and expand a market for grape juice both in Australia and overseas in order to provide some outlet for surplus production both now and in the future.

QUESTIONS**BUDGET DEFICIT**

Mr. **TONKIN:** My question is directed to the Premier. In view of the record-breaking deficit expected in the State

Budget, will the Government now reverse its disastrous financial policies by no longer arguing before the Arbitration Court for full wage indexation, and by taking positive steps to stimulate the recovery of the private sector in South Australia? The Premier has publicly stated that the South Australian deficit could have been \$10 000 000 higher (that is, \$36 000 000) if the rate of increase in wages and salaries had not slowed down.

This State Government has consistently opposed the Federal Government's efforts, which have been successful in restraining wage escalation through partial indexation. The Premier was solely responsible for shattering the wage price freeze, which had been enthusiastically supported in the community throughout Australia. In spite of the fact that an \$18 400 000 deficit was predicted in October, the South Australian Government has continued to press for full wage indexation. It has failed to institute any practical spending restraints. Neither has it given any support or recognition to the plight of the private sector in its efforts to create employment opportunities. Will it now implement positive and sensible measures to restrain extravagant and wasteful Government expenditure?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Leader is about his usual politicking. I find it extraordinary that he is now on this tack, when only 18 months ago he was on a completely opposite one.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members complain about Question Time, but in the past three days I have asked them to stop interjecting after asking a question. I want this practice to cease. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: At that time the Leader was saying that the State's surplus of funds, which at that time I was carefully conserving, should be spent by reducing taxes in the State immediately. If I had done that, we would have had to reduce services and still face an unmeetable deficit. Now, he is on the completely opposite tack and is saying, "Well, it's all right now to use money in reserves as against our deficit, but we want to reduce expenditure." The Government has a very close control over expenditure in this State. I assure the Leader that his suggestion that we should not put potted palms in Government buildings will not meet a \$26 000 000 deficit. He has never suggested any means by which that may be done. We have conserved moneys in South Australia and our Treasury has regularly been better off than have those in other States for some time now. We have managed to maintain a high level of services and a high provision from public funds of contracts to the private sector that has maintained the present level of employment in this State. In every previous economic down-turn this State suffered more than any other State because of its industrial structure, and we had worse unemployment than every other State.

Mr. Tonkin: Not true.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable Leader to order.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: This time we are doing better than we have done previously, because the private sector has had very marked assistance from Government. The Leader wants me to reduce the kind of assistance that is now being given to the building and construction industry in this State by our using revenue resources, as well as the limited Loan funds that the Commonwealth has been prepared to agree to our having from Loan Council, in order to keep construction expenditure going in this State. He would like us to reduce the amount we are now spending on employment in the community by employing people in the Public Service: for instance, the teaching and nursing services, which have been our largest areas of

expansion of employment in this State. The Leader has never been prepared to face up to the corollaries of the policies that he is on about at any particular time or tack. If he wants us to reduce expenditure, he had better get some other list than the sorry collection he was able to put to the House yesterday and get to something that will approximate the kind of funds the State needs to cover its deficit. In these circumstances, he will have to be prepared to stand up and say what services he will stop and whom he will sack, because that is what it means.

Members interjecting:

Mr. Dean Brown: It's like catching a few—

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

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Leader talks about the disastrous deficit in South Australia, but fails to point out that that deficit has been covered by funds. The suggestion that we have a different budgetary situation from that applying in other States is quite wrong.

It is quite remarkable that, in all of this and in saying that there is a disastrous situation in South Australia, the Leader fails to mention at all the enormous increase in the prospective deficit of the Commonwealth, which is occurring for precisely the same reasons that the deficit is increasing in this State, and as it will increase in other States—that is, with the decline in business activity as a result of the present economic circumstances in Australia, brought about by the kind of policies that are adopted by the National Government, we will inevitably have a decline in revenue and, if we are to maintain services, an increase in expenditure. That is a situation which the Commonwealth Government itself is facing, and its increase in its deficit is many times what is the increase in the deficit in South Australia, even if we take the proportions of the deficit of the Commonwealth's Budget and this State's Budget into account. When given those facts, the plain huffing and puffing of the Leader is so obvious that it needs no further comment.

PREFERENCE TO UNIONISTS

Mr. WELLS: Will the Minister of Transport, in the absence of the Minister of Labour and Industry, draw his colleague's attention to a report in today's *Advertiser* and ask him to comment on the report, because I know that he is aware of it. In the High Court yesterday, a panel of judges ruled against a union on the basis of three to two when it was seeking compulsory unionism. The case, on my information, was defeated on a technicality, but the important fact I want to draw to the Minister's attention is that the employer in the award, Uniroyal, the tyre and sporting-goods manufacturer, asked the High Court to prohibit the preference provision. The important fact is that all five judges rejected the submission put by Uniroyal counsel (Sir Billy Snedden, Q.C.) that the preference clause amounted to compulsory unionism. As I believe that members should be aware of this matter, I respectfully ask the Minister to draw his colleague's attention to it and to the fact that Mr. Gietzelt, who is the Federal Secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers Union, stated that the High Court now upheld the principle of preference to unionists. The significant factor in the decision is that all five judges rejected Uniroyal's submission that the preference clause amounted to compulsory unionism.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the honourable member is repeating himself. The honourable Minister of Transport.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As this matter has been the

subject of attention by the House on several occasions, I shall be interested in the response of the Minister of Labour and Industry. I am sure that he would have seen the report, and I shall ask him whether he can bring down a statement on it, explaining the details for the benefit of all members so that in future, when they talk some of the ballyhoo they do talk on union membership, they may be a little better informed.

Mr. Dean Brown: Fraser has put the option in.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Davenport to order for the last time.

BUDGET DEFICIT

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: What taxes and charges does the Premier envisage will have to be increased to cover the huge Budget deficit which he predicts for this financial year? The Premier has given the warning today in the *News* that taxes will be increased unless the Federal Government gives more help. The increase from the Federal Government to the States in 1976-77 was \$603 000 000 in revenue sharing, or a 19.6 per cent increase. In 1977-78, the States will receive an additional \$660 000 000 in revenue sharing, or 18 per cent more than in 1976-77. This indicates the generosity of the Federal Government under the new federalism scheme at a time when, as the Premier acknowledged today in answer to a question from the Leader, it is grappling with record and increasing deficits at the Commonwealth level, which, I might point out, were a legacy of the disastrous Whitlam Budgets.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is commenting.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: In South Australia we already have among the highest taxes in the Commonwealth. I instance motor charges, which are the highest, and which are about three or four times more in this State than in Queensland. Our water charges, at 19c a kilolitre, are higher charges than those in any other State in the Commonwealth. Other States are making significant taxation deductions. Queensland has abolished death duty and gift duty, and Mr. Wran has foreshadowed that he intends to abolish succession duties in New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! I want the honourable member to stick to his question. He is now starting to comment and to debate.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: The other States are making significant concessions, while the Premier in South Australia is forecasting increases in State taxation.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member asks what taxes and charges we will increase this year to cope with the State's deficit in this year—none at all. I have previously said that, and the honourable member obviously does not even bother to read what is in front of him or to listen to what is said in this House. There is no requirement of the State to increase taxes this year; the moneys are covered. What I have said is that, unless the Federal Government changes its attitude to the States, then next financial year we will be required to increase some taxes within the State if we are to maintain the services of the State at their present level (and the Government intends to do that), because we will not have reserve moneys on which to draw next year to any significant extent.

Mr. Goldsworthy: It's \$26 000 000 instead of \$18 400 000.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Leader has asked his question.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: When I kept the reserves at

a time when members opposite said that I spend them, I said that I was keeping them as against the very problem that arose during this financial year: that if we were to keep the services high and not put on taxes or charges that would be inflationary in effect, if we were, for instance, to continue to absorb the increasing deficits that have occurred in the State Transport Authority and run the services, then in those circumstances I would have the money as against the prospective deficit from revenue. I also had to take revenue money as against construction expenditure.

The honourable member has carefully quoted increases in revenue funds from the Commonwealth. What he carefully did not do was refer to the reduction in real terms in housing funds, the cessation of specific purpose grants, and the reduction in real terms in Loan funds. If all of those things are put together there has been a cut, in real terms in Commonwealth support of the State, of 7 per cent. The honourable member, of course, very carefully does not want to talk about what happens in the Loan Fund; he seems to think that somehow or other I can conjure the money out of the air if it does not come from the Loan Council. I had to take it from revenue and that was part of the reason for the deficit.

Mr. Venning: What about your \$600 000 000 from the railways.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Rocky River to order.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The plain fact is that the Opposition, I think, does not bother to know what happens in the finances of the State, because so far all that has come from the Leader and the Deputy Leader illustrates their profound ignorance of State finances.

SEAWEED

Mr. OLSON: Will the Minister of Marine have investigated the problem associated with decomposing seaweed on the beach at Taperoo? Following the removal of quantities of sand to replenish southern beaches, seaweed has been used to refill the excavations. The filling has since subsided so that tidal waters now enter, creating an obnoxious aroma, to the discomfort of residents. Could sand be supplied to fill the excavations thereby reducing the ozone emitted by the decaying seaweed?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will have to consider this matter in my capacity as Minister for the Environment, because the Coast Protection Board would be responsible for the work that has taken place on the beach. The honourable member mentioned that the removal of sand had led to the problem he has outlined. I shall be happy to take the matter up with the Coast Protection Board to find out whether something can be done to solve the problem. A similar problem led to a statement in the weekend press that there was raw sewage at Port Gawler. It turned out to be an area of rotting seaweed about 100 feet by 20 feet. This indicates the type of smell that exudes from such a mass, because people mistook the smell for that of raw sewage. I will let the honourable member know whether we can do anything about the problem.

DRUG PENALTIES

Dr. EASTICK: Can the Attorney-General say whether the Government has expressed to the courts or the Parole Board an attitude about granting suspended sentences or parole for persons convicted of drug trafficking and, if it has, what is the Government's attitude? I want to make

clear that I am not suggesting or recommending that the imposition of a Government attitude be placed on the courts or the Parole Board, or, indeed, that that would be possible. Because of the great public concern at the ease with which a number of drug traffickers seem to be receiving suspended sentences or early parole, I believe this is an area where some dialogue could be of advantage.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: The answer is "No". I imagine that if I took such action to approach the courts and gave any direction of that sort about penalties to be applied in the courts there would be loud bleating from the Opposition that I was interfering with the independence of the Judiciary. Certainly, I would not want to be involved in that. If this Parliament wishes to have a Minister of the Crown direct the courts on penalties that should apply, the appropriate action to take would be for a member opposite, if he wished this to happen, to introduce a measure to give a Minister the power to do that.

Mr. Mathwin: What's your attitude?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: As I said, it would not be proper for me to hold discussions with any member of the Judiciary along such lines. As for my attitude, I believe that the penalties that are available to the courts to be applied in these matters are adequate. The way the courts are applying those penalties has, in my view, been quite satisfactory. It would be of some use to members opposite if I were to obtain statistics about the number of suspended sentences that have been applied to drug takers and the associated statistics so that members opposite can see clearly what is the situation. To some extent the honourable member's question has probably been prompted by what may well turn out to be newspaper talk and speculation. If he studies the statistics he will find that the courts in South Australia are applying the law and the penalties properly and adequately.

CONTACT REGISTER

Mrs. BYRNE: Can the Minister of Community Welfare inform the House about the response to the establishment last year of an adopted person's contact register and whether or not, as a result of it, any reunions have occurred between adopted persons and their natural parents?

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Yes, I can. Between August last year and the end of January 66 names have been placed on the contact register. These names comprised 31 adopted people and 35 original parents. It is interesting to note that, in both categories, females heavily outnumbered males. The 31 adopted persons who have registered comprise 25 females and six males whilst, in the case of original parents, the breakdown is 34 mothers and only one father. I can inform the honourable member that, to the end of January, no reunions had occurred amongst those persons who had placed their names on the register.

PREMIER'S OVERSEAS VISIT

Mr. GUNN: Will the Premier explain to the House the purpose of the overseas visit he is to undertake early in April, and give details of his itinerary, the duration of the tour, and the composition of the party that will accompany him?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As I said earlier, I have been requested to go to a number of North African countries, to Jordan, Libya and Algeria, in relation to the work being done in those areas by the South Australian Government on dry land farming and the provision of

infrastructure in dry farm settlements, and I expect a development agreement will be signed while I am there. I have also been requested to head a trade delegation and to hold a series of trade seminars in the United States relating to South Australia. The final details of this itinerary have not been completed. They had been completed tentatively previously but they have had to be rearranged because of the sittings of the Royal Commission and the necessity for my being available for evidence or recall on evidence before the Royal Commission. Therefore, the final details of the arrangements are not available. I hope to have them available early next week when I will give them to the House.

ROAD TAX

Mr. WHITTEN: Can the Minister of Transport say whether any agreement has been reached with the Federal Minister of Transport on suggestions to replace the road tax system now used in Australia? The following report appeared in the *News* on February 9, headed "Virgo has new tax plan":

The Transport Minister, Mr. Virgo, today outlined a plan to replace the current road maintenance tax system used in Australia. The road maintenance tax system, used by all States, has been under constant attack by long-distance hauliers and bus companies . . . Mr. Virgo said he wanted the road maintenance tax scheme abolished and replaced with a fuel tax system.

I ask the question because road transport people have expressed to me great concern about the present situation.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I did not write that report or its headline, which is quite inaccurate when it says that it is a new tax scheme, because the scheme to which the report refers is the one I put to the Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting in July, 1976. As the report explains, the scheme is to replace the existing road maintenance contribution payments with a fuel tax. This would require the concurrence of all States and the Commonwealth because obviously the Commonwealth would have to collect the tax because it is an excise. Mr. Nixon considered the proposal for about 15 months. At a meeting in October, he advised us he was not prepared to agree to that scheme.

Mr. Mathwin: How did you go with Charlie Jones?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The proposition was not put to Mr. Jones, but I am sure that he would have seen the justice of the fuel tax system as compared to the iniquity of the present road maintenance contribution. Indeed, I doubt very much—

Mr. Mathwin: I thought that was the basis—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Glenelg to order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO:—whether any Opposition members would be prepared to defend the road maintenance contribution. Likewise, if they were responsible, not one of them would suggest that it be abolished without a replacement because that would lead to a winding down of our road programme. If it is accepted that it is an iniquitous tax, and that we cannot do with that much less revenue, we will have to find a replacement.

The replacement is there. All that is required is the agreement of the States and the Commonwealth to bring it into operation, but to date we do not have that.

Mr. Becker: You seem to support the member for Eyre's views.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Hanson to order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: We have not been able to get

that agreement, principally because the Federal Minister will not agree to it. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Chapman: Do all the States agree?

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Alexandra to order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Notwithstanding that agreement has not yet been reached, there are those who intend to continue to campaign to achieve that objective, because it is in line with the expressed desires of the road trucking industry, all sections of which support it. On Sunday, I think the member for Alexandra will attend a meeting at which I shall be present, and I am sure that he will come away from it without any misunderstandings of where that industry stands in relation to the tonne-mile tax.

Mr. Chapman: Where do the other State Ministers stand?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Gunn: What about in 1965?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Eyre is out of order. I do not want to warn the honourable member for Alexandra, but I will if he continues.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I say that, generally, State Ministers agree. However, in a verbatim report of the Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting in New Zealand the Minister for Transport in Queensland, Mr. Tomkins, is on record as having said that he supports retaining the existing tonne-mile tax legislation. A former Minister for Transport in Queensland strongly supported my case but, unfortunately, the present Minister apparently has another view. Whether that is as a result of the change that took place following the recent State election by which the Transport portfolio now is a Country Party allocation whereas previously it was a Liberal Party allocation, I do not know, but the Minister is on record as having said that he supported the road maintenance contribution continuing in Queensland. Notwithstanding that, I hope that sufficient pressure can be mounted (and I am sure it will be) by the trucking industry in all its aspects, so that eventually the Commonwealth especially and those States with different views will see the error of their ways, and united we will get a fuel tax as a replacement, remembering that only about 60 per cent of funds taken from road users by excise is returned to the roads. The motorist already has 40 per cent of his tax pinched for other purposes.

Mr. Chapman: Like what?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member will speak to his Federal colleagues, he will find out. It goes into the general revenue of the Commonwealth for any and every purpose. In that area there is ample opportunity for the Commonwealth to return to the States the equivalent amount that the States are now raising from this tax, and so have it abolished.

NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. WOTTON: Will the Minister for the Environment say whether he has received the results of a survey that he instigated in October last year regarding the development and management of national parks, and whether the Government intends to take action regarding recommendations concerning problems associated with insufficiencies of staff and finance as recommended in a recent report to the Government prepared by the Monarto Development Commission and, if it does, what action the Government intends to take? In reply to a question in the House towards the end of last year, the Minister said:

I have posed to the Acting Director of the department, and

through him, to the person responsible for the management of this State's national parks (Mr. Lyon), a series of questions designed to enable me to review the current situation as to whether or not the Government should now place added impetus on the development and management of national parks, or a greater effort than has been the case in the past. I hope that the information I have sought from him . . . will be forthcoming soon, and that it will enable me to head up a proposal to place before Cabinet. If the points I have raised are met, and if the queries I have raised are as I suspect they might be, I will head up a proposal to Cabinet that might lead to an increase in the staffing regarding the development and management of this State's national parks.

Some weeks ago, in a report on the Adelaide Hills, prepared for the Government by the Monarto Development Commission, the following recommendation appears under the heading "Bush Management":

Although the National Parks and Wildlife Service manage a small proportion of the total bushland—
referring to the Adelaide Hills—

they are over-extended in terms of bush management staff numbers. In view of the substantially increased interest in passive and active recreation, plus the existence of bushland with scientific interest that does not have a secured future, there is a strong argument for a detailed reassessment of the future needs of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Criticism has been directed at State Government and local government bodies, mainly by primary producers, over the poor standard of weed, vermin and fire control management.

This poor level of management is generally due to lack of finance rather than management expertise. Therefore, any expansion in Government-owned resources should be supported by financial grants to allow adequate control and management.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As I have said in the House previously on a number of occasions (and, indeed, it has been said by other Ministers), the Government's policy hitherto has been that we should devote the majority of our financial resources to the setting aside of areas of land in South Australia (representative samples of soil) in order to achieve the Government's policy on national parks, namely, the setting aside of at least 5 per cent of the land mass of the State for that purpose. That, of course, has not yet been achieved, and the honourable member would be aware of that. I have been concerned for some time (even before becoming Minister for the Environment) that we ought to review that situation to see whether or not the policy should now change, and whether we should go through a period of consolidation because, as the honourable member has said (and I have never denied it), the management and development level is not high enough, and that has been deliberate.

The series of questions I posed was on my own initiative. I have had replies to those questions but, frankly, I have not yet had the time or the capacity (without the assistance that I need in the department, and I do not have that yet) to formulate a new policy to the extent where I can make a submission to Cabinet. There have been and will be some increases in staffing in national parks as a result of my efforts and those of my predecessor (the present Chief Secretary), who was able to convince Cabinet during the last exercise on the manpower budget that he should have 27, I think, positions allotted to the Environment Department, some of which would have gone to the national parks and, indeed, some creation of those positions has taken place recently. That will not solve the problem, by any means, because, as the honourable member knows, we will need large sums of money for adequate fencing, for a start, and priorities have to be placed on where that should happen first. I

think the honourable member will appreciate that only two management plans are available for national parks in this State. The reply to a query I raised with the department recently regarding how long it would take, for example, to set up a management plan for the new national park in the counties of Chandos and Buckingham, was that it would take about two years. That will give the honourable member some idea of the work involved. Under the current policy of the department that there be public involvement the plans have to go public, and we have to wait for comment on them before we can properly go about managing the parks.

I think the honourable member would appreciate that it is not the kind of scene on which we would want an *ad hoc* approach. We should have the overall problem properly tabulated, and we should be able to put priorities on the work and to know the total amount of finance involved, so that we can set a time over which this sort of programme should take place. There is a tremendous amount of work in that. I repeat that I am working towards achieving this aim. I have not got to it yet, but I am doing the very best I can to change the direction, because I think that is necessary. The answers to the questions that I posed show that it is necessary. However, a tremendous amount of work remains to be done before I can come up with any proper plan.

PREMIER'S OVERSEAS VISIT

Mr. RODDA: My question is supplementary to that asked by the member for Eyre regarding the forthcoming world trip of the Premier and his party. Can the Premier inform the House of the likely cost of this trip? The people of this State are interested in having their leaders appear at places that are of value to the State. When the Premier returns, he will be asked this question, and I am giving him an opportunity to answer it, perhaps, before he goes.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know whether the Premier wishes to answer the question. It seems that this is a presumption about where he is going. He has answered the question previously, but if he wishes to do so, he may answer it.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The exact anticipated cost I cannot, at this stage of proceedings, give to the honourable member, because the details are not finalised. For instance, there will be the cost of fares. In some areas there will be accommodation costs, but not in other areas. I shall be the guest, for instance, of the Jordanian Government whilst I am in Jordan, and there are some arrangements of this nature which also pertain to other areas that I shall be visiting. It is not possible at this stage to outline the exact anticipated costs, particularly as the details have not been completely finalised.

Mr. Rodda: How many staff are you taking?

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

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That differs from place to place. I have said that I shall give a statement to the House as soon as these matters are completed, and that will be done. If the honourable member is suggesting that there will be no value in the trip to the State of South Australia, that is the sort of thing one could expect from the Opposition.

Mr. Rodda: I don't think I was suggesting that.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If the honourable member was not suggesting it, I am not quite certain why—

Members interjecting:

Mr. Becker: All we're worried about is that you've got to come back.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to have to warn

the honourable member for Hanson. I have called him to order once, and I do not intend to do so again.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That was the plain implication of the honourable member's statement. I do not know what else he was saying, because I had already explained that I was going to North African countries in relation to business which we are doing in that area and that I will be signing a major agreement in one of the North African countries about which we have been negotiating for some time and which will be of considerable value to the State. I have been asked by Commonwealth trade officers and indeed, at the suggestion to the Australian Ambassador in the U.S.A., to lead a trade delegation from South Australia. Businessmen from South Australia will be going to the U.S. and taking part in the seminars which I will be giving there, at their expense, in that country. It is viewed by my officers and the Department of Trade and Development as being very necessary. It is an exercise which has been undertaken recently by the Premier of Victoria on behalf of his State and it is proposed, I understand, that a similar exercise be undertaken later by the Premier of New South Wales on behalf of his State.

LEASEHOLD LAND

Mr. RUSSACK: As my question concerns a matter of policy, I ask the Premier, representing the Minister of Lands, what is the Government's current policy regarding applications for converting leasehold farming land to freehold land? I was recently told by a farmer that he had been visited by two gentlemen employed by the Government who discussed the matter of leasehold land with him at length. He was given the impression that the land could become freehold, and a price was suggested. The farmer was told that he would possibly hear about the matter within a week. A month went by, and, because he had not heard, he visited the office and was told that it was not recommended because it was not policy. I ask this question because the two officers involved must have been uncertain about the policy and then, after seeking confirmation, it appears they found out that it is not the Government's policy. Can the correct policy be made known to the House?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The question of freehold and leasehold land has been under review. I think that I should get a full statement for the honourable member as to the present state of the policy. I will get the details for the honourable member and, if he can give me the details of the case concerned, I will also have that investigated.

BOTANIC GARDEN

Mrs. ADAMSON: Can the Minister of Works say what is the future position of the water supply at Mount Lofty Botanic Garden and when two scenic lakes, which are an integral part of the garden's water supply, will be constructed. The Mount Lofty Botanic Garden was opened in November, 1977, and it has been widely acclaimed since and visited by many people. The decision to construct the lakes was made 18 months ago and approved by the former Minister for the Environment. At present the gardens are forced to rely on a bore and four tanks containing 85 000 gallons of water to water the whole garden, which comprises 100 acres. Planting this winter is dependent on an assured water supply for next summer and, unless the lakes are soon constructed, the gardens could be in a precarious position.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will refer this matter to the Minister of Education. As the honourable member would be aware, the botanic garden is under his control and does not come under my control at all.

Mrs. Adamson: The public works aspect.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not make decisions, as the Minister of Works, about these matters; I am simply the person who carries out the work. I do not make the decisions about what the requirement is. In fact, it is the same with school buildings. I do not decide to construct a school building; the Minister of Education does. I simply build the school for him. I will find out for the honourable member from the Minister responsible for the botanic garden exactly what the situation is, and obtain any other information I am able to get for her.

BUS DRIVERS STRIKE

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can the Minister of Transport tell the House the current situation regarding the pending bus drivers' strike about which we have been reading in the newspapers for some days? The last report that I read on this subject indicated clearly the Minister's deep concern about the pending strike action and his disappointment that an earlier proposal had not been upheld and adopted by those bus drivers.

I ask the Minister in replying to my question to be brief but as precise as possible in explaining to the House the basis on which this strike has been threatened; that is, as it relates to the claims by the bus operators themselves.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I spent, I think, about 2½ hours this morning in discussions with the President, Secretary and two other officers of the union concerned in an endeavour to try to avert the stoppage that is scheduled, I believe, for tomorrow, but I am not sanguine of having been very successful. The various requests that the unions have put forward over some time have been thoroughly investigated. Most of the claims relate to rostering problems.

I do not want to go into detail about those matters, because they are far too complex and I do not believe that many people would understand them anyhow. It is sufficient for me to say that all but one of the points put forward by the union have been resolved satisfactorily by my appointing a roster committee consisting of representatives of management and the men. The net result of appointing that committee is that success has been achieved.

The one issue which has not been resolved and which principally is the basis of the present dissatisfaction by the men is their request that no shift should extend beyond eight hours and that there should be a paid meal break in the middle of the shift.

In effect, their claim is for a 7½-hour day. First, the claim is against the principles of indexation and obviously could not be entertained on that score, and secondly, the cost of implementing the claim has been estimated at about \$4 000 000 a year. Obviously, the claim cannot be agreed to with that sort of cost involved. That is where the claim lies at the moment.

Mr. Chapman: You don't support this?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The other claim that has not been satisfied is the union claim for six weeks annual leave. Again, such a claim is contrary to the indexation guidelines and cannot be pursued further. If and when the Government entertained a change in leave conditions, it would be an across-the-board decision; we could not, in isolation, alter leave conditions applying to the State

Transport Authority that would make its conditions inconsistent with those for the rest of the Public Service.

Mr. Chapman: You're clearly opposed to—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has already been called to order once. I hope that he will not interject again; otherwise, I will warn him.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I have told the union that the Government obviously cannot extend the deficit of the operation by an additional \$4 000 000, which is the sum that has been estimated that would be involved in meeting the eight-hour spot-on day. Although I have much sympathy for people not being required to work for more than eight hours a day, a certain practicality is involved. If one is driving a bus, tram or train on a set route and the eight-hour shift expires but one is still quarter of an hour short of one's destination, one cannot very well get off the bus, leave the passengers and say, "Sorry, sport, my time is up." Those sorts of fixed hours can perhaps be worked in offices and factories, but not on public transport. It is worth saying that 80 per cent of the shifts worked by the authority do not extend beyond 8¼ hours, so only a small number of shifts is involved.

Whether or not the strikes proceed will soon be generally known, because I understand that the union has given an undertaking that it will inform the public by 4 p.m. on the day before a strike. However, I anticipate that there will be a 24-hour stoppage tomorrow with a shut-down of two depots.

FISHING LICENCES

Mr. BLACKER: Can the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Fisheries whether the Government intends to amend existing fisheries regulations to provide that all authorities are issued on similar criteria and, if so, what is that criteria? The House would be aware that abalone authorities are the only authorities issued on the man and not the vessel and that, as a result, there is an inconsistency between the various fisheries. Concern has been expressed by authority holders in other fisheries, for example, in the lobster and prawn industry, that the present criteria will be altered to provide that those authorities will be issued on the individual rather than on the vessel. I seek this information from the Minister because, as he would appreciate, it is desirable that all authorities be issued on similar criteria.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to take up the matter with my colleague, and get a reply for the honourable member. The honourable member would appreciate that this matter has had a long history. At least, I have been aware of it for some time. I will get a report for the honourable member.

CABINET FEES

Mr. EVANS: Can the Premier say whether there exists on a Government file a record of Cabinet Ministers receiving fees for attending any type of meeting outside the normal business hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.? Twice previously I have asked questions about this matter. A reply to the first question I asked was given on November 29, 1977. The question I asked was whether South Australian Cabinet members at any period during the past 15 years had been entitled to a fee for attending meetings outside the normal business hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and then I asked a group of supplementary questions. In reply, the Premier stated:

In the last 15 years no fees have been paid for attendance

at Cabinet meetings.

The Premier defined that as meaning Cabinet meetings outside normal business hours. On Tuesday this week I again placed a Question on Notice asking whether Cabinet Ministers received any fee for attending any type of meeting, other than a Cabinet meeting, outside normal business hours. I found the Premier's reply rather intriguing. It was as follows:

To my knowledge, no Cabinet member during the past 15 years has received fees from the State Government for attending meetings other than Select Committees of the House: I cannot, of course, answer in regard to fees relating to Liberal Ministers, who probably received board fees from private bodies.

I therefore now pose the question whether there exists anywhere on Government files a record of fees having been paid to Cabinet Ministers, because I believe that in 1967, fees were made available through some departments to Ministers who might have attended meetings outside normal business hours. I am not sure, but even some Liberal Ministers may have made use of that facility, although I cannot say. I am asking the question because the matter is unclear in my mind. This is the third time I have asked whether that information is on file in any Government department. I also ask it because of the Premier's words "to my knowledge", which may indicate that a complete investigation was not made throughout the departments to ascertain whether any Minister has been paid by a department for attending meetings outside normal business hours. I am not asking the question for a snide reason, but whether or not it is the case we should know about it, because the matter was put to me back in 1970.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I know nothing of the practice. I must confess that I was completely mystified by the honourable member's suggestion and spent some time with my Chief Administrative Officer trying to figure out to what the honourable member's inquiry was directed. We do not know. If the honourable member can perhaps be more specific we can arrive at what it is he is trying to get at. I know of no payment being made to Cabinet Ministers in relation to any attendance at meetings by the Government apart from the fact that Ministers are paid on attendance at Select Committees just as other members of the House are. Is the honourable member directing his question to attendance at some meetings which are involved with a Minister's duties?

Mr. Evans: Even public meetings, any form of meeting.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: A fee?

Mr. Evans: Yes, an attendance fee or an expense fee, if you like.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know what an expense fee would be. It is normal when Ministers have incurred expenditure to use one of two forms of claim. They can claim a daily rate in the same way as officers can in certain travelling situations or they can claim the actual expenditure, but that is not a fee to the Minister. I know of nothing else. If the honourable member knows of anything, I would be grateful if he would tell me because I am at a loss to know to what he can be referring.

BOTANIC GARDENS BILL

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the establishment and management of public Botanic Gardens; to repeal the Botanic Garden Act, 1935-1961; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

It is intended to replace the Botanic Garden Act, 1935-1961, which established a board to manage the public botanic gardens of the State. Several amendments to that Act have been desirable for some time but the form of that Act is considered to be so out-moded that enactment of a new Act is appropriate.

The major changes of substance made by the Bill are the provision of a borrowing power in the board, the requirement that the board make an annual report to Parliament and provision for imposition of expiation fees for illegal parking on land under the control of the board. The quorum of the board which has eight members has been increased by the Bill from three to five members. The Bill also changes the name of the board from the "Governors of the Botanic Garden" to the "Board of the Botanic Gardens". Finally, the Bill provides that the board is to be subject to the general control and direction of the Minister in accordance with the general policy of the Government in relation to statutory authorities.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides that the measure is to come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Clause 3 sets out the arrangement of the measure. Clause 4 provides for the repeal of the Botanic Garden Act, 1935-1961. Clause 5 sets out definitions of terms used in the Bill. Clause 6 provides for the continuation of the board known under the present Act as the "Governors of the Botanic Garden" under a new name, the "Board of the Botanic Gardens". Clause 7 provides a membership of eight for the board as is the present situation. Clause 8 regulates the term for which and conditions on which members of the board hold office. Clause 9 provides for the validity of acts of the board. Clause 10 provides for annual election of a Chairman of the board.

Clause 11 regulates the procedure for meetings of the board and increases the quorum from the present three to five members. Clause 12 provides for attendance of the Director of the Botanic Gardens at meetings of the board. Clause 13 sets out the functions and powers of the board, being principally the establishment and management of public botanic gardens. Clause 14 provides that the board is to be subject to the general control and direction of the Minister. Clause 15 provides for delegation by the board. Clause 16 provides that the board may borrow moneys from the Treasurer, or, with the consent of the Treasurer, from any other person, for the purpose of performing its functions. Clause 17 provides for and regulates the operation by the board of a cheque account.

Clause 18 provides for appointment of a Director of the Botanic Gardens and other officers. Persons appointed for this purpose are to be appointed under the Public Service Act, 1967. Clause 19 provides for the preparation and audit of the accounts of the board. Clause 20 requires the board to prepare an annual report and provides for the tabling before Parliament of the report and audited

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

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

accounts of the board. Clause 21 provides a penalty for damage to any property of the board. Clause 22 provides the summary disposition of offences. Clause 23 provides for moneys for the purposes of the measure. Clause 24 empowers the making of regulations, including the imposition of expiation fees for parking offences.

Mrs. ADAMSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE (Minister of Community Welfare) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Adoption of Children Act, 1966-1976. Read a first time.

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

This Bill deals with a subject that has become a very distinct community problem in recent years. Some time ago a reasonable balance existed between the number of families seeking to adopt children and the number of children available for adoption. Now, for a variety of reasons, the number of children available for adoption has fallen off considerably. The resulting imbalance creates difficult and intractable problems for welfare authorities. There are now many couples who are ready and eager to adopt children, and who would indeed provide excellent homes for adopted children, but whose desire to do so will inevitably be disappointed. In these circumstances, measures must be taken to distinguish between the various applicants for adopted children on the fairest possible basis. Absolute justice in a matter like this is, of course, unattainable and it is inevitable that the criteria chosen to reduce this lists of approved applicants will be to some extent arbitrary and inflexible. But nevertheless the Government believes that strenuous efforts should be made to achieve the greatest possible measure of justice in the present difficult circumstances.

Of course, it is most important to bear in mind that under the law of adoption, the interests of the child are the paramount consideration. Thus, the interests of persons who are anxious, and in some cases desperately anxious, to adopt children must always be subordinated to the overriding interests of the child. The present Bill provides for setting up an adoption panel consisting of experts of various kinds and also representatives from the community to make recommendations principally in relation to criteria that should be adopted as the basis for determining eligibility for approval as prospective adoptive parents. The panel will also act as a general advisory body and will recommend procedures for carrying out research into adoptions.

The Bill also provides for the setting up of adoption boards which will be empowered to review a decision by the Director-General refusing to approve a person as being a fit and proper person to adopt children and various other decisions by the Director-General on related matters. It is envisaged that these review boards will be normally constituted of members of the adoption panel.

The Bill also deals with the constitution of adoption courts. It is hoped that when the proposed new Children's

Court of South Australia is constituted, that court (in its civil jurisdiction) will take over adoption proceedings. These proceedings are presently heard by a court consisting of a magistrate and two justices. The amendment provides for adoption proceedings to be heard by a court constituted of a judge of the Children's Court of South Australia, a Local Court judge, or a special magistrate.

The Bill also empowers the Minister to grant financial assistance to adoptive parents in certain cases where the care of the adopted child creates unusual financial burdens because of physical or mental disabilities of the child, or other special needs of the child.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 deals with the constitution of adoption courts. Clause 4 empowers the Minister to make financial grants to adoptive parents. Clause 5 establishes the Adoption Panel and sets out its functions. Clause 6 provides for the constitution of the review boards to which I have referred above.

Mr. WOTTON secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)

Adjourned debate on the question:

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

(Continued from February 22. Page 1761.)

Mr. WHITTEN (Price): I agree with the provisions of the Bill with the exception of one line on which I must comment: the line relating to "Minister of Health", and an advance to the South Australian Health Commission to cover delayed Medibank reimbursements from the Commonwealth. I express my concern and support the Bill.

Mr. TONKIN (Leader of the Opposition): That is one of the finest speeches I have heard in this House for a long time. It is traditional on occasions such as this to bring to the attention of the House various matters of concern, and I intend to do that. First, I draw attention to a most remarkable performance by the Minister of Mines and Energy in this place last Tuesday. Among other things, he made the rather startling statement that the *Sunday Mail* had beaten-up a story on the Lock coal deposits. He waxed eloquent on this matter. He said how reprehensible it was of the *Sunday Mail* to beat-up this matter into a front-page story. He imputed to the *Sunday Mail* ulterior motives for doing this. He said all it wanted to do was sell newspapers because the price of the paper had gone up that day by 5c. All of what he said may have been in some small way justified but I find it extraordinary that a Minister who has the record he has of beating-up stories in the past should be hypocritical enough to lay a charge such as this against one of South Australia's newspapers.

The Government of this State has thrived on beaten-up stories. For the past seven years almost every major announcement that this Government has made has been a beaten-up rehash of something it has announced before.

Well may the Minister of Community Welfare laugh. It is amusing when one looks at the many announcements which have been made for the third, fourth, or, on one occasion, for the tenth time. Need I remind the Government of the four-cylinder engine plant that was to be established in South Australia? Like most of the beat-up stories it appeared just before a State election; this must have been purely a coincidence of course. Under the headline "Japanese car firms agree to South Australian

plans" a report states:

The two major Japanese motor vehicle manufacturers Toyota and Nissan have committed themselves in principle to build four-cylinder engines in South Australia.

There it was plain for all to see. If the Government had left it at that it might have been forgiven, but then it set out to exaggerate the story, and they went on in that entire beaten-up to say:

The South Australian Premier (Mr. Dunstan) described the announcement as "a triumph for the fight which the South Australian Government put up on this score together with the car industry and the unions". It would mean a "very marked increase" in employment in the car industry in South Australia. It would also provide security of employment in component industries—"and that is a vitally important area for us".

Even the Assistant Federal Secretary of the Vehicle Builders Union (Mr. Townsend) was taken in by the Government's announcement. He is quoted as saying that the engine deal was good news for the Australian automobile industry.

Mr. Bannon: When did he say that?

Mr. TONKIN: On July 11, 1975. If the honourable member would like to have the cuttings as a perfect example of a beaten-up story I shall be willing and happy to let him have copies.

Mr. Bannon: You're going back a long way.

Mr. TONKIN: I can go back further than that. I have been in this place longer than has the honourable member. I can quote to him all the other aspects, such as the railway station development and the dial-a-bus plan. The railway station development was announced by the Minister of Transport as a positive development that would take place, just as in every other beaten-up story that this Government has put forward from time to time it has been asserted that what is proposed is absolutely true and about to happen. Another newspaper report states:

The plans envisage: A modern administration building for the railways. An international standard hotel. A large stadium with seating capacity for 8 000. Buildings for the State Transport Authority. Commercial development, including office accommodation. Restaurants and bistros. Retail and service shops. Residential development such as flats.

There it all was: a beaten-up story? The Minister did not think so at the time. The Minister of Mines and Energy did not think so at the time, but we did not hear from him. We could speak at some length about the hotel in Victoria Square, and the number of times that that story has been rehashed and beaten up. The Minister of Mines and Energy in this place has the nerve to accuse the *Sunday Mail* of putting in a beaten-up story. This Government has been the master of beaten-up stories and has existed on publicity and beaten-up stories ever since it came into office.

The Minister has no justification for making such charges: people who live in glasshouses should not throw stones, and the Minister lives in a large glasshouse. We can look further at the uranium enrichment plant at Redcliff at the tremendous announcements and beaten-up stories that were made, coincidentally just before a State election, about the probability of a Redcliff petro-chemical plant going ahead. Of course it was going ahead, because the newspaper said so, and it was the Minister who gave that information and beat up a story.

I do not intend to expand further: I repeat that there are records and newspaper clippings that show time after time this Government has beaten up stories and used and manipulated the press to suit its own ends. Many other factors and matters could be referred to, but in all of these

matters the Government should be the last body to accuse anyone, including the *Sunday Mail*, of beating up and creating stories out of nothing, because that is what the Government has been doing for the past seven years.

I said recently that the public of South Australia had become conditioned to the unusual, the unexpected, and the unconventional in both its Premier and its Government, and there is no question but that that is true. I have just dealt with one example of crass hypocrisy on the part of a Government Minister, and that matter is more laughable than it is serious. However, it emphasises the reliance that the present Government has placed on its effective manipulation of the media in the past. More serious and far more significant is the tendency that has now arisen for this Government and its Ministers to mislead Parliament almost as a matter of course, almost as though it is something that goes on every day and is above board. In this House, the Premier makes speeches, which are expected of him, defending the importance of the Westminster system of Parliamentary democracy, and in well-constructed prose he states clearly the principles on which that system is based. The Premier has said:

The Executive Government of the State is responsible to Parliament and to the people. It must account for its actions, and account for them fully and effectively. Should any member of a Government of this State deny this accountability, mislead this House, the penalty is clear: resignation or dismissal from office. There is no other choice.

These are the Premier's words uttered on a serious occasion and, obviously, we will all agree with the fundamental principle that he has stated. However, all members are well aware that their answers to questions coming from the Ministers are incomplete and sometimes not forthcoming at all, if for some reason it suits the Government to withhold information or to mislead the House. Several times replies have been received stating that the amount of time necessary to research the matter is so great that a reply cannot be provided. Another reply is that the records have not been kept to the extent that the detailed answer required can be provided. At other times information has been sketchy and only partial.

For instance, as we all recall, the Minister of Transport gave misleading answers in this House concerning the safety of certain railway bridges, but he was not asked by the Premier to resign. There have been numerous other examples in which Ministers have misled the House, but they have not been asked by the Premier to resign. It seems that there is one principle which is enunciated by the Premier and which applies in theory but which does not at any time apply in fact if any of his Ministers are involved, or if he is involved.

The two most recent examples (actually, I have three examples now) occurred in the past week or so. Only yesterday the Deputy Leader asked a question about Public Service appointments and a change in policy, and the matter of Mr. Dempsey was raised. In his reply the Premier said that at no time had Mr. Dempsey worked as his private secretary. Technically, that is correct. However, I have a copy of Mr. Dempsey's card which he used at that time and which states, "Rob Dempsey, Executive Assistant to the Premier". Technically, the reply was correct: Mr. Dempsey was not a private secretary. He was an executive assistant, but the Premier knew the intent of the question and wilfully misled the House by stating only half the facts. A small matter? Yes. Petty, perhaps, but I do not think so, because I think there are no degrees of truth in this matter.

The next example again involves the Premier. At a recent press conference on January 20 he is quoted as saying, and indeed has been shown on television holding

up the documents, that he had in his hand two statutory declarations supporting a certain claim he had made. It was not until these statutory declarations were tabled in the House that we found that one was not signed until January 23. This is a rather more serious matter. These statutory declarations concerned a matter of considerable note and significance to the people of South Australia, although I do not intend to refer to that matter.

I say that the Premier misled the public in a blatant and reprehensible fashion, both by representing to the press conference and thus causing to be published statements that indicated that he had two statutory declarations that were in order, and then going on television and giving the people of South Australia the impression that that was so. He defended his action, when challenged in this House, by saying, as he always does, that such things are of no significance. He is always able to shrug or laugh them off by ignoring them. However, I believe they are of tremendous significance. It is a matter that deserves the attention of the people of South Australia.

He said that he had the individual's authorisation to make the statement he made at the time, but the statement he made was that he had two statutory declarations when, in fact, he had only one. It may or may not be so that he had the individual's authorisation, but I do not think it matters.

What does matter is that he succeeded in taking the heat off his actions as far as the public was concerned, and certainly other more serious matters were occupying its mind at the time, but the seriousness of the way in which he did that has all but been ignored by the public and the media. That is what I meant when I said that the public (including the media of this State) had become conditioned to the unusual, the unexpected and the unconventional. Clearly, the Premier was guilty of publicly uttering a blatant untruth, and he has been caught out in it. No amount of bland explanation can cover the simple fact that he stated that he had a statutory declaration when, in fact, he did not have such a declaration.

The second example occurred only this week when the Premier attributed to the Federal Minister for Productivity (Mr. Macphee) words and intentions which were untrue and which have since been refuted by that Minister in the Federal House. We know that the Premier is desperate to achieve the Labor Party's brand of industrial democracy in this State by hook or by crook.

Mr. Nankivell: By crook.

Mr. TONKIN: Obviously he is not above achieving his ends by crook, by crooked means. Obviously he has no conscience in twisting words to suit his own ends. The Premier stated categorically in the House in reply to a question I asked him that the Federal Minister was so impressed with the South Australian Government's industrial democracy programme that he had requested an opportunity of speaking to the forthcoming world seminar being organised in South Australia to promote the whole concept with South Australians. The facts, of course, are quite the reverse. The original approach came from Mr. Bentley, an officer of the South Australian Government, asking the Minister to be involved in the seminar. The fact that the Premier's discourtesy in not confirming a verbal invitation passed on by his Senior Industrial Democracy Officer made it necessary for the Minister's staff to inquire whether the seminar was still on does not change the fact that the original approach to involve the Federal Minister came from the South Australian Government. Here, again, clearly the Premier has misled the House. Of all people, the person who should be the first citizen of this State, who should command the respect of everyone as the

leader of this State in the political and the Government arena, should be above reproach. Certainly, I believe that the Premier's activities, as shown by these three examples and by the many other occasions when he misleads the House by using only half of the truth, are not what South Australians expect of their Premier. I predict here and now that the world seminar on industrial democracy will be one of the most highly-organised and stage-managed propaganda performances ever set up for the people of South Australia.

Mr. Dean Brown: The Premier will be opening and closing it.

Mr. TONKIN: He will be opening, closing and probably consuming the whole business. Industrial democracy concerns us all. I have stated categorically that industrial democracy, the threat of it in this State, and the complete shambles which has now resulted from the Premier's total inability to say exactly where he stands on the issue and what are the plans for South Australia's future is actively keeping industry from coming to this State. That is a tragedy, but industrial democracy is not the point at issue now. The point at issue is once more that the Premier has again misled Parliament and has tried to pass off the matter by trying to ignore it.

Mr. Venning: He should resign.

Mr. TONKIN: If he were to apply the same principles to his own conduct as he seeks to apply to others, he certainly should resign, but I see no prospect of that happening. It is a sad comment on the degree of conscience that he shows. Obviously, as my colleague reminds me, he has no conscience. What is right for other people is not right for him, and that is a symptom of the power-crazy attitude that is now being developed by the Government of this State. I would have been convinced that the Premier should hold himself to have an even greater responsibility to honesty and integrity towards the Parliament and the people than would any other person in the community, but obviously this is not so.

The overall impression that inevitably comes through more and more strongly is one of arrogance and supreme dominance based on power—sheer, naked and corrupting power. It is apparent from examining the present Government's record since it came to office in 1970 that it has never been afraid to exploit and use whatever power it has, and it is little wonder that it has now come to regard itself as being all powerful. Many people in the community are afraid of offending the Premier or the Government for fear that they may suffer some disadvantage. These people range from the sphere of industry and commerce through to members of the Public Service. The fear is so widely and firmly held that one cannot help but believe that it exists and is truly felt.

Journalists have found to their cost that they dare not offend the Premier or the Government without running the risk, in some cases, of losing their jobs and livelihood. The events at 5DN are the latest example where people have crossed swords with the Premier and somehow or other have suffered accordingly. There have been many other examples during the past seven or eight years. The *Australian* newspaper has not carried South Australian Government advertising for some time, and the withdrawal of this valuable account inevitably must be construed as an attempt to influence the press. It is a matter of some concern to a newspaper which depends on its advertising accounts to maintain circulation that that advertising account is being diminished in that way.

We have had evidence (and it has been the matter of a feature story) that writs are being taken out, whenever necessary, by Government Ministers to quieten what they see to be unfair criticism. Even more reprehensible is that

the Law Department is being used to take these proceedings. Is there any wonder that this Government is now developing a reputation for power, and the abuse of power, which is fast bordering on dictatorship?

Since 1970, the Labor Party believes that it has secured South Australia for its own use, to do with as it pleases for all time. The Premier has exploited his personal popularity, largely by using Government resources in the development of his public relations and media contacts. He has built up a new establishment, which is curious, coming from a person who was so critical of what he at one stage called the Adelaide establishment. He has built up a new establishment called the Dunstan establishment. He is making political appointments from outside the Public Service to senior key positions in almost all areas of public life, and he has made political appointments to other Government and semi-government authorities and committees.

He has developed political nepotism, or perhaps favouritism, to a degree never before seen in South Australia. Even if a majority of South Australians become so disturbed, disenchanted or concerned that they decide that it is time for a change in Government, because power has gone to its head, well over 50 per cent of our present population will have to feel this way before any change can eventuate. The so-called one vote one value redistribution, which has gone only half of the way, has made it possible for the Government to remain in office until at least 54 per cent of the population either becomes fed up, or wakes up. This is not a bad electoral cushion and protection for the Government, and it is certainly dependent on it. This is not technically a gerrymander; the simple fact is that almost a 5 per cent weighting currently favours the Australian Labor Party. It knows it, and it is depending on it.

So much for the ardent democrat who spoke so vehemently 10 years ago for electoral justice and the right of the majority to govern. The Upper House electoral system, although basically democratic, contains an anomaly that just happens to favour the Labor Party and to disadvantage smaller Parties. It is an anomaly that is not being corrected, and I see no sign at all of any anxiety on the part of the Government to correct it.

So much for the assertions of concern for democratic representation made by the Premier and his Government over the past eight years or 10 years. Finally, we had the early election, held six months ahead of time and prepared well in advance even of that—a sugar sweet, no issue election specifically designed to stop people from thinking about the Government or from criticising any of its actions, so that it could just breeze in. It is impossible to believe anything other than that the Government knew that its run was too good to last and that more and more people would begin to question its activities as months went on.

It would be interesting indeed to see exactly what the electoral result would be if we were going to the polls early in March of this year. I venture to predict that it would be very different indeed, and the Government knows that full well. I believe that recent events have seen the beginning of the crumbling of the Labor Party edifice in South Australia. As a result of the increasingly obvious and blatant use of power, the Labor Party is coming more and more under critical survey from more and more people in the community. In particular, the position of the Premier is now of extreme interest, and it has been said that, having achieved, as they believe, total control of the South Australian community for the next three years, the left wing of the Labor Party will now exert its influence more and more openly. I think that is to be seen quite clearly

across this Chamber in the deeper and deeper involvement and the more prominent involvement of the leader of the left wing, the Attorney-General, sitting now on the front bench.

If that is so, and if we are to see the left wing imposing its worker participation quality of life, what has now settled down to be called its industrial democracy programme, on the private sector in South Australia, if we are to see the gradual socialisation of all aspects of our lives, according to the policies laid down, I believe South Australia is in for a very lean time indeed, and a disastrous time.

What the Government does not seem to be able to grasp is that its welfare programmes and all its bureaucratic programmes cannot be financed on fresh air alone, and that capital is necessary. I believe that in the attempts the Government is making to impose socialism on the people of this State it is leading the people not to prosperity but to disaster. My concern is not that this is the beginning of the end of this Government. That is something I am pleased about. My main concern is that the cost of finding out the true nature of the people who now govern us will be so great that it will adversely affect the prosperity of the South Australian community for many years to come. That basically is what we are faced with at present.

Benign socialism, the big experiment: that is what we are seeing now being brought into operation, now that the Dunstan regime supposedly has tied up South Australia for the socialists. The events of the next three years should convince the people of South Australia better than anything else can of what is happening to them. I am sorry that those events have got to take place for people to learn in what sort of dire difficulties and troubles they will be.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I wish to raise one matter in the brief time available to me; it concerns the working of the House. I think probably this week is an appropriate time to raise the matter, because, in my view, the situation has been quite unsatisfactory. The South Australian House of Assembly is small in numbers when compared to the Lower Houses in the other States, and it would seem to me that in this place there should be ample time for members to question the Government and to participate in debates with reasonable sitting times for the House. It appears now that some members of the House have asked only one question since the sitting resumed, and it will be some time before they will get a chance to ask another.

In the period of almost eight years during which I have been a member of this House, the time allowed for back-benchers to have their say on matters of concern to them or on legislation before the House has been diminished greatly. Question Time has been halved. Time limits have been placed on debates. We have a programme that is supposed to be organised and jointly agreed to by the Government and by the Opposition, so that we can regulate the affairs of the House at a reasonably harmonious level, with everyone feeling reasonably satisfied at the end of the week that they have had a fair go. Unfortunately, in my judgment, the system has broken down.

The architect of this situation very largely was the former Attorney-General, now Mr. Justice King. He was the person who sought to improve the workings of this Parliament, and he steered through this House—by weight of numbers, as always—fairly radical changes to the Standing Orders. It seems to me that, since this sitting resumed, the situation has been as bad as it has been for some time.

We have had instances of legislation being brought in by

the Government which it expects to be debated on the same day. This is making a complete farce, in my opinion, of the democratic process. If members of the Government are happy to be guided simply by their Ministerial front-benchers, and to take their word for the legislation, that is well and good. For the Opposition, that is a completely unsatisfactory situation. The Government, of course, has the benefit of knowing what the legislation will be, and having an opportunity for its Caucus committees to examine the legislation, and then for Caucus itself (which is equivalent to our Party meeting) to vet the legislation and find out what it is about. At least they have an opportunity, if they are interested, to know what is going on.

Bringing to the Parliament legislation which the Opposition has not seen, and expecting it to pass through the House on the same day, is making a complete mockery of the democratic process. It has not happened previously to any great extent unless there has been an urgent Bill or a very minor Bill, the significance of which can be grasped by a first quick reading. We are supposed to have had an arrangement, which was spelt out by the Deputy Premier in a Ministerial statement on March 4, 1975, as follows:

Following alterations to Standing Orders, Cabinet has appointed me Leader of the House and, as such, I am responsible for giving effect to the time table set by the Government for consideration of its legislation. The Opposition has been invited to meet with me and the Government Whip at the beginning of each sitting week to discuss the Notice Paper and the business the Government wants to deal with. The Opposition will then have an opportunity to express views on the Government's programme as to the time that should be devoted to debating each item. Individual members of the House may put their views on the matters to be discussed either to the Government or Opposition Whip as they wish, so that those views may be considered at the Tuesday meetings. I must point out that the Government could not be bound by the allocation of time suggested at the meetings. Each week I will circulate copies of the time table for members' information. The time table of business for this week (which could be subject to alteration if necessary) is set out in the paper now being circulated in the House. It is the Government's aim that, unless the House orders otherwise in certain circumstances, the House should rise by 10.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and by 5.30 p.m. on Thursdays and so provide the opportunity to debate grievances. I should appreciate the co-operation of all members in this matter.

I am keeping this debate on a fairly low key. I could get stirred up about it. The last time I raised it, I did get stirred up, but it achieved nothing. Indeed, all it did was put up the back of the gentleman concerned. So, I register this protest in as quiet and as rational a fashion as I can, in the hope that we may be able to improve the situation.

In earlier weeks, legislation has been introduced and the Government has expected it to pass in the one day. This week, major reports of two Select Committees appointed to inquire into important matters were tabled in the House. I should like now to refer to what the Standing Orders say regarding Select Committees. Standing Order 395 states:

The evidence taken by any Select Committee of the House, and documents presented to such committee, which have not been reported to the House, shall not be disclosed or published by any member of such committee, or by any other person.

That means that the only Opposition members privy to the information presented to the Select Committee, and indeed to its report, are the two Opposition members who happened to serve on the committee, and they were bound

by Standing Orders not to tell their colleagues about it. So, on Tuesday the deliberation of one of the Select Committee's ended at 12.5 p.m., and members of the Liberal Party in this place had no ideas regarding its report. The members of the Select Committee had then to go to a hurried Party meeting and give their colleagues, in the most veiled terms, in accordance with Standing Orders, some idea of what was happening. Opposition members had then to come into the House, where the report was presented, and were expected immediately to debate the matter. That puts back-bench members in an impossible position.

Mr. Wilson: There were two in one day.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: That is so. I could not understand the Select Committee's report in relation to unconscionable contracts. I did not have a hope, because I was not on the Select Committee, and nearly every Opposition member was in the same situation. The other Standing Order to which I refer is Standing Order 401, which provides:

The report of a committee shall be brought up by the Chairman, and may be ordered to lie upon the table, or otherwise dealt with, as the House may direct.

I raise these points as matters of genuine grievance, because this leads to confusion. The Government may want to confuse the Opposition; that may be part of a political ploy. I was not at all impressed by the way in which the member for the Salisbury or Elizabeth area handled the debate on the wine industry; it was a cheap political tactic. It is not conducive to good deliberations on and consideration of legislation, or indeed to co-operation from the Opposition, if the Government seeks to rush through legislation in order to confuse the Opposition. That is not what Parliament is all about.

There has been a deterioration in the sights of back-benchers who want seriously to do their jobs as members of Parliament. Those rights have been whittled away during the time that I have been a member, and I hope that the Government will spend more time considering the views of Opposition members regarding arranging a reasonable programme, as contemplated in the Ministerial Statement by the Government Leader in the House in 1975.

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

Mr. WILSON (Torrens): I should like to continue with the remarks I started to make, before the House adjourned for the Christmas recess, relating to the over-supply of drugs to the community. At that stage I discussed what I considered to be the over-supply of drugs from hospitals departments in this State. I am pleased to see that the Hospitals Department has instituted an internal inquiry into the matter, and I congratulate the Government and the department on that move. I am told, in reply to a Question on Notice, that the inquiry will be completed by the end of March, and I hope that the results of the inquiry will be made available to Parliament and the public.

In referring to the over-supply of drugs to the public, I should like to deal with a category of drugs supplied outside the hospital area. There are three categories of supply. One is, of course, through hospitals departments, an aspect to which I have already referred; another is by prescription; and the final one is by self-medication. In this respect I am referring to medical drugs and not to non-medical or social drugs.

Australia has a reputation of having, per capita, the largest intake of drugs, by whatever means, in the world. I want particularly to refer to the matter of analgesics, and I

will let *Hansard* have a copy of the names of the drugs to which I refer. Analgesics are pain-relieving drugs that also have the effect of reducing one's temperature. The greater proportion of analgesics are obtained by the public under the heading of self-medications. In other words, members of the public purchase these drugs themselves. However, they are also prescribed, in great quantities, by the medical profession.

I will quote from a table of medicines dispensed under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Act, 1975-1976. Regarding the types of medication that have been prescribed, one would suppose that antibiotics, which are life-saving drugs, penicillins, or heart drugs would be the major prescription items. However, when one examines the matter, one sees that 6 082 000 prescriptions were written for broad spectrum antibiotics in a year, costing this country \$23 000 000. One also sees that 7 183 000 prescriptions were written for penicillins, costing the community \$24 527 000. Bearing in mind that analgesics were bought as self-medications also, one sees that 10 224 000 prescriptions were written for them, costing the community \$29 610 000. That is a serious position, because analgesics give rise to kidney disease. I now refer to a report in the June 20 issue of the *National Times*, as follows:

Australia consumes more pain-killers per head of population than any other country. Our nearest rival, the Swiss, consume less than half as much per head.

The article goes on to refer to kidney disease, which to an alarming rate is caused by the over-consumption of these analgesics. We find that \$10 000 000 is spent each year treating the 300 patients who have severe kidney complaints owing to over-use of pain killers. Many pharmacies of which I know, and certainly the pharmacy run by my wife and myself, have collection boxes for medicines that the public does not wish to use any longer. This system is arranged by the Lions Clubs in this State. I congratulate the Lions Clubs for the work they are doing because they try to collect the excess, unused medicines from the community. They have those drugs sorted by pharmacists and the ones that are still good are sent to countries that are less fortunate than ours.

Members would be staggered if they saw the amount of drugs collected in this way. Some drugs which were placed in the box at our pharmacy recently and which were excess to the requirements of a particular family contained, among other things, 60 Trimethoprim Compound tablets, which are a combination of an antibiotic and a sulphur drug; seven bottles of Nystatin drops, an anti-fungal drug; eight Beclomethasone aerosol inhalers used in the treatment of asthma; 100 Betamethasone tablets, which are cortico-steroid tablets; four Orciprenaline aerosol inhalers, also used in the treatment of asthma; and 250 Salbutamol tablets, also used for the relief of asthma and related conditions. These drugs were excess to the requirements of the patient concerned. They were all supplied by the pharmacy department of a public hospital. The wholesale value of those drugs is \$80.

Imagine the cost for the amount of drugs that are in the community if that represents just one family. I point out that example to show the House that this is a serious situation, one that I intend to continue to raise during my time in this House because, as a community, we over-medicate ourselves. One of the most serious cases of over-medication in our community is the amount of medication given to infants. Professor Murrell and the Department of Community Medicine have done much work on this subject. It seems that we give infants younger than 12 months old incredible amounts of medication. This has the effect of sensitising those infants to medications, and is

one way of causing the habit to form as they progress to adulthood.

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I draw the attention of the House to the report of the administration of the Juvenile Court for the year ending June 30, 1977. In my opinion this report, in part, is completely incorrect. I think that some of the figures have been plucked out of the air. I refer particularly to page 10 of the report as follows:

The total of 367 cases [before the Juvenile Court] represents a further decrease in the totals of the past three years:— 613 in 1973-74, 541 in 1974-75, 444 in 1975-76. This steady decline in the numbers of State children who offend can probably be partially attributed to the increasing emphasis placed on security at the various "secure" homes maintained by the Department for Community Welfare and the marked decrease in the absconding rate that has resulted from the security measures adopted.

We do not have the abscondings that we used to have not because of the securing of the homes but because a number of inmates are allowed out on leave and a greater number now have early release, so there is no need for these young people to abscond.

The main area of the report to which I want to draw attention is at page 11, as follows:

The trends are as always carefully watched.

I wonder who watches these. The report continues:

What is certain is that the overall picture is not a bleak one; there is no cause for pessimism. On the contrary, as I have pointed out elsewhere in this report, it has been estimated that 427 463 children under the age of 18 years were resident in South Australia on June 30, 1977. Certain of that number accounted for 4 270 juvenile court appearances and 3 666 juvenile aid panel appearances. Expressed another way 3 296 children appeared before courts and 3 503 children appeared before panels. Expressed another way in terms of a percentage of the total population under 18 years of age, these children amount to less than 1.6 per cent of all the children in this State.

I challenge that figure; I think it is entirely wrong. No figures are available for 1977, but there are figures for 1976 and 1975. I submit that in collating these figures, the Community Welfare Department has added the number of adults aged 18 years. At 18 years of age young people are sent to prison and are no longer juveniles.

The person who collated these figures has also included all children from their day of birth. One cannot imagine a child of three months, six months or four years being charged with rape or assault. It is ridiculous for the person who collated these figures to include all children in the State. If one looks at the figures of the Bureau of Statistics for 1975, there were 403 768 children up to 17 years of age. If one includes the 18-year-olds that figure increases to 426 901.

If we also include those up to 10 years, we have an additional 215 300. It would be reasonable to expect anyone talking about juvenile crime to take away the number up to 10 years, because it would be ridiculous to suppose that some of these children, particularly those in the lower age bracket, could be charged with doing, or could even do, some of the things done by older children. Taking away those under 10 years and including those up to 18 years, the figure is 211 601, not 427 000 as in the report.

If we include the 17-year-olds, which it is right and proper to do, and take away those up to 10 years, the figure is only 188 468, which is far lower than the estimate of 427 000 contained in the report of the Juvenile Court. I have been referring to 1975. In 1976, on preliminary figures, there were 401 854 children up to 17 years. If we

also take away those up to 10 years, namely, 188 600, that brings the figure to 213 254, which is far lower than the figure estimated by the Community Welfare Department as the number of children under 18 years, namely, 427 463.

It seems that those responsible for collating the figures have, in this report, cooked the books in regard to juvenile crime in South Australia. I wanted to deal with the report in detail, but there is not sufficient time. However, all the areas are mentioned separately in the statistics on page 8 of the report, and that accounts for the decentralisation, but it also makes it most difficult for people to collate the figures for themselves. Those people have to rely on the department's figures and it is difficult to do that when, on making one calculation, one finds that the books have been cooked.

Paragraph 2 on page 9 of the report makes clear that this year there were nine fewer crimes of violence brought before the court. The total number of matters brought before the court was 180. I wonder how many of those concerned in those cases were hard-core recidivists. That would be a good area for the person concerned to have examined. Later, regarding the Juvenile Court only, the report states:

Whilst the trend in the figures regarding the crime of rape is being watched very carefully, the number of such crimes over the past four years has been so small as to enable no satisfactory conclusion to be drawn therefrom.

I wonder by whom the trend regarding rape was examined carefully. Further, over the years, we see from the reports that in 1975 there were only three cases of rape before the Juvenile Court, in 1976 there were seven, and in 1977 there were 17. When we check previous reports on the Juvenile Court as given by the Community Welfare Department, how can a person arrive at the figures, when it is plain on the figures that there has been an increase?

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

Mr. BANNON (Ross Smith): There have been frequent complaints recently in this session of Parliament from the Opposition that, in some way, the Westminster system is under threat by the actions of the Government, that Parliament is being treated with either arrogance or disregard by members of the Government, and that the whole institution of Parliament is under threat because of this attitude. I think there is some truth in what the Opposition says about there being problems in running the Westminster system in South Australia, that there is a suggestion of irrelevance in the debates in this Chamber. I agree with the Opposition up to that point, but, in diagnosing the reasons for it, we part company sharply. The reason why this Parliament, this Chamber, and the debates in it seem to be losing relevance can be sheeted home firmly and directly to the performance of the Opposition.

Let us examine the Westminster system of Government. One of its most important features is the existence of the Opposition. The Westminster system formalises that area of debate whereby the Government proposes its policies and defends them against the Opposition, and the Opposition has several vital functions in the system. The first is that the Opposition must be seen to be an alternative Government and must behave as though it is. In other words, it must be perceived by the community and those in the Chamber that, sitting opposite each Minister shadowing him, is a member of different political persuasion who could take the Minister's place as a member of a competent Government team.

The other feature is that, in opposing the Government,

in attacking it and in subjecting its policies to close scrutiny, the Opposition is also part of the system. In fact, the official title of the Opposition is "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition". That is a fairly pompous phrase, but I think it contains an important constitutional prerequisite, namely, that the Opposition does not see its role as purely attacking basic institutions in our society, attacking the State, and opposing in every instance. What "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition" means is that the Opposition's role is to constructively criticise and to provide a constructive and positive alternative.

I come back to the role that the present Opposition in South Australia has adopted. First, its role is totally destructive, not constructive. Secondly, in terms of proposing alternatives, one regrettably finds on reading speech after speech, particularly from the Leader of the Opposition and his shadow Minister colleagues, that, in criticising Government policies, they do not propose any positive alternative action that they would take. They talk in vague generalities. Admittedly, one must excuse them for not having a detailed programme: I think it is in the nature of the Liberal Party and the style of policy of that Party that members of it do not operate to a programme or principles, because they are founded on a pragmatic need to preserve the status quo and prevent anything that might alter or reform society too much from happening. In a sense that is understandable, but when the Government gets down to particular proposals, one would expect the Opposition, in criticising and opposing those, to be able to say what it would put in their place.

Regrettably, the Opposition in South Australia has proved to be totally incapable of doing so. The leadership is fumbling and inept and the front bench has not been able effectively to match Ministers to whom they are opposed. We hear hardly a word by way of question or speech from some members of the front bench. They do nothing to put a Minister on the spot. The competent Ministry here would like the cut and thrust of debate and opposition to and criticism of its policies. However, in some areas, Ministers get none of that. In other areas, the Opposition is so negative, pettifogging and useless that it is hardly worth replying to. That is why this Chamber and this Parliament is tending to lose its relevance in the eyes of the public.

I will take a prime example: the contribution made yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition when confronted with the Appropriation Bill, which was introduced by the Premier, who gave a fairly long and comprehensive statement in which he set out the economic basis of the estimates that had been prepared and in which he outlined the deficit, and so on. One would have thought that that was a prime case where the Opposition would, in commenting on what it says is the parlous economic condition of this State, have come up with its alternative positive proposals. On the contrary, this was the most significant point of the whole debate—

Mr. Goldsworthy: You're wet behind the ears. Don't you think that back-benchers have rights in this place?

Mr. BANNON: They certainly have.

The SPEAKER: Order! During the course of this session I have spoken to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Goldsworthy: When was that?

The SPEAKER: Order! I have called the honourable member to order. He knows better than to interject when the Speaker is on his feet.

Mr. BANNON: Thank you for your protection, Sir. As a back-bencher, I am trying to exercise my right to speak despite the interjections and disturbances of the Deputy Leader. Let me now return to the Leader of the Opposition. I notice that the Deputy's interjections

became vociferous when I mentioned the Leader's name, because he does not want to hear what I am going to say about him. Let him sit there and cop it, as possibly his Leader would if he were here. The Leader spoke in this debate, and in talking about a subject that he should have had in his command, the economy of the State, he spent the first five or 10 minutes of his speech complaining that he had had only three hours to consider these detailed estimates.

The Leader of the Opposition has a staff at his disposal that would surely have been monitoring the economic position, and the indicators and the figures detailed in the Premier's statement, many of which are not new. They are collected together in the one place for the first time, but they are not new. The Leader would have us believe that he was starting completely *de novo*, from the beginning, and did not know what was going to be in the statement. It appeared that it had caught him by surprise and that, in three hours, he and his staff could not get up anything worth while to reply. That is an extraordinary admission for a Leader to make. If that is the sort of performance we can expect, it indicates why the people of this State, including, his own supporters, do not regard him as an alternative Premier. The Leader proceeded to make a big complaint about not having had sufficient time to prepare himself. He even took it to the extreme of actually seeking leave of the House to continue his remarks later. He was not surprised when he was not granted leave to do so.

I cannot understand someone posing as Leader of the Opposition, and supposedly on top of the situation, coming to a major debate, of which he has had some hours notice, and saying that he cannot present anything to the House that is concrete or worth while and must therefore seek leave to continue his remarks later. When he was refused leave he was forced into an embarrassing position of having to try to produce a speech from somewhere. He did so, and, as he has done so often in the past, he only regurgitated material that he had already presented to the House.

The Leader started talking about the Auditor-General's Report and what the Auditor-General could or could not do. He said all sorts of things, ending with a peroration that the State Labor Government was getting into the position that the Whitlam Government was in and that he would have to clean up the mess just as Fraser had to. Is he saying that if he becomes Premier he will do what Fraser did? Will he sack many members of the Public Service and cut out major programmes for social welfare, housing development and construction? If that is what he is going to do, let him spell it out to the House.

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

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): Over a long time I have brought to the attention of the House the grave concern of people in South Australia for our major water resource. This time I want to draw attention not to the problem of salinity in the Murray River but to another aspect of that major water resource. Around the 1890's and the turn of the century the Murray River was used as South Australia's major route for the conveyance of goods from interstate and the eastern part of South Australia. The Murray River was not only of principal need to the State at that time from the transport point of view but it was also a major water resource. Vast tonnages of produce from inland New South Wales and inland Victoria travelled by steamer down the length of the Murray River into South Australia, particularly to Morgan.

It is interesting to note that at about the turn of the century Morgan was the busiest port in South Australia,

handling a greater tonnage of produce than did Port Adelaide. That might seem remarkable, but that was the case in those days. In recent years the Murray River has not been used to such a degree for the transportation of produce from inland New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. However, it is now becoming important again as a part of our tourist industry, a transport corridor, and a place for holidays. Section 22 of the first schedule of the River Murray Waters Act provides:

The weirs and locks aforesaid shall be so constructed as to provide at all times of the year for vessels drawing five feet of water.

Section 27 of the schedule refers to the need for the States concerned to provide, in any construction built on the Murray River, a navigable passage for vessels drawing 5ft. of water. Although locks and weirs in South Australia have been constructed to provide that navigable passage, many parts of the river in South Australia no longer have that navigable passage. In many instances below some of the weirs navigable water to a depth of only 2ft. 6in. exists. It is clearly the responsibility of the State Government to maintain the Murray River in South Australia in a navigable form.

Although in the past 50 or 60 years the Murray River has not been used so greatly for the transportation of goods and primary products from the inland of Australia, it is again becoming an important part of commerce in South Australia, particularly from the tourist point of view. Numerous houseboats and small pleasure craft now use the river. On the lower reaches of the Murray River in South Australia two major vessels operate. It has been stated that another passenger vessel will operate between Renmark and Morgan, but there is doubt whether or not the vessel could navigate effectively that part of the river from Morgan to Renmark and return because much silting up of the river has occurred over the past 50 or 60 years. As I have said, the River Murray Waters Act clearly provides that any construction built on the river must incorporate a navigable passage of 5ft.

We no longer have a navigable course of 5ft. through the Murray River. In fact, the depth is much less than that in some places. I believe approaches have been made to the Government on this matter, but the Government has rejected any responsibility for having to maintain a navigable passage. This is debatable in the light of the requirements of the River Murray Waters Act. I call on the Government to look at this question closely, because it is a deteriorating situation. If the situation is allowed to continue, we will reach a stage where there will be insufficient water for any major vessel to navigate the length of the Murray River in South Australia.

The tourist industry is becoming important in South Australia. Modern vessels with modern facilities will attract patronage not only from the Eastern States but also visitors from overseas. If we do not concentrate on this aspect and accept our responsibilities in looking after our section of the river, we are doing ourselves a great disservice. We will be denying South Australia a lucrative business in the future.

The other matter I wish to bring to the attention of the House concerns the expected \$26 000 000 deficit referred to by the Premier in the past two days. I am convinced from looking around South Australia at the many capital works being undertaken by the Government that as long as it continues with its policy of day-labour construction rather than contract construction, the cost escalation will continue, and South Australia will have mounting deficits in each subsequent year.

I refer to the capital works programmes of the various Government departments, especially the Public Buildings

Department and the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the Government's two major construction departments. In my district there is a major rehabilitation of the irrigation distribution system being undertaken in the Renmark Irrigation Trust area. The major pipelines in that rehabilitation scheme were installed by contract. It was completed at a cost close to the expected cost, yet the Lands Department's installation costs for the new irrigation distribution system in the Riverland are in many instances double the expected cost, or the cost given to the Public Works Committee when it initially reviewed the project.

I have suggested often to the Minister that more work should be undertaken by way of contract. Not only would it reduce the cost, it would give work to local people, who have contracting businesses in the area and who have ability and equipment. They could lay, if not all the pipe systems, some of the systems. Therefore, I call upon the Government to consider, in seeking to reduce its deficit, letting out more work on contract.

Mr. KENEALLY (Stuart): An interesting practice of the Opposition in this House is to complain bitterly that the Government blames the Fraser Federal Government for all the ills that beset our economy. That is an interesting complaint coming from a Party and an Opposition which, for three or four years, has blamed Gough Whitlam for everything that befell Australia, including droughts, floods, and even fires. I should just like to discuss that matter, because such criticism has been raised again by the Leader of the Opposition in this debate.

The Opposition seems to have forgotten that it is two years and four months or more since the Whitlam Government was thrown out of office by the Governor-General, and defeated at the subsequent election. However, the Opposition seeks to continue to blame that Government for the unemployment, the high rate of inflation and the state of the economy.

There were other matters the Liberal Party was critical of the Labour Administration for. It was critical of jobs for the boys, and all honourable members can remember the sorts of criticism that were levelled at the Whitlam Administration on this matter. Therefore, I merely want to refer to two recent examples of jobs for the boys of which the Fraser Government has been guilty.

Mr. Chapman: What about Mr. Crimes?

Mr. KENEALLY: What about the job given to the former Governor-General? What sort of pay-off was that? I hear not a word from members opposite, who know as well as we know, and as well as everyone in Australia, that that was a pay-off. We know the price paid by the conniving Prime Minister in order to get a double dissolution last year. He had to promise the then Governor-General a soft spot in the south of France at \$80 000 a year total income. That is a totally reprehensible action for any Government to take.

Mr. Chapman: What about Ernie—

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the honourable member for Alexandra will stop interjecting. That is not the first occasion today. The honourable member for Stuart.

Mr. KENEALLY: Further, I refer to the imminent (and probably eminent) appointment of Senator Cotton to the position of Consul-General in New York. The Labor Party is not in the habit of criticising appointments if there is a reason for such appointments. The Labor Party has appointed senior politicians to jobs overseas of a like nature, and we are not critical of the appointment made by the Liberal Government. There have been some good appointments in this field, but the Liberal Party does not

share our reasoned view in this area.

I well recall the hysteria about the Labor Party's overseas borrowings, that Australia was going to be put in total debt, that it would become bankrupt as a result of interest payments on such overseas borrowings. I hear not one word of criticism now, despite the Federal Government's borrowing more than the amount the Labor Party intended to borrow. The present borrowing programme of the Liberal Government bears consideration, especially when compared to the ideal situation that the Labor Government wished to create in Australia, by buying back the farm. No honourable member could be critical of that, yet the people who have been involved in trying to do something for Australia have been ridiculed and destroyed politically by the likes of the Opposition and their lackeys in the press.

We do not hear the same sort of criticism of Federal members of Parliament seeking to line their own pockets, not doing what they are doing for the good of Australia generally but for their own good. The silence is deafening! I refer also to the so-called massive deficit of the Labor Administration, which was described as a classic example of maladministration and total incompetence in running the country, because the Labor Government was running the Federal Treasury at a deficit.

What is the current position of the Fraser Government? In the two years or more since it has been in Government the total deficit is higher than for the three years in which the Labor Government was in office. The Liberal Government's deficit is higher. Do members opposite criticise that? Suddenly, deficit budgeting represents a responsible attitude. This year on January 11 it was reported in the press that the Budget deficit falls were still above estimate. The report states that the deficit remained substantially above the Budget estimate.

On January 19, the deficit had ballooned to \$330 000 000, and at the end of the month I understand it will be about \$760 000 000. This is responsible Treasury management! I think not. Criticism has been expressed of the previous Labor Administration concerning high unemployment, but let us compare the Labor Party's record to what is going on now. At present, we have the highest unemployment rate since the depression, 7 per cent, and it will get higher because of the deliberate policies of an unthinking and uncaring Federal Administration, which wants the average working people of this country to pay for its mistakes.

The Federal Government does not require those people in Australia and the institutions that are able to meet the requirements of a bad economic situation to accept some responsibility. It wants the average working class person made the scapegoat for its mismanagement. Unfortunately, there is little we can do to stop the megalomania of those tyrants in Canberra. I smile every time Opposition members refer to inflation and say how responsible the Fraser Administration has been in bringing it down to a single digit. Inflation is comparable: one should compare it in Australia to those countries with which it is reasonable to equate our inflation rate. Australia is a trading nation and we import our inflation to a great degree.

Under the present Federal Government inflation in Australia is high compared to equivalent countries elsewhere in the world, and that is how inflation should be judged. There is no point in judging a high inflation rate in an economic climate in which inflation rates in the world have dropped against a high inflation rate at a time when rates in comparable countries in the world were at a record high. That is what Opposition members are doing. They are comparing the Labor Administration at a time of great economic stress to a Liberal Administration when the rest

of the world is overcoming its problems, but we are still lagging behind. That is the issue that Opposition members should be considering.

I get sick and tired of the mealy-mouthed criticisms of Opposition members who blame every ill that occurs today on the Whitlam Administration. A period of 18 months was the longest that the likes of Opposition members would allow the Labor Government to be in administration. The Fraser Government has been in power for two years and has done nothing: in fact, conditions became worse. The country is now in a worse economic situation with high unemployment. We have heard criticism from Opposition members, although their own people are worse in every respect. For two years and four months the Liberal Government has been in power and we should expect to see some improvement in the areas to which I have referred, but I am very pessimistic about the ability of the Federal Government, because it wants to support wealth and privilege and at the same time prejudice those people in the community least able to survive. Unfortunately, Opposition members seem determined to support this sort of Administration. I hope that the level of debate on the Supplementary Estimates will rise above pure—

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

Mr. GUNN (Eyre): We have heard a poor speech from the member for Stuart. We know that he is only holding the crease, so he decided he would attack the Federal Government. That Government has the overwhelming confidence of the people of this country, as was demonstrated on December 10, much to the horror of the Dunstan Government. However, I refer to matters that concern me and affect my district. I expect that even Government members would be aware that there are areas in South Australia that have suffered from the extreme effects of drought. Unfortunately, many of those areas are in my district and on Eyre Peninsula.

I shall illustrate the problems, and say what I believe should be done to rectify the situation. To demonstrate the magnitude of the drought, it is necessary only to examine deliveries to silos in the Thevenard Division during the past three years. In the 1973-74 harvest, 300 000 tonnes of wheat was delivered to this division, but last year only 31 000 tonnes was delivered. The five-year average is about 127 000 tonnes. In 1973-74, 53 000 tonnes of barley was delivered, but for the present harvest about 11 000 tonnes was delivered. I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it a set of figures that are too difficult to quote, and which show deliveries to the silos in the Thevenard Division from 1973-74 to the present year.

The SPEAKER: This information is all statistical?

Mr. GUNN: Yes.

Leave granted.

THEVENARD DIVISION—(1)

Agency	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	5-year Ave.
CUNGENA—						
Wheat	22 727	11 599	4 332	365	2 001	8 205
Oats	3 891	2 773	1 047	194	—	1 581
MINNIPA—						
Wheat	30 391	19 598	11 578	11 757	5 811	15 827
Barley—Bulk	3 081	3 699	4 124	3 602	1 981	3 297
Bagged	—	—	—	—	—	—
NUNJIKOMPITA—						
Wheat	22 146	11 083	5 076	—	—	7 661
Oats	1 716	2 097	433	—	—	849
PENONG—						
Wheat	13 440	6 098	2 844	1 252	611	4 849
Barley	3 224	2 670	3 026	1 105	408	2 087
Oats	340	602	—	66	—	202
PINTUMBA—						
Wheat	3 529	1 500	1 829	—	1 015	1 575
Oats	—	—	242	—	—	48
POOCHERA—						
Wheat	27 293	21 798	11 201	4 682	3 734	13 742
Barley—Bulk	8 919	6 747	5 623	1 716	922	4 785
Bagged	—	—	—	—	—	—
Oats	—	—	—	—	—	—
STREAKY BAY—						
Wheat	14 992	10 509	8 239	3 207	2 981	7 986
Barley	6 304	6 991	6 302	2 654	1 473	4 745

THEVENARD DIVISION—(2)

Agency	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	5-year Ave.
THEVENARD—CEDUNA—						
Wheat—Bulk	102 980	52 210	13 826	3 108	4 238	35 272
Bagged	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barley—Bulk	25 044	20 052	16 114	4 144	1 245	13 520
Bagged	—	—	—	—	—	—
Oats	4 560	2 642	1 204	201	—	1 721
WIRRULLA—						
Wheat	29 741	19 624	4 663	431	—	10 892
Barley	2 896	3 030	2 231	184	—	1 668
Oats	—	—	—	—	—	—
WITERA—						
Wheat	16 137	14 804	12 957	8 717	8 136	12 150
Barley—Bulk	3 516	3 655	5 179	4 881	5 277	4 502
Bagged	—	—	—	—	—	—
YANINEE—						
Wheat	17 681	13 192	5 920	6 946	2 739	9 296
Oats	1 878	2 544	997	244	—	1 133
Wheat	301 057	182 015	82 465	40 465	31 266	127 454
Barley	53 984	46 844	42 599	18 286	11 306	34 604
Oats	12 385	10 658	3 923	705	—	5 534

Agencies with no deliveries in the past three years or more have been excluded. However, actual deliveries in the whole of the division are included in final total.

Mr. GUNN: It is important that these figures are placed on the record so that people will be aware of the problem. During the Christmas period I attended a meeting in the worst affected areas of my district organised by the United Farmers and Graziers organisation in order to discuss this problem. At this meeting a programme was formalised, and it was suggested that a direct approach be made to the Premier. Last Thursday I introduced to him a director of Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited from Wirrulla to enable him to discuss the situation. The Premier gave us a sympathetic hearing, and agreed to refer the matters discussed to the Federal Government.

On that day the Prime Minister announced that he was asking Federal officers to discuss matters with State officers, and I hope that the proposition we put to the Premier will be considered favourably. The basis of the scheme was that any person who had suffered from three successive droughts should be given a cash grant by the Government. Unfortunately, many of the worst affected are young farmers of the up-and-coming generation, the sort of people we want in country areas.

Some of them in these areas have recently purchased properties and, unless they receive direct financial assistance, cannot look forward to a favourable future. It will be a disaster if they are forced off their properties. Through no fault of their own they are facing a serious financial situation: they have been good farmers, have not abused the country, and have not engaged in wild spending sprees but, because of circumstances beyond their control, they are now faced with this difficult situation.

Unfortunately, some of them suffered loss of crops in the year prior to the drought conditions. The situation will be better in the future because the Commonwealth Government has introduced legislation for income equalisation deposits. Such a scheme was recommended to Mr. Whitlam and Senator Wriedt in 1973, but nothing concrete was done until the election of the Fraser

Government in 1975. So, I hope that the State officers will make strong representations, because drought assistance from the Commonwealth Government is forthcoming, if the State Government meets certain criteria, which I understand it has met. The Commonwealth Government has been responsive in this area. Many of these people believe that there is no point in their borrowing money, even the cheap money that the Government has offered, because the money has to be paid back and many of these young people believe that they would be accepting a burden that they would be unable to bear. I recommend that people read the editorial in the *Advertiser* of January 12 which completely sums up the situation. I have received the following letter, dated February 17, from the Chairman of the Hawker Area School Council:

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of the Hawker Area School Council to bring to your attention the urgent need for action in two matters directly related to the school.

Firstly, there is an immediate need for air-conditioning to be installed in our transportable classroom which is used for drama, films and music classes. At present the teaching and learning conditions are intolerable thereby adversely affecting the learning progress of the students. I inspected that classroom last week and I also investigated other problems at the school. As a result I entirely endorse the comments made. The letter continues:

Specifications for the installation of air-conditioning have been completed by the Public Buildings Department but due, we are told, to a Governmental policy, no further jobs can be started before the end of the financial year. Thus we seek your help to facilitate and, if possible, circumvent this policy, so that the contract may be completed as soon as possible. Since the temperature in the room is regularly over 40 degrees centigrade and there is no adequate ventilation fan, we trust you will recognise the urgency of this matter.

Secondly, the Public Buildings Department has made a thorough study of the school and have recommended that a

major maintenance, repair and painting job be done to the whole school. This contract was due to begin in late 1977. We now find that, again due to the freezing of expenditure, no work will be undertaken until the end of the financial year. As a council we find this most disappointing and consider it will have an adverse effect on the overall tone of the school.

There is a pressing need for major repairs to several rooms as well as a general need for thorough interior and exterior painting of the school buildings.

We urge you to visit our school

I hope the Minister of Works and the Minister of Education will peruse the report of my comments in *Hansard*. I have written to the Minister of Education about the matter, and I hope that action will be taken. Because Hawker is at present experiencing high temperatures, funds should immediately be allocated at least to install air-conditioning.

The Hon. D. W. SIMMONS (Chief Secretary) moved:

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

Motion carried.

Mr. MAX BROWN (Whyalla): During this debate Government members have had to put up with a tirade of abuse from some Opposition members based on the question that the Budget will show a deficit of about \$26 000 000. However, I point out that the Federal Government, on a pro rata basis, has a higher deficit than the State Government has. There is a slender possibility that the reason for the high deficit is the massive unemployment that we are now experiencing. If any member laughs at this matter I recommend that he visit Whyalla, which is experiencing twice the percentage of unemployment that the nation as a whole is facing. The Federal Government is running its deficit despite the policy enunciated by the Liberal Party that spending and services must be cut back. The Federal Government is in a financial mess, and one of the reasons is the high level of unemployment. Of course, unemployed people do not produce anything, and payments must be made to them through the Social Security Department.

Mr. Chapman: What are you doing about unemployment?

Mr. MAX BROWN: I have been very much involved in endeavouring to bolster manufacturing industries in Whyalla. When the Whyalla shipbuilding and engineering works was in real trouble 18 months or two years ago, approaches were made to the Federal Government and the State Government as to what could be done. As a result, the State Government made a submission to the Federal Government that would have cost \$6 000 000 in two years to the State Government to retain the shipbuilding industry. This submission was put to a mass meeting of unionists and the management, which was instructed by top management to attend. They endorsed it, but there has not been one word from the Federal Government as to its intentions.

There is no doubt that the Federal Government is hell bent on surviving through unemployment. Although the member for Alexandra asked me what I had done about the problem, he now appears to be disinterested. He knows, as do his colleagues, that the Federal Government is not doing anything about the unemployment problem.

Mr. Chapman: I asked what you had done.

Mr. MAX BROWN: That is only one thing. On the Whyalla shipbuilding and engineering works becoming defunct, many secondary industries in Whyalla were placed in difficulty. For example, a small firm called *Carmour Engineering* got into difficulties and became desperate for orders. It has succeeded in obtaining orders from outside the State, and the State Government has

picked up the tab for subsidies and transport costs. We asked the Federal Government to do something about this question and, again, not one answer was received.

Then came the proposal of the Premier's working party in Whyalla involving national rolling stock. Senator Cotton at one stage said he would visit Whyalla to receive submissions. I understand he is at present in America. He has done nothing about the matter, nor do I think he intends doing anything about it. I am not going to argue about the viability of providing the national rolling stock but, unless it involves an industry as labour intensive as the Whyalla shipbuilding and engineering works, we will not solve the unemployment problem in my community.

At one time, the Whyalla shipbuilding and engineering works directly employed between 1 700 and 1 800, and indirectly an additional 600. How can we expect to solve the unemployment problem in a community of about 33 000 people if we are not looking at an equally labour-intensive industry? I believe that the Federal Government is not looking at the question of unemployment constructively; indeed, it is doing the reverse: it is doing everything it can to prevent unemployed people from obtaining unemployment benefits.

A classic example of this was the proposal of the Federal Minister (Mr. Street) that raids by social security officers should be made on the unemployed. That policy is to be deplored, and I believe that many people, if given the opportunity today, would have second thoughts about the decision they made on December 10 last.

Mr. RUSSACK (Goyder): I should like to speak about a matter concerning charges. In today's *News* we see the headline "Taxes may rise, warns Dunstan", and the Premier is quoted as saying:

We don't anticipate doing so this financial year.

There is only about three months left of this financial year, so from July 1 onwards we can expect some steep increases in taxes. However, I am sure the Government will adopt the same procedure as it has in other years: these taxes will be increased, and by the time the Budget comes along the Government will claim that taxes have not further increased. I see a certain pattern being adopted by this Government, as I see suggested in today's *News*. The Premier will announce that there will be a likely increase in taxes and then back off by saying it will not be in this financial year, as he did earlier this week, when he made a statement about worker participation, and then said, "No, not immediately; it is some years ahead." The same procedure has been adopted in some departments, as I will explain in a few moments. There have been taxation changes. Last year, there was legislation providing a formula for motor vehicle registration. I am glad the Minister of Transport is here, as he may recall that I made a similar statement in that debate: by proclamation or regulation, the Government announces an increase in taxation, irrespective of the reason; but it is there.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: It was not an increase in taxation; it was an increase in the registration fee.

Mr. RUSSACK: An increase in charges, yes, and the House does not have an opportunity to debate whether or not such an increase is advisable. I now come to rentals or fees on leasehold land. I have two cases here, and time will allow me to mention only these two. One concerns land in the Warooka area. It involves a perpetual lease, with a revaluation review every 14 years. I do not know why the term "perpetual lease" is mentioned because, at the end of that 14 years, if certain conditions are not met, that leaseholder loses that land. However, in this case the increase for the lease was 1 841 per cent. So the gentleman wrote a letter to the Lands Department and received this reply:

I refer to your letter of May 28, concerning the rental of \$755 per annum fixed for the term of 14 years in respect of your perpetual lease . . . The Minister of Lands has directed me to advise that as a result of the reassessment the board has now fixed the rental for lease 3129 at \$420 per annum for the seventh term of the lease. The Minister has further approved of this rental being reduced to \$140 per annum for the first three years of that period provided you continue to hold the lease during that time. In the event that you transfer the lease to another party, the full annual rental of \$420 would apply.

That gentleman replied by saying this:

Please find attached the acceptance of revaluation of my perpetual lease. I return this with much misgivings, believing on the one hand that it would be unthinkable to give up my home and life work for such an amount, and on the other failing to see the slightest justification for an increase in rental of over 1 000 per cent. I note with some disappointment the lack of replies to my queries and as the due date for acceptance is getting close, I am returning my acceptance, believing your usual sense of fair play will encourage you to again review this rental.

There has been, with the reduced figure, an increase of 1 024 per cent in the annual rental, but a remission has been gained for three years, resulting in a lower rental, which still represents an increase of 341 per cent. That gentleman states that he attended a meeting recently in Warooka, at which reference was made by the State Planning Authority to the area he is leasing. At page 15 of the report, concerning the area, the comment appears that the uncleared land on that part of the peninsula is "particularly infertile and liable to drift when cleared". The people who attended the meeting claimed that this was a false statement. However, that was the report from those who had investigated the matter. On the one hand, the Government is saying that this land is infertile and, when not covered by scrub, is inferior; on the other hand, it is increasing taxation on that land by more than 1 000 per cent.

I turn now to another case, this one involving an increase of 1 216 per cent, although the same consideration applies as in the other case over the next three years. I am given to understand that about 700 similar leases throughout the State can be reviewed every 14 years and that in 1981 all these leases will be brought to a point where the higher lease fee will apply. The Government makes an announcement and then retracts it, preparing the people and conditioning them to greater taxation and charges in future.

Referring still to the second case I have mentioned, in 1894 the lease fee was \$6; in 1908 it was \$14; in 1922 it was \$26; in 1936 it was \$52; in 1950 it was \$112; and in 1964 it was \$192; it has doubled every 14 years. In 1978 the increase has been 1 216 per cent and the amount is \$2 336. The gentleman concerned has received a letter setting out the same comparisons and stating:

You are advised that the rental of \$1 116 per annum is reduced to \$348 per annum for the first three years of the seventh term of 14 years.

Farmers were grateful when the Government abolished rural land tax, but it would appear that this may be an imposition to replace rural land tax. Only the unfortunate few are paying the tax. I know of properties where on one side of the road the land is a complete perpetual lease, on which a fee cannot be changed unless there is a resale and the use of the property is changed; on the other side of the road, a person may have to pay thousands of dollars more than his neighbour is paying. I do not consider that that is fair or proper. Why should there be such outstanding increases, unless the Government is trying to make up for abolishing rural land tax?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Klunder): Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable member for Napier.

Mr. HEMMINGS (Napier): First, I congratulate you, Sir, Mr. Acting Speaker, on occupying that extremely important position. I am sure that in the 10 minutes that I am permitted to speak to this motion you will give me the full protection of the Chair. This afternoon, I should like to speak about a character reversal of one of the nation's leaders. I must point out that in my opinion, and indeed that of most Australian people, this person is in no way a leader of this nation. I refer to Mr. Malcolm Fraser, who has been responsible for so much misery over the past two years. He gained power in dubious circumstances aided by an extremely dubious person, Sir John Kerr, and an extremely friendly press.

In 1977, assisted by his two dubious partners, Mr. Fraser was again returned to power. His advisers have now decided that it is about time that Mr. Fraser underwent a character change. His Government has been returned to office for three years, and he now considers it time for the friendly press to brainwash the electorate. Instead of Mr. Fraser's being seen as a person who has been responsible for all the misery and unemployment that we have experienced and witnessed over the past two years, he is seen as Mr. Nice Guy, a man of the people, so that people will be fooled into thinking that it is not Mr. Malcolm Fraser who is responsible for all the misery. The people will be told that he is still patching up following the problems experienced under the Whitlam Labor Government. So, the media, his friends, have stepped in and done a job on Mr. Fraser. It is a sickening job, and I am sorry that you, Sir, sitting in the Chair, must hear about the sickening job that the media have done on the Federal Leader of the Liberal Party. This shows how out of touch Mr. Fraser is with reality and, most important, how he treats the intelligence of the people of Australia.

Mr. WILSON: On a point of order, is the member for Napier reading his speech? It is against Standing Orders for a member to do so.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The honourable member for Napier would not be in order if he was reading his speech. I assume that he is using copious notes only.

Mr. HEMMINGS: Thank you, Sir. When I have concluded my speech, the honourable member may see my notes. He will then see that they are just a few notes, and, if he refers to *Hansard*, he will see that there is no relationship whatsoever between what I have written here and what I have said. I now refer to a sickening report in the February 17 issue of the *News*, a newspaper that we all know is friendly with Mr. Fraser. The report, in the "News Mag" section of the *News* (which section is in the new go-ahead style of that paper) contains a report headed "A nation of knockers". It involves a special interview with the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Malcolm Fraser. The first question he was asked was:

When you leave the Prime Ministership, what sort of Australia would you like to leave behind?

We would all have our views about the kind of Australia that the Prime Minister would be leaving. However, this is the answer that he gave:

An Australia that is secure, that respects individuals, the different lifestyles of different people, an Australia that is tolerant, an Australia that has found a greater sense of unity. With 445 000 people unemployed, there cannot be many people like that in this country today, but the Prime Minister assured us that he would leave a country that has a great sense of unity. He then gets even more sickening. The article continues:

In their hearts I believe Australians have an intense sense of patriotism and of loyalty and love for our country. But they don't often speak about it. They very rarely articulate it in any form except perhaps when they are returning from overseas—

how many of these 445 000 unemployed people go overseas on holiday—

and they say: "Australia is the best country in the world. I've been in plenty of countries and I wouldn't live anywhere else."

That shows how out of touch he is with the situation in Australia today—everyone goes overseas on holidays, everyone is happy, united, patriotic and loyal. This country is the most divided it has ever been at any time, and, although I was not here then, I include the time when there was the great debate about conscription. The article then deals with the role of the unions, as follows:

Q: Do you feel that that is a good thing?

A: I am certain it is a good thing for Australia. I was in Melbourne recently buying a fishing rod and, when I came out of the shop, there were a couple of builders labourers up the street and they just said "Hi yer Malcolm, have a drink?" I had half an hour to kill so I said "Where is the nearest pub?" and we went and had a drink. And it was a very profitable time because it was the end of the day and I must have had about 15 people saying what a terrible person Mr. Gallagher (of the Builders Labourers Federation) was and why wasn't something done about it.

Could anyone in his right mind imagine that happening in Melbourne if Mr. Malcolm Fraser went up and spoke to two builders labourers? I think that the builders labourers would have done certain things to Mr. Fraser for which they would have had to go to court. Then he was asked about his saying, "Life was not meant to be easy." The article continues:

Do you think too many people do expect life to be too easy? For instance, the high dole, the 37½-hour week, Australia's very poor recent record in increasing productivity?

A: I don't think too many Australians expect that things are going to come too easy. They know it can't. You go

around the factories, the shop floors and one of the most constant questions you get is—

and I would like to see him go around G.M.H. and ask this question—

"Why do you pay so much of my taxes to the guys on the dole? They can get a job if they want to work."

I repeat the remark that my colleague made a little while ago to the member for Alexandra: Mr. Fraser ought to come up to my electorate and see the desperate people trying to get a job. He continues with a statement that is an insult to the intelligence of the people of Australia, as follows:

Now whether you think that is right or wrong it is a very common view on the shop floor. I think it is so because they have the feeling that if they lost their present job they could get another one within a week.

How stupid. The figures show it, the queues at the Commonwealth Employment Service show it, and the queues at the Department of Social Security belie that remark, but Mr. Fraser says that is the situation. The last question and the answer given by Mr. Fraser also insults the intelligence of the people of Australia. They are as follows:

Q: Do you think income tax is fairer than indirect tax?

A: It depends what it is for. In many things if there is an indirect tax people can make their own decision whether they spend it or not. They get more take home pay each week and, if they want to spend a larger part of that money on buying a petrol-guzzling expensive v8-cylinder motor car, that is their decision.

There are hundreds of those around! Everyone is buying them every week! If that is the kind of garbage—

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

Mr. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.25 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, February 28, at 2 p.m.