

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 21 February 1980

The **SPEAKER (Hon. B. C. Eastick)** took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITIONS: PORNOGRAPHY

Petitions signed by 170 residents of South Australia praying that the House would legislate to tighten restrictions on pornography and establish clear classification standards under the Classification of Publications Act were presented by the Hon. J. D. Wright and Mr. Blacker.
Petitions received.

PETITION: DOGS BY-LAW

A petition signed by 2 444 residents of South Australia praying that the House would urge the Government to reject Brighton council's proposed by-law to ban dogs from its beaches during summer was presented by Mr. Glazbrook.

Petition received.

PETITION: SHACKS

A petition signed by 372 residents of South Australia praying that the House would urge the Government to allow the building of shacks in the Lucky Bay and Port Gibbon area was presented by Mr. Blacker.

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: HILLS FIRE

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

Leave granted.

The **Hon. D. O. TONKIN**: I must report to the House the extent of the damage caused by the tragic fire in the Adelaide Hills and detail the relief operations that have been and will continue to be undertaken in aid of the victims. Even at this stage the full extent of the damage is unknown. The latest reports from the scene indicate that about 20 000 acres were burned out. In the north-eastern sector of the fire 25 houses, 75 sheds and 25 vehicles were destroyed. This, however, does not include the area of greatest damage in the region of Longwood. Emergency personnel are still determining the full extent of damage in this sector.

I am certain I speak for all members of the House and for all South Australians in expressing our heartfelt thanks for the splendid efforts of every person who rallied to help. Special mention must be made to all members of the Country Fire Service, local government employees in affected areas, police personnel, voluntary workers, including the St. John Ambulance Brigade, the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Central Methodist Mission, St. Vincent DePaul Society, R.S.P.C.A., community service groups such as Lions and the Country Women's Association, the South Australian Fire Brigade, the Army and the Air Force, medical staff, especially the retrieval team and the burns unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Telecom, Government departments, including the departments of Community Welfare, Agriculture, Lands and others, and ETSA.

The involvement of Red Cross in this particular exercise

has been particularly important. The registration of people suffering in the area was carried out through registration centres at Heathfield, Strathalbyn and Mount Barker, and a report which I have received from the society shows that people are still looking for contacts. The Red Cross has now doubled the telephone lines in Red Cross House, with the assistance of Telecom, and at about this time it will have about 14 lines available.

They will continue to keep going until they can satisfy people's requests for information. They were going until 3.30 this morning and were back on the job at 7 a.m. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that the selfless, courageous and spontaneous response of everybody involved, all of whom rose to the urgency and extreme danger of the situation without thought of personal misfortune, prevented a calamity of even greater dimensions. It is a miracle that more people were not injured and I pray that the search being undertaken today for trapped victims will fail to yield one fatality.

The latest reports to hand indicate that the St. John Ambulance Brigade treated 154 walking patients and six stretcher patients, two of whom were seriously burnt. I visited those two patients this morning in hospital in the burns unit, and I must report to the House that they are in good spirits, although they are seriously ill. In addition to these numbers, St. John personnel treated a large number of fire fighters for eye irritation and minor burns. The medical retrieval team from Royal Adelaide Hospital went to Stirling District Hospital. They treated injuries on the spot and performed a fine service with their out-patient service for those firefighters.

The Department for Community Welfare established yesterday an emergency centre at Heathfield High School which will remain open for as long as necessary. It is staffed by 10 officers of the department, with two others located at the Stirling district office. Accommodation, clothing and other welfare services, including the provision of emergency financial relief, are being handled at those centres. An information referral point is being established in the Stirling council chambers, telephone 339 5400. At this stage there are five lines available, with another five lines being installed as soon as possible. It is proposed that representatives of Police, St. John, Salvation Army, C.F.S., State emergency services, R.S.P.C.A., Department for Community Welfare, Red Cross and the Australian Insurance Institute will be co-ordinated locally through this information referral point.

Two officers of the Department for Community Welfare are co-ordinating two crisis care units from the Stirling police station (telephone number 339 2422). Accommodation was provided overnight for 14 people at Woorabinda. All others requiring accommodation stayed with friends or relatives. Early this morning additional D.C.W. staff were dispatched to Woorabinda.

Furthermore, the schools of Strathalbyn and Mount Barker, as well as Heathfield, to which I have made reference already, stayed open through the night and accommodated relief teams from Red Cross, Salvation Army and the Police. As just one example of the splendid response displayed by everyone involved, I might mention that Mr. Jim Johns, Headmaster of the tiny Scott Creek school, provided his 10 students with food and bedding in the relative safety of his own home.

The precise extent of welfare services required today and in the following weeks is uncertain. However, ample staff and facilities are being provided, with particular emphasis being placed upon the establishment of grief counselling and assistance as the full impact of the tragedy becomes clear. That, I found this morning, from personal experience, will be one of the most bitter things about this

tragedy; that is, the loss of everything that people own—from houses to contents, to cars and clothing. There are people in the Adelaide Hills who possess nothing more than what they are dressed in today.

Officers of the Department of Lands are compiling an inventory of land owned by State Government departments and authorities which will be suitable for short-term and long-term use for the agistment of stock of owners whose land has been rendered useless for grazing by the fire. This information is being supplied to the State Disaster Relief Committee to enable it to provide relief in appropriate circumstances.

The aerial survey aircraft of the Survey Division, Department of Lands, is standing by to aerially photograph in colour the areas from Heathfield to Hahndorf and at Deep Creek for the use of authorities responsible for action following the fires. The flights will be undertaken as soon as the present cloud cover over the areas has lifted. Existing maps and aerial photographs have already been supplied to those authorities.

The Department of Agriculture is ready to provide financial assistance under the Primary Producers Emergency Assistance Act, as well as emergency stock treatment services, loss assessment services and fodder relief. Complete co-operation has been received from the Commonwealth Government under the terms of the Commonwealth/States Natural Disaster Relief Agreement. We have already heard from the Prime Minister of his willingness to co-operate with these arrangements and of his very deep concern and sympathy for those people who have been injured in this tragedy.

As I explained to the House earlier this week, this provides for matching contributions for damage up to \$3 000 000, with Commonwealth/States contributions in the ratio of 3:1 for disasters in which damage exceeds this amount. The State Disaster Relief Committee, formed at the time of the November storm, will meet at 3 p.m. today to co-ordinate all relief operations.

Once again, I cannot praise the immediate response of the community too highly. The people of South Australia have clearly expressed their immediate concern and will now have an opportunity of demonstrating this in a tangible way. Several organisations, but notably the Lions Club of Stirling, are conducting appeals for clothing and household goods. Further, the Lord Mayor has agreed to establish a fund known as the Lord Mayor's Bush Fire Appeal 1980, which will pool all financial donations for the victims of the fire. The Government has contributed \$100 000 to the fund, which will be officially launched in the council chambers tomorrow at 10 a.m. I commend that appeal to all South Australians.

Mr. BANNON (Leader of the Opposition): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

Mr. BANNON: I would certainly like to put on the record, in response to the statement made by the Premier, the matching concern felt by the Opposition to the disaster which has occurred in the Adelaide Hills. This morning, accompanied by my Deputy and our spokesman on agricultural affairs in another place, I chartered an aircraft to fly over the disaster area to obtain an over-view of the full extent of the damage that had been caused by the fire. I would certainly say that even from that eagle's eye view, where one is at a distance from the personal and human and individual tragedies that the Premier has referred to, one can still see the great scope of the disaster—the huge swathe that has been cut by the flames through the Hills, through areas where people live and work to obtain their livelihood.

It is also remarkable when one looks at the path of the

fire the way in which the fire services have been able to contain and push the blaze away from some of the residential areas and the way in which the fire breaks have operated quite effectively even in the face of such a holocaust. It is certainly a remarkable tribute to the sort of work that can be done by the people of this State and by those skilled and trained, as well as volunteers, when faced with a disaster.

I intend to go to the site tomorrow and have a look at it more closely from the ground. I congratulate the Government on the speed with which it moved to mobilise the various relief agencies, the re-establishment of the disaster committee, and the other steps that were necessary. I certainly endorse and support all the actions that have been undertaken in that area. Clearly, as the Premier has said, it will not be possible for many of the people affected to restore fully their peace of mind, their goods and chattels—the houses, the gardens, and so on that they have loved and tended. On the other hand, financial relief at this time is, of course, a very important thing. Again, I congratulate the Government on moving very swiftly to obtain some endorsement from the Commonwealth in relation to putting into effect the natural disaster provisions which the Premier outlined. In fact, I think the Premier could claim a certain amount of prophecy in this respect as he gave fairly comprehensive detail to the House on Tuesday of just what these disaster relief provisions were.

Tragically, within a day or so, those very provisions have to be brought into force. I hope that the Commonwealth Government, in this case, is able to make an exception to its normal guidelines for the repair and restoration of private assets damaged or destroyed by the fire. If it has given no such indication, I hope the Premier will make representations along those lines. Such representations were made on the occasion of the bushfires in Tasmania in 1967 and the flooding in Queensland in 1974. I think a disaster of this magnitude should attract the same special consideration. I thank the House for giving me the opportunity to make a statement, endorsing what has been done and placing on record the Opposition's concern regarding this situation.

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): I seek leave to make a statement. Leave granted.

Mr. EVANS: As the member through whose area the biggest percentage of the fire passed, I appreciate the comments made by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. I support what they said about the work of the organisations, both State and Federal, in the area, and also of the volunteer service organisations, the C.F.S. in particular. We are happy that, so far, no deaths have been revealed, and I hope that remains the case. One can only say that that is because of a bit of luck, but also because of a heck of a lot of good management by the police, the C.F.S. and other authorities that worked with them. Unless one works and lives in those conditions and knows them, one can never really understand the risks and dangers involved.

I am sure that for those people who have lost everything there could have been no sadder time in their lives. They will appreciate whatever help, Federal, State or local, is forthcoming. They will also appreciate community support in the form of accommodation, clothes, food and counselling, not just people saying, "We will help you wherever we can." We will not know the full extent of the personal suffering of some people for some days. I know many of those people; they are friends of mine, and I know their circumstances. I hope that in the end result we can make the situation better in the circumstances so that

those people can settle down in the future. I again thank the Government for its actions and the Opposition for its support of those actions.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: RADIOACTIVE WASTES

The Hon. J. L. ADAMSON (Minister of Health): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. L. ADAMSON: Yesterday in this House the member for Baudin asked me a question about arrangements for the disposal of low-level radioactive wastes from hospital, medical and industrial establishments. These wastes are currently disposed of under controlled conditions in sanitary landfill at Wingfield at a site which is not readily accessible to the general public.

Approximately twice a month a utility deposits a load of waste at Wingfield. The waste consists of small, capped, plastic tubes, glass vials and other solid waste, such as laboratory glassware, bottles, syringes, paper and other materials that have been contaminated by the radionuclides used for diagnostic and analytic purposes. The waste materials are contained in plastic-lined paper bags and sealed metal drums and are collected from medical and scientific institutions.

Officers of the South Australian Health Commission collect the waste from the various institutions and take it to the tip, where it is covered immediately with other fill to a depth of at least one metre. Surface radiation levels are monitored when the dumping is completed, and no increase over background radiation levels has been detected. Other disposal sites, including the city of Salisbury tip at St. Kilda, have been suggested as alternatives to the site being used at present. By the standards determined by the International Commission on Radiological Protection, these radioactive wastes do not constitute a radiation protection problem. Therefore, there is no reason to alter either the site or disposal methods on radiation protection grounds. Similar disposal procedures are used in other States.

The member for Baudin alleged that accidents had occurred. I have had this allegation closely investigated and have been informed that the responsible officers have no knowledge of any accidents or of liquid radioactive wastes being emptied from containers at the site. I emphasise that all of the disposal is conducted under inspection by officers of the Health Physics Unit of the Health Commission. Therefore, if the honourable member has any evidence to substantiate his claim, I would appreciate his providing it to me.

The wastes currently being disposed of at Wingfield are low level, and it would be inappropriate to send them to a national repository. Other wastes of higher activity require special arrangements for their disposal. Negotiations for a national repository for such wastes were initiated with the Commonwealth by the previous Government and are continuing with this Government. The low-level wastes currently being disposed of at Wingfield do not constitute a radiation hazard. This is confirmed by the measurements which are carried out at the time and which have shown no increase over background radiation levels.

Any future disposal sites for radioactive wastes will be subjected to rigorous environmental assessment in accordance with the procedures currently being developed by the International Atomic Energy Agency. These are expected to be published later this year in a report entitled "Underground Disposal of Radioactive Waste—a Guide to Shallow Ground Disposal".

QUESTION TIME

HILLS FIRE

Mr. BANNON: Can the Premier advise the House of the cause or causes of yesterday's bush fire disaster, and is he satisfied with the adequacy of policing and observance of fire prevention procedures? Obviously a tragedy of this type is a terrible warning to others not affected by it as to the need to check on whether they have adequate fire prevention procedures, whether, indeed, they have knowledge of how to behave in an emergency, and the various other aspects of a natural disaster. It is most important that we learn from a tragedy such as this in terms of re-examining the procedures and the policing.

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: As to the first part of the question, there have been one or two speculations about the cause of yesterday's fire, but, in discussions with the controller, I find that no conclusion has been reached. The matter will be investigated and an inquiry will go on immediately in order to determine what the cause might have been; indeed, there will be a full debriefing on the entire exercise.

As to the second part of the question, whether the Government is satisfied with the adequacy of fire prevention measures, yes, we are totally satisfied that all that could have been done in yesterday's fire was done. Obviously, we very much regret that there were casualties. However, circumstances such as those that occurred yesterday do not happen very often; indeed, it is 25 years since that black Sunday of ill repute, and I have no doubt that yesterday will go down in history as black Wednesday. It is caused by a combination of 40° Celsius temperatures with very strong northerly winds, and that is the point, I think, that really caused the area to flash and caused the fire to move so rapidly.

One of the difficulties for the people controlling the fire yesterday was that, in that situation, spot fires occurred at any distance up to 100 metres, not only in front of the advancing fire, but on either side of it. The heat was intense, and it was a most exceptional set of circumstances and a most exceptional sort of fire. In this situation, it is inevitable that casualties will occur. I repeat that I hope that we can prove that there have been no fatalities as a result of this fire.

I believe that there is a need for constant supervision and community awareness of fire prevention measures and of the precautions to be taken in case of fire. This is something that must be kept constantly before us in this country of ours, especially in areas such as those existing in the Hills, where there is a great profusion of natural scrub and, as a result, a very high fire risk for the people who live there.

There will be a full debriefing and, if there could be any increase in awareness, any measures that can be taken will be taken, and any courses which can be instituted will be instituted. It has been suggested, for instance, that those people who have so selflessly volunteered to help, without any previous experience or training in fighting bush fires, are not really very much help at all and can be a danger to themselves and to other people. A suggestion has been made that courses for people in the community who might like to learn a little more about firefighting, so that they could play an active part, would be a good idea. That is the sort of activity I am sure we can leave to our C.F.S. to recommend, and I look forward with interest to the debriefing report. I intend to bring at least some detail of that report, when it is available, to this House.

RURAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. LEWIS: Will the Minister of Agriculture say whether it is a fact that, to qualify for assistance under the terms of the Rural Industry Assistance Act, 1977, a farmer cannot dispose of his small inadequately sized holding, or he otherwise becomes ineligible, and that, because of an inadequacy in the Act, sharefarmers are excluded? Does the Minister believe that the previous Government was unreasonable and insensitive in drafting the legislation? Broadly, the Act states that the purpose of farm build-up is to increase farm size to an economic unit, either by subdividing the farm and amalgamating portions with adjacent holdings, or by purchasing additional land.

In the preliminary sections of the Act, a farmer is described as one personally engaged in rural industry on his own account or under a sharefarming agreement. As I understand it, this gives rise to two problems. The first is the question of disposal of a small farm to purchase a larger unit; and the second is that, even though a sharefarmer is included in the definitions of persons eligible, he must own some land as well. Again, as I understand it, if he sells to move to another area with his plant and liquid assets, because he no longer possesses any land, he is ineligible.

The Hon. W. E. CHAPMAN: I appreciate the question. I understand his concern about the interpretation that he places on the Act. I think it is important to indicate at the outset that in fact a share farmer can qualify for assistance under this Act, and the honourable member's interpretation of that section, which provides farm build-up assistance to primary producers, is one that I do not share.

I would like to refer to that section of the Act in particular which concerns the point that the honourable member makes. The provisions for financial assistance, of course, are reached by agreement between the State and the Commonwealth and that assistance is available to primary producers or, in the terms used in the Act, to persons engaged in rural industries, and the key word is "engaged". In the definitions of the Act, the reference to a "farmer" includes persons involved in the two parts of the farming practice. The definition refers to any natural person who is a resident of and personally engaged in rural industry in this State whether on his own account or under a sharefarming agreement. My interpretation of that definition is quite clear; if a person is in fact engaged in share farming that person may qualify for assistance.

In reply to the honourable member's question whether the previous Government was remiss in its promulgating of this Act, my answer is "No". There may have been occasions when my predecessors in agriculture may not have adopted the same interpretation of the Act as I have and am currently doing in relation to providing assistance to primary producers. However, in accordance with my clear understanding of the Act and in accordance with the application of the Act by the new Government, primary producers can enjoy farm built-up financial assistance at a low interest rate for the purposes of increasing their holdings and so increasing their viability in the practice.

If any question arises whether a person is or is not a farmer within the meaning of the section to which I have referred, the Minister shall determine the matter and that determination shall be binding on all persons and shall be without appeal. I think the very fact that that paragraph is an incorporated part of the Act provides me, as Minister of Agriculture in this State, with the opportunity to place not someone else's interpretation on it in exercising the terms of the Act but to apply my own interpretation of it. I am grateful to the member for Mallee for raising the

subject, because it has given me the opportunity to explain to the House the broad principles which are being observed in relation to funding assistance within the terms of the Rural Industry Assistance Act, 1977.

STATE TAXES

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Can the Premier say whether he was misrepresented by the *Advertiser* when he was quoted on 24 December as saying, "It may well be that we have got to look at a State sales tax," or was the Premier's extraordinary reply to a question on this matter in this House yesterday intentionally misleading?

Yesterday, in this House, the Premier, in reply to a question from the member for Eyre, said my Leader was guilty of a quite blatant misrepresentation during the recent election campaign when, according to the Premier, the Leader said that a mini Budget would be introduced and that the Government intended to impose a sales tax on the people of South Australia. The Premier added that the Leader had shown abysmal ignorance because it was not constitutionally possible for a State to impose a sales tax.

In fact, I am informed that the Leader of the Opposition never said that the Government intended to impose a sales tax, and the Premier well knows this. If the Premier's staff had examined the Leader's statements they would have found that he referred to a sales turnover tax being contemplated, and that is quite constitutional. The only mention of sales tax came from the Premier himself in an *Advertiser* interview. Perhaps at that stage he was not aware of the constitutional situation. However, the Adelaide afternoon paper, the *News*, on 22 January reported, in a front page headline story, that the Government was considering the introduction of a sales turnover tax and quoted sources close to the Government as saying that this was the most favoured option to make up for an expected shortfall in revenue in the next financial year. The *News* article also said the Premier had indicated that one solution to the State's financial problems might be a State sales tax. I therefore ask the Premier to withdraw his unfortunate and inaccurate remarks, or to ask the two papers concerned to correct their apparent misquotation of the Premier's remarks; he cannot have it both ways.

The SPEAKER: Without including the comment at the end, I ask the honourable Premier to answer the question.

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: Thank you for your protection, Mr. Speaker; I was beginning to wilt under the attack. The Deputy Leader has engaged in another exercise of face-saving for his Leader, and I suppose one must commend him for that. His last sentence gave the clue to the problem when he quoted me as saying that one solution might be the imposition of some form of State sales tax or turnover tax.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: So you did—

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: As the member for Hartley would well know, the same thing was said of him when he was Premier. I give the member for Hartley credit, by putting him in the right on this issue. We both said it in the context of what could be done when the Commonwealth-State Financial Agreement is renegotiated some time in the next financial year.

Both of us made a most responsible comment in that regard but, unfortunately, this once again points up (how clearly it points up) the very fact that the present Leader really does not understand what it is all about. If there is to be a sales tax, or a turnover tax, as the member for Hartley knows full well, it has got to be by agreement with the Commonwealth and it will have to be done by a

renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State financial relationship. I am quite prepared, as he was, to bring this matter forward for investigation. Indeed, it would be quite wrong of us not to look at it as one possibility.

The Hon. J. D. Wright: But you—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: The Deputy Leader knows, despite his protest, that the Leader tried to put words in my mouth and to say that we would bring in a mini Budget immediately after the Norwood by-election and that it would include a State sales tax. Well, the Leader failed miserably to make that one stick, and his Deputy Leader has not helped him one little bit.

COUNTRY ROADS

Mr. OLSEN: Will the Minister of Transport indicate what action he intends to take (a) to ensure that all Federal Government funds received for rural roads are, in fact, spent in rural areas; and (b) to obtain a more equitable distribution of Highways Department grants to local government authorities for road construction and maintenance? Local government authorities in country areas have expressed deep concern at the reduction in recent years of available funds to complete urgent and necessary road maintenance and construction work, a situation that has certainly been aggravated by the record harvest, which, I might add, has resulted in significant export earnings for the State. Because of that harvest traffic, the deterioration in roads has accelerated alarmingly. Additionally, in some council areas, the grants are used for the purposes of providing employment for residents of local government areas.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: I thank the honourable member for Rocky River for the question. First, perhaps I should refresh his memory in case he does not know how the Commonwealth actually allocates road funds for rural purposes. Every three years the Commonwealth renegotiates the Commonwealth-States Roads Agreement which passes through the Federal Parliament and which is granted to the States under section 96 of the Constitution. The road funds for that triennium are laid down by the Commonwealth, and really the States only take part in the consultative process before then. We are renegotiating a new roads agreement to go into the Commonwealth Parliament later this year for the next triennium. Those road funds are spread into eight different categories.

Mr. Abbott: And you'll have to go through every one of them.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: It would do the honourable member good to hear the figures, but I will not go through them all.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is unnecessary audible conversation across the Chamber.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: Those eight categories include funds for rural arterial roads and rural local roads. Last year the State received only \$7 700 000 for rural local roads maintenance and construction for the whole State. Because of the Commonwealth-State Roads Agreement, the State has no option but to spend that amount of money on rural local roads. There is also a figure for rural arterial roads, and the State has to spend that amount of money on rural arterial roads. Indeed, the State has to match the Commonwealth grant with a grant of its own; in fact, the State matches the Commonwealth funds by 92 per cent overall with our road funds. I point out to the member for Rocky River that the State has no option but to spend on rural roads the money it receives for rural roads and we

cannot divert that money to national highways or to urban arterial roads or urban local roads.

Regarding the second part of the question, I have had numerous representations from district councils in the country on the allocation of rural local road grants, and many councils are dissatisfied because they have received a lesser allocation than they received last year. The allocation at present is made on the basis of need, because there is not enough money to go around to every council on a fixed growth rate. In fact, some councils received no grant at all in any one year but may receive a grant in the next, depending on the local needs. This is probably the most equitable basis upon which the money can be funded, and the only thing I can say to the member for Rocky River is that many councils have made extremely well detailed submissions to me for rural local road grants for the ensuing year. Indeed, I am taking all the submissions that have been made to me into account in readiness when the Highways Commissioner and the committee that I am to set up allocate funds for the next year. For instance, only last week I had a delegation from the Mid North councils, which presented me with a very detailed and well thought out submission on their rural local roads needs.

I flew to Kangaroo Island, which is represented by the Minister of Agriculture, two or three weeks ago, and similar representations were made to me then about money for rural local roads. This year, I intend (and I am in the process of negotiating with the Minister of Local Government) to see whether we can find a more equitable formula for the allocation of grants that would satisfy the rural district councils. I hope we can come up with such a formula, although it will be a difficult task.

STUART HIGHWAY

Mr. KENEALLY: My question, which is directed to the Minister of Transport, comes at a most opportune time, in view of the answer to the last question. Will the Minister say how he can assure the public of South Australia and members of this House that the sealing of the Stuart Highway to the Northern Territory border can be completed without making inroads into other highways works in South Australia? In support of the member for Rocky River, I will now refresh the Minister's memory. My question is motivated by two definite but rather contradictory statements made by the South Australian Minister of Transport and the Federal Minister for Transport.

The South Australian Minister of Transport, in answer to questions last year, said that to seal the highway in six years would require an extra \$18 000 000 from the Commonwealth, and to seal it in seven years would require about an additional \$14 000 000. He also added that no other major projects would suffer because of the construction of the Stuart Highway. In fact, he said that additional money would be made available from the Commonwealth Government. The Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. Hunt, in writing to the member for Grey, Mr. Laurie Wallis, said that no additional funds were forthcoming from the Federal Government. Will the Minister explain this rather apparent contradiction?

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: The answer is really very simple, and I am well aware that the member for Stuart knows it. I repeat the statement I made: if the Stuart Highway is to be sealed within seven years, we will need about \$14 000 000 extra in real terms of Commonwealth money. I repeat that quite emphatically. A couple of weeks ago we had a meeting in the Barossa Valley of the

Australian Transport Advisory Council.

The Hon. Peter Duncan: Did you have a nice time?

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: We did have a nice time, and I invited my predecessor to attend one of the social functions, because he served on so many ATAC meetings. However, I do not want the Opposition to draw me away from the point.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: I could go on for some time if the Opposition would like to hear me.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister must answer the question.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: Yes, Sir. During that ATAC meeting, my Director-General, the Commissioner of Highways and I had detailed talks with the new Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. Hunt. I spoke to Mr. Hunt, soon after his elevation by the Prime Minister to that portfolio, about the Stuart Highway to remind him of the negotiations I had had with his predecessor, Mr. Nixon. Those talks were valuable indeed. I can only repeat that we will need an increase in funding in real terms to seal the Stuart Highway within seven years, and I suggest that the member for Stuart wait until April, when the Commonwealth will announce its road funding for the next triennium.

OVERLAND

Mr. SCHMIDT: Will the Minister of Transport make representations to the Federal Minister for Transport to have the *Overland* service from Adelaide to Melbourne improved with respect to improved time tabling, and improved booking procedures such as a centralised computer system? Recently, I had an opportunity to travel on the *Overland* from Adelaide to Melbourne, and was barraged with complaints from people.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should not answer interjections, but should explain the question.

An honourable member: Was it on time?

Mr. SCHMIDT: No, and that was the main complaint. That has been a complaint for a number of years. Almost a ceremony occurred on our arrival in Melbourne because we were able to link up with the train to Sydney. This has been a long-standing complaint for many years. If we want to improve particularly tourism in South Australia, this is something that we, as a Government, should look at closely, and make representations to the Federal Minister to have this service improved, particularly the ticketing aspect of it, because many people, once aboard the train, find that seats have been double-booked, and it is confusing to have them relocated in some other section of the train. It would be to our benefit to make this representation to the Federal Minister.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: I am indeed pleased to have the honourable member's question, because Opposition members are not asking me many questions. They have 42 Questions on Notice for me to answer, so they have no questions left to ask me. I attended a Recreation Ministers' conference in Melbourne only a few months ago and thought that, as I did not have to start the conference until about 11 a.m., I would go by train, thus giving myself a chance to catch up on work on dockets that I took with me. The train was 1½ hours late, and I just made the Ministers' conference in time. I am well aware of the problems the honourable member has brought to my attention. I will take up this matter with the Australian National Railways Commission, because I agree with him

(and I am sure that the Minister of Tourism also would agree) that it is of great value to South Australia to have the tourist link with Melbourne through that line. It also depends on whether we can eventually prevail on the Commonwealth to standardise the gauge between Adelaide and Melbourne, because we believe that that is extremely important for the future of South Australia. Indeed, the Premier made much play of this matter at the Premiers' Conference in Canberra last December.

I had discussions with Mr. Hunt on this matter as well as on the matter of the Stuart Highway, because we believe that we should press the Commonwealth to proceed with standardisation as soon as possible. Regarding computerised train control (C.T.C.), which the honourable member mentioned in his explanation, I shall be pleased to take up that matter with A.N.R., but I doubt whether the commission would be prepared to go to the expense of centralised train control without the equivalent standardisation of the line as well.

TRAIN SERVICE

Mr. HAMILTON: Can the Minister of Transport say whether it is a fact that he has agreed to reductions by the Australian National Railways of freight services on the Pinnaroo and Murraylands line from 1 March and, if it is, will he also say what prompted him to agree to those reductions? I think it necessary to place on record a statement from the Minister on 23 October 1979 that he had lodged an objection to the winding down of the freight services on this country line. Apparently the reductions were due to take place on 1 October, but were deferred. The Minister was reported to have said that, given the level of demand for rail freight in the region and the needs of the community, he could not agree to the proposed reduction. Members would be aware that reduced country rail services must be agreed to by the Minister and that, in the case of disagreement with the A.N.R., the matter must go to arbitration.

The Railways Agreement Act states that the arbitrator has to take into account economic, social, and community factors. It would be helpful if the Minister could inform the House in his reply what check was made into those factors, and what the people in the Murray Mallee thought. Also, it would be instructive for members to learn what consultation was engaged in with the relevant unions. Consultation was promised, but did it take place?

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: The honourable member is quite right. Soon after I became Minister, the Commonwealth notified me that there were to be reductions in certain services in the Murray Mallee (I think that is what the honourable member referred to). Indeed, it was at the same time, as he probably realises, that there were reductions in passenger services to Port Pirie. I immediately took the matter to Cabinet and lodged an objection with the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, Mr. Nixon. Within two or three weeks, I flew over to see him about it, and to make representations to him about the reductions in services. The matter of the Port Pirie services was agreed to by the State, and I shall not go into that now; the member for Stuart is well aware of the details of that.

I made representations to the Commonwealth Minister about the reductions to the Murray Mallee services. What eventuated was that we would agree to certain of the reductions, provided that a joint study between the Commonwealth and the State was undertaken to investigate the future of the Murray Mallee services, including the provision of an A.N.R. freight depot at

Loxton. That investigation has just finished, and I daresay the member for Albert Park, who has a fairly deep knowledge of railway matters, will realise that A.N.R. is to provide a freight depot at Loxton. In fact, I am to have discussions this afternoon with my colleague, the Minister for Water Resources, part of the South Australian response to that, because the honourable member may or may not realise that the Noora salt basin, when full, will interfere with the rail track that goes up and around the top.

The Hon. P. B. Arnold: There is 7½ kilometres of it.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: Yes. It is not as easy as it appears; in fact, it is a fairly complicated question. Agreement is being reached with the Commonwealth on that point.

I should like to take up the matter of the railway transfer agreement. The honourable member mentioned the clauses in that agreement, but he should realise that, where the Commonwealth is not going to close a line, there is provision to go to arbitration if the Commonwealth and the State can agree on an arbitrator. That is the first point. If the Commonwealth is going to close a line, there is no problem, but if it is going to reduce services a written objection must be lodged, which happened in this case, and then we have to agree on an arbitrator. Then we have to find someone to define the phrase "effectively demanded", because the agreement provides that, unless the State can prove that the services are effectively demanded, the State has no case.

That is extremely difficult to prove because, as the honourable member has said, the social effects are important, and the community effects of any rail services are important. The State accepts that, and that is the line that this Government takes. However, the Commonwealth takes the line that "effectively demanded" means only in relation to economic circumstances, and the only way in which we can resolve the matter is to take out a writ against the Commonwealth. I do not intend to take out such a writ against the Commonwealth on the Murray Mallee services, because we are able to reach an agreement which I think will be to the benefit of this State and the Commonwealth. Whether or not we take out a writ against the Commonwealth on any future closure is another matter.

Let me also remind the House that there have been at least nine or 10 reductions in service by the Commonwealth during the past few years, and my predecessor and, in fact, the Labor Government did not take out a writ against the Commonwealth. In fact, they gave official notice of objection to the Commonwealth on only about five occasions.

TEA TREE GULLY THEATRE

Dr. BILLARD: Will the Minister of Environment ask the Minister of Arts what progress has been made by the Government in its efforts to ensure the adequate provisions of theatre facilities within the Tea Tree Gully district? In recent years considerable pressure has developed within Tea Tree Gully for the provision of cultural and specifically theatre facilities which are adequate to meet the needs of a rapidly growing city of over 60 000 people. Many groups have been formed to survey and study these needs, the most recent being a report titled "The City of Tea Tree Gully Community Arts Field Survey", which was undertaken by the Tea Tree Gully Council and was completed during 1979.

Prior to the last State election the then Shadow Minister of Arts indicated his support for the concept of State

assistance and encouragement of community based cultural facilities such as those which were so urgently needed in the Tea Tree Gully area. Following the election, when opening the Tea Tree Gully art exhibition in October last year, the Minister of Arts reiterated his commitment and indicated that his department would in the near future start preliminary investigations into the various options. Because of the great strength of amateur theatre and cultural groups in Tea Tree Gully, many people are interested in the progress that has been made since then.

The Hon. D. C. WOTTON: I am fully aware of the interest that the member for Newland shows in the Tea Tree Gully area, and in particular in relation to the proposed Tea Tree Gully theatre. I think I should point out, as the member for Newland would probably appreciate, that the Government has adhered to its promise and has set up a working party to investigate this matter, as was promised at the time of the election. I know that the Minister of Arts expects a full report this year from that working party, and I know that the member for Newland would be expecting to receive more detail than I can provide him at this time. I will therefore ask the Minister of Arts to bring down a full report, which I will make available to the honourable member.

TROUBRIDGE

The Hon. R. G. PAYNE: Can the Minister of Transport state what new information available to him caused him on 18 February to raise the matter of a role for private enterprise in the ownership of the m.v. *Troubridge*? The service to Port Lincoln by the *Troubridge* was discontinued some time ago. At that time, even with a subsidy of about \$200 000 a year, up to June 1972 the Adelaide Steamship Company Limited was not operating the service profitably, and indicated that it could not continue it. I am sure that is well known to all members. It would certainly be known to the member representing Kangaroo Island that the Labor Government was forced to step in and take over the *Troubridge* from the private sector from July 1972. I need only add that the net cost to the Government of the service in 1978-79 was \$1 400 000. I would be interested to hear from the Minister what other information he had available that made him make that rather surprising statement.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: No new information was available to me when I made that statement last week to the seminar that I was addressing. The question of the *Troubridge* is one that worries the Government, as it worried the honourable member's Government, because, as he correctly said, the deficit we had to subsidise last year was \$1 400 000, \$1 000 000 of which came from the Highways fund and \$400 000 of which came from general revenue.

The question of the *Troubridge* is certainly bound up with Liberal Party policy regarding Kangaroo Island. That policy states that this Party will maintain freight rates to Kangaroo Island residents commensurate with those available on the mainland. That is an unequivocal statement, and we will not resile from it at all. However, the honourable member will realise that the *Troubridge* has just had a refit, which cost about \$800 000 and which will give the ship a maximum life of about 10 years.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: I think they said that about the *Melbourne*, but that is still going.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: I do not think we will be flying planes from the *Troubridge* for some time. This life of 10 years means that we will have to start considering a

replacement, certainly within the next five years at the latest, but we should be doing the work now. I have been approached by various private enterprise organisations suggesting that I might like them to take over the *Troubridge*, to which I replied that I would certainly like them to take over the \$1 400 000 deficit. However, the problem would be to maintain the freight rates in accordance with my Party's promises, because, as I have said, we will not resile from that at all and that would mean that we have to provide a subsidy.

The Hon. R. G. Payne: It is a good answer, because you are not reading for once.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: That is a most incredible comment, but I will let it pass. I am trying to give the honourable member an honest answer. It is a complicated business.

Mr. O'Neill: So is your answer.

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: If the member for Florey does not want to receive the information, he can leave the Chamber.

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

The Hon. M. M. WILSON: I can only reiterate that, if we can enter into negotiations with a private firm to charter the vessel or to take it over in some way that maintains the election promise to the residents of Kangaroo Island and also reduces the Government's deficit, we would be happy to do it.

WATER SUPPLY

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister of Water Resources state whether the Engineering and Water Supply Department's income is to budget and, if it is not, what circumstances have occurred to date that indicate that a short-fall might be likely? Until a few days ago we had experienced an unusually mild summer, and I believe the income expected by the department may not be forthcoming. The department benefits considerably from excess water charges on metropolitan residents at the rate of 24c a kilolitre, which rate was increased by 2c by the previous Labor Government from 1 July 1979.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must not comment.

Mr. BECKER: I also understand that, since the present Minister has taken over the portfolio, a sound advertising campaign has been effective in bringing home to the people in this State the message that they should conserve water. I would also like to know whether the Minister can give any information as to the background of the campaign?

The Hon. P. B. ARNOLD: It is interesting to note that the current holdings at the metropolitan Adelaide water storages are extremely good for this time of the year. In fact, 56 per cent of total capacity is being held at the moment. This has been brought about largely because of the wet conditions that existed during the spring and the fairly mild summer up until a week or so ago.

In fact, the actual consumption of water on Tuesday was 1 292 megalitres and yesterday it was slightly less (perhaps it was too hot for the average person to go out and shift sprinklers). The honourable member referred particularly to water and sewerage rates and asked whether those rates were on line with Budget estimates. I can tell the honourable member that receipts to date are running very much on line with estimates provided to the Treasurer. In fact, to the end of January, \$51 700 000 is indicated, which represents about 50.8 per cent of the anticipated revenue of \$101 000 000 for the financial year. Therefore, receipts

at this time are pretty well right on target. It is not expected that there will be any deficit as a result of the cool conditions that have prevailed for most of the summer.

Regarding irrigation and drainage rates in Government irrigation areas, the situation is very much the same. Until the end of January, 50.5 per cent of expected revenue for the financial year had been received, which is in line with estimates given to the Treasurer. The other matter the honourable member raised related to the effectiveness or otherwise of the "save water" campaign. We have not had an opportunity, and will not have an opportunity until the end of the financial year, to investigate the total scene, but it is believed that it has been very effective.

The \$80 000 approved by Cabinet and provided by the Government for a water saving campaign was provided on a somewhat restricted basis because the time available to the Government, on coming to office, to initiate that "save water" campaign only enabled the Government to approach, on a selective basis, four companies that it believed had the expertise to provide a programme in the time allowed. The current programme was selected from the programmes submitted by the four companies involved. We believe it was effective and next year we intend to undertake a similar programme, which will be offered on a wider basis because there will be sufficient time for it to be offered to all companies interested in submitting a proposal for the "save water" campaign. I believe that the programme has been extremely effective to date, and that, as the water storage in the reservoirs indicates, we are in very good shape.

The SPEAKER: Before I call on the honourable member for Whyalla to ask his question, I draw his attention to the proximity of the close of Question Time.

SAFETY INSPECTION

Mr. MAX BROWN: Will the Deputy Premier advise me whether the Mines Department inspector who recently visited Whyalla to investigate an industrial accident at the firm of Pacific Salt will also be investigating the industrial relations and industrial health situations within that firm's industrial complex at Whyalla?

I am aware that there has been an inspector visiting Whyalla and that he, in fact, examined the safety issue at the particular plant, but I am perturbed that industrial relations and industrial health have not been examined, and I ask whether the inspector will go back.

The Hon. E. R. GOLDSWORTHY: I suggest that the member write to me.

Mr. Max Brown: I have already done that.

The Hon. E. R. GOLDSWORTHY: I did not know. The question was garbled, but there were some overtones of industrial relations. It is not the normal function of the Mines Department to be involved in industrial relations *per se*, but, if there are certain ramifications in the inspectorial duties of the Mines Department that the honourable member wants me to examine, I am quite happy to examine them.

At 3.15 p.m. the bells having been rung:

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: HILLS FIRE

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN (Premier and Treasurer): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. O. TONKIN: I have to report to the House now that the most recent report from the Director of the Country Fire Services, received shortly before 3 p.m., indicates that the fire is now totally contained. By dawn today, 21 February, the Director was satisfied that the fire was under control. At 9 o'clock a conference of fire control supervisors and senior police officers confirmed this. Mopping up operations have been in progress since that time, and will continue for a considerable time. A further conference of fire control officers is planned for 4 o'clock this afternoon for debriefing. Although the area will continue to be closely monitored, it is considered now that there is no longer any serious danger of any further flare-up.

In my earlier statement I made two omissions; the first was of people who were able to help, when I omitted to mention the services of the West Beach Airport Fire Service. I also omitted to pay a tribute, which I think all honourable members will join me in, to the work done by the Director of the Country Fire Services, Mr. Lloyd Johns, who I believe did a magnificent piece of work in coordinating the entire operation. I think the thanks of South Australians are due to Mr. Johns.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr. LEWIS (Mallee): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. LEWIS: Following my remarks in the Address in Reply debate on Tuesday evening in this place the honourable member for Mitchell misrepresented me when he said, so far as I recall, the following:

I would like to confirm that I do not think his qualifications are in that field, either; he appeared to be advocating, for the Mallee railway system, some form of mechanised wheelbarrow. This system runs along the lines with a fellow riding on the shaft who hops off and unloads some bales of wool. The honourable member said that he did not know why unloading was not done on this light-weight basis. I suspect it is more complicated than he said.

I did not say at any time that I was advocating some form of mechanised wheelbarrow. I did not say that some fellow hopped off the shafts at some time and took coals to Newcastle or wool to Mallee.

Members interjecting:

Mr. LEWIS: I can understand that that is the limitation of his mental ability.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has sought leave to make a personal explanation. During the course of a personal explanation he must not reflect upon any other member in the manner he has done.

Mr. LEWIS: Thank you for your instruction, Mr. Speaker, but I understand the member took some licence with me. I would like to put the record straight and tell him and other members of the House what I did say, as follows:

Presently, people in the Mallee fear the loss of or a severe reduction in their rail services, because the present services provided are too expensive to sustain. Equipped and manned as these services are, there is no incentive for efficiency within the management or the labour force, and as a result they cost the taxpayer and the user more than they are worth.

The SPEAKER: Before calling on the business of the day, and with due regard to the comment just made by the honourable member for Mallee, I draw the attention of all members of the House to the fact that the constraints on a personal explanation are quite explicit. It does not give a

member the opportunity to have the degree of licence which otherwise occurs during normal debate. I bring this matter to the attention of the member for Mallee. It appeared that he had the impression that he was not permitted to get away with one course of action which other members have been able to get away with (if we can use that colloquial term). There can be no reflection upon the Chair. The instruction given to the honourable member for Mallee is the instruction the Chair will seek to have obeyed on all future occasions. Call on the business of the day.

SHOP TRADING HOURS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. D. C. BROWN (Minister of Industrial Affairs) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Shop Trading Hours Act, 1977, and to make a consequential amendment to the Second-hand Dealers Act, 1919-1971. Read a first time.

The Hon. D. C. BROWN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It proposes amendments to the Shop Trading Hours Act, 1977, which Act has operated in South Australia since 1 December 1977. Honourable members will recall that the Act was introduced in 1977 following a Royal Commission into shopping hours.

Over the past two years, experience has shown that the present restrictions on shopping hours are causing problems and difficulties, both to the buying public and to the shopkeepers. For example, there is a strong public demand at weekends for goods such as cars, caravans, boats, builders' hardware, and building materials. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in policing present requirements of the Act regarding closing times for shops selling those kinds of goods. Many of them are opening illegally to satisfy the public demand. Despite inspections by officers of the Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment it has proved difficult (I would add almost impossible) to obtain sufficient evidence for successful prosecution. I have thoroughly gone into this matter and it would appear that the way the Act is currently drafted that it is almost impossible to satisfy the courts with the required proof to prosecute a person, especially in relation to a car yard, the sale of caravans, or any other sale that takes place over a very large area, and where it is obvious that an industrial inspector may be on hand.

The proprietors of many stores selling hardware and building materials have divided large shops into smaller ones with the sole object of complying quite legally with the provisions of the Shop Trading Hours Act by enabling them to satisfy the definition of "exempt shop" in the Act.

The buying pattern of the public, particularly regarding weekend sales of the goods that I have mentioned above, appears to have substantially settled. It emerges that much of the demand for cars, boats, caravans and trailers, for example, manifests itself on Sunday afternoon, yet the demand for hardware and building materials is mainly from mid-Sunday morning until mid-afternoon. The pattern emerging clearly shows that the public and many shopkeepers do not accept the compulsory closing of those shops at weekends. The Government believes that to take account of such public demand the responsible decision is to permit shops to open for a longer period than is now the case. Nevertheless, some restriction must be placed upon indiscriminate and unfair trading. Honourable members will see that this will ensure fairer competition than is now possible under the restrictions imposed under the present Act.

I am aware that the previous Government received several deputations from traders seeking some resolution of the problems caused by the present restrictions in the Shop Trading Hours Act. Similar representations have been made to me as Minister. For various reasons the then Government was unable to provide the kind of relief the present Government's proposals will give to both the buying public and shopkeepers.

The Government's proposals will permit all shops in shopping districts, other than shops declared exempt from the operation of the Act, to trade until 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday, except on public holidays, but still retaining the one late week night trading until 9 p.m. that is at present permitted. There will, however, be no trading on Sundays and public holidays for other than exempt shops and those holding a licence under section 17 of the Act. Honourable members will note that the proposal will permit retail petrol outlets to trade on Saturday afternoons until 6 p.m., if they so wish.

To cater for the demonstrated demand for extended trading hours for motor vehicles, caravans and boats beyond Monday to Saturday, these shops will be permitted to open between 12.30 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Sundays with one late night (depending upon the shopping district as to which night that would be). The present concession for those shops (that is, those car yards) to open during South Australian daylight saving time until 9 p.m. will be revoked in favour of the Sunday afternoon trading. Shops selling hardware and building materials will be permitted to open between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sundays, with one late night during the week as is the case with other shops.

The Government has been concerned at the weakness in the Act which allows large shops to subdivide into smaller shops outside of normal trading hours so as to circumvent the provisions of the Act to trade after hours. Where subdivided shops occur, under the new proposals the subdivision must prevent at all times internal access between the shops by customers.

I am sure honourable members will agree that the Government is proposing sensible and reasonable changes to shop trading hours which will bring such hours into line with demonstrated public demand. I have decided to introduce the Bill today and to seek comment on it from the many different parties and persons that have sought the opportunity to put a case on shop trading hours. Such comments should be addressed in writing to my office and must be received there by 14 March 1980. It is my intention that further consideration of the Bill by honourable members will not occur until 25 March 1980, when the sittings of the House resume. The provisions of the Bill also make some machinery amendments to improve the operation of the Act.

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

Explanation of Clauses

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends the definition section of the principal Act. The material amendments are those made to the definition of "exempt shop". Any shop which formerly qualified as an exempt shop but which trades wholly or mainly in furniture, floor coverings, or other soft furnishings, electrical appliances, hardware and building materials or toys will cease to be an exempt shop. Moreover, any shop that is merely a department, division or subdivision of a larger shop, or is not physically separated from other shops, will lose its exemption. New subsection (2) is designed to cope with the problem of relating the closure provisions to shopping

areas that are essentially unenclosed. It is intended that reasonable provisions for closing of car yards and other exposed areas of a similar kind will be worked out by regulation.

Clause 4 repeals section 5 of the principal Act, which is now obsolete. Clause 5 makes a drafting amendment to section 6 of the principal Act. Clause 6 amends section 13 of the principal Act, which relates to trading hours. New subsections (1) and (2) provide for a general extension of trading hours to 6 p.m. on a Saturday. New subsections (6) and (8) enable the late shopping night within part of the metropolitan area to be changed from Thursday to Friday. New subsection (9) permits hardware shops, and shops selling motor vehicles or boats, to trade on Sundays in the manner outlined above. New subsections (10) and (11) permit temporary extensions of trading hours at times when it is appropriate to make such extensions.

Clause 7 is an evidentiary provision designed to facilitate proof of unlawful out-of-hours trading. Clauses 8 and 9 make amendments consequential upon the amendments to the definition of "exempt shop" and a drafting change. Clause 10 inserts an evidentiary provision designed to facilitate proof of an allegation that a shop is situated within a shopping district. Clause 11 makes consequential amendments to section 17 of the Second-hand Dealers Act.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 20 February. Page 1128.)

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT (Adelaide): The motion for adoption of the Address in Reply has my support, such as the document was. It did not contain very much information for honourable members or for electors throughout South Australia, but tradition at least does have it that we support the motion irrespective of what the actual document itself contains.

My first and one of my most important tasks in the Address in Reply speech is to convey gratitude to the electors of Adelaide, who have now elected me on five different occasions. That worthy event first occurred in 1971 at a by-election, when I succeeded the Hon. Sam Lawn, who was the member for Adelaide for some 16 or 18 years prior to my fortunate winning of that preselection to represent the electors of Adelaide. I was elected again in 1973, 1975, 1977, and, of course, 1979. The highest percentage vote that I have received from the electors of Adelaide for all those years was in 1977, when I was fortunate enough to receive almost 67 per cent of the vote. That, of course, had built up between the years from 1971 until 1977, as during that period were the very active and acceptable years of the Labor Government so ably led by Don Dunstan, which as I say, culminated in 1977 with a record majority in the District of Adelaide. However, things were to occur following 1977. Most honourable members who have spoken in this debate so far have made known their personal views as to why they thought there was a deterioration in the voting pattern for the Labor Government in South Australia.

It is important to remember and place on record that since 1941, on a State basis, the Labor Party has been receiving a high percentage of the vote. The Labor Party has been the most popular Party, although it was not able to govern during many of those years because of the

gerrymander; country districts were weighted heavily as opposed to city districts. The Labor Party was kept out of power. That situation changed in 1965, when we were able to capture Government. We lost Government briefly in 1968 and lost it again in 1979. Because the great majority of the electors in South Australia voted so overwhelmingly for the policies of the Labor Party, one can understand why most members in this House decided to make some contribution in the allotted time to speaking about why the Labor Party lost the most recent election.

I thought the member for Newlands made an excellent contribution in his assessment of the reason for the decline of the Labor Party. I do not agree with him all the way, of course, but I thought he made an intelligent analysis of the situation. I received a record vote in 1977, and 27 members were returned to the House of Assembly in that year. That was not the first time we had 27 members in this House. In 1975 that number was reduced dramatically to 23, with the Speaker keeping us afloat in 1975-77. The electorate reaccepted our policies in 1977 and returned us with what was almost the maximum vote and certainly a maximum vote under these boundaries for the 27 districts that we held until the debacle in 1979.

It is pertinent for me to make some assessment; I do not want to deal with it at great length, but I want to say something. There has to be a reason why the Labor Party's and my individual overall vote in 1979 depreciated by about 8 per cent. I am now setting out on a determined course, as I know are all our other members, to regain the Labor Party's former position. I believe that the majority of people in South Australia want to vote for the Labor Party, provided we give them the correct and proper policies. I have not made an indepth study, but political Parties never spend money after an election. It may be an advantage if we did, but most surveying is done before electioneering commences in order to find out the problems, and that is proper. One can always speak with some authority after reading the results of those surveys.

However, on this occasion, I do not have a survey, nor has the Australian Labor Party a survey, to tell what actually happened in the 1979 election. Whatever one says in this regard can only be conjecture and personal opinion that one picks up in getting around the electorate and discussing with interested people the politics of the situation.

It is my guesstimate (I do not place it much higher than that) that the decline of the Labor Government started after the dismissal of Commissioner Salisbury. I have given this matter much consideration and I want to place on record (I have not done so before in this House) that I totally and unequivocally supported that dismissal. I thought that the Government had no other options. Salisbury was a man who refused to disclose important information to the Government and, more than that, he supported his stance and said that he would do it again. I am not sure what the Liberal Party would have done in similar circumstances had it been in Government in considering a high-ranking officer like the Commissioner of Police who was avoiding, and telling lies to, the Government.

Mr. Becker: It's not true.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: It is true. The Commissioner himself admitted that those were the facts of the case, so it is no good saying that they were not true. They are the facts. What I am relating to the House now are quite clearly the facts of the situation. I place on record that I supported the dismissal and I would support it again. The difficulty about the dismissal was that the Government was not able to make the electorate understand the situation. While members of the Labor Party, and in many cases

supporters of the Labor Party, were able to understand the principle involved and the action that needed to be taken, we found ourselves in a position where the electorate, and even some other of our supporters, did not understand the subtlety of the situation.

People woke up one morning and found that the Police Commissioner had been dismissed. The reasons were there but people were not able to understand them. I believe that is where the decline of the Labor Government commenced. The Government virtually was forced to change its course and have a Royal Commission. It is important to say something about the Royal Commission, because it completely validated the actions of the Government. That is where the truth lies, and the member for Hanson knows it. He is not saying it is a lie now, because he knows that the Royal Commission validated the Government.

It was too late for the Labor Government to make up the ground it lost because of its actions. There were still overwhelming doubts in people's minds, which were fired to a large extent by the Liberal Party and its supporters, who kept the situation alive. I believe that that is when the Labor Government started to lose not all support, but a major part of the support that it was able to gain over the years.

The second thing that occurred in the last three or four years, particularly between 1977 and 1979, was the decline in the state of the economy. I think that the present Government is realising that it is difficult for State Governments to agitate and get the economy on the move when that is not occurring on a national basis. The Federal Liberal Government was refusing to inject any money into the economy and saying that that move would be inflationary. The Federal Government was refusing to implement job-creation schemes and to go into local government areas. It refused all those things that would have injected money into the economy and to a large extent have had the desired effect throughout Australia, particularly South Australia.

The Labor Government in South Australia was the only Government in Australia that recognised the positive fact that there was a need for job creation schemes. In all Western countries I visited, where there was a downturn in economy, this policy was adopted by the Governments. It is a proper and correct policy. Mick Young reiterated in his recent book that there was a need for injection of money into the economy. I recall at a conference of Labour Ministers about 18 months ago, which I was privileged to attend, that all Ministers, three Liberal and three Labor, called on the Federal Government to inject funds into local government, the housing industry, and those areas that would immediately improve unemployment in Australia.

It was the fault not of the South Australian Labor Government, but of the Federal Government, which refused to accept the situation. Mr. Viner is on record as saying that philosophically the Liberal Government does not agree with job creation schemes. It is a philosophical stand by the Liberal Government. The same thing applies here, and I will speak later about that subject. We were faced with high unemployment during 1977-79. We were gradually reaching the zenith of our unemployment situation, which took us to the top of the tree. The Labor Party and I (I was responsible for trying to have successful schemes of training and job creation implemented) were not satisfied. The economy was at an all-time low and was stagnating; people were concerned. There are three aspects. First, the Salisbury situation did not help the Government and, in fact, lost the Government ground.

In addition, the economy was on a downturn nationally,

but even more so here, and there was also unemployment. The fourth thing which, I believe, was one of the most dramatic of the shocks and which certainly cost a percentage of votes in the overall situation was the loss of Don Dunstan who, in my view, was the best leader of the Labor Party I have known, both nationally as well as in South Australia, and who stands head and shoulders over any Premier of this State with whom I have had anything to do. The Party therefore had four major things happening to it during that period. We were unable to recover from the loss of Dunstan; there was a setback in the economy and in employment. They are the major reasons, in my view, that started the ball rolling, thus bringing about the defeat of the Labor Party.

There were many other factors, with which I will now deal. First, there was the role played by the employers in this State, and I will give some evidence about their role. It was the most disastrous stand ever taken by a third party in any election with which I have had experience. It started before the election and built up. This third party in politics is something new. It has not been there for long, but since about 1972 third parties have come in supporting one Party or the other. In this case we had more than a third party coming in: we had the Chamber of Commerce and Industry coming in, even before the election. In no circumstances do I expect the Chamber of Manufactures, the Employers Federation, or any of the employer organisations to support a Labor Government. That is not where our natural support lies, and I do not want it. Our main support comes from the people we represent, the working-class people, but what I expect from the employers is integrity and honesty. Arnold Schrape left his integrity at Port Adelaide, on 2 August, when he issued a warning in a report headed "Gloomy warning—jobs may be lost". The report, by Greg Reid, states:

Widespread unemployment, company closures and a loss of investment possibilities will follow in the wake of the State Government's new industrial legislation. . .

During his address, Mr. Schrape said: "One of the objectives of a Bill to amend the Act is to give greater security of employment to workers, consistent with the economic well-being of the State. We believe the Government is misguided in this matter. The Bill, if passed, will cause such an upheaval in our industries that the security of workers will be destroyed, more companies will close and less investment will be attracted to this State.

Until the Government begins to reflect the needs and aspirations of the people of South Australia—
he should have said employers—

and not the aspirations of a small, but powerful, group of radical trade unionists then our economic development will continue to stagnate.

We are facing formidable odds against our State regaining its place as a major industrial force in Australia. The need now is for concerted effort. Politics may be in a permanent state of ebb and flow, but industry always must grow. If it halts and withers, the State declines.

The crux of our current problems, while certainly being reflected in economic turmoil, is fundamentally not economic at all, but political."

I do not deny Mr. Schrape the right, as a member of that organisation, to make that sort of statement, because it is his right. He can make it any time he likes. However, my objection is related to the fact that he was then having negotiations with the Government at his request. Negotiations were going on with trade union and employer organisations. In fact, the Bill had been withdrawn from the House. Mr. Schrape forgot his integrity in his speech at Port Adelaide, by supporting the employers when the Bill had not even been reintroduced in the House. If that is

integrity, I do not want it. Let us see what the *Advertiser* said the next day about this attack on the Government, when the Bill had not been presented. It said:

The other [employer] organisations are worried that the attack has broken their agreement to avoid public discussion of the Bill until they have completed submissions to the Government.

We were in the middle of submissions from employer organisations, and the chamber did this to us. The report continues:

When Mr. Schrape's comments were made public yesterday, employers' representatives were meeting officers of the Department of Labour and Industry to discuss the proposed legislation.

What would Mr. Schrape have said if at that time I had made a speech about the discussions being held privately between his organisation and officers of my department? That shows the integrity of the employers. Let us have a look at what the more responsible employer organisations had to say about this outburst by Mr. Schrape. I quote the following report in the *Advertiser*:

The Director of the Metal Industries Association, Mr. L. A. Swinstead, said last night his association was discussing the Bill with the Government "in accordance with the normal procedures that are always followed. We hope that this sort of procedure would always be available," he said.

"However, in view of the matter coming to the public notice it is fair to say at this point that the Metal Industries Association is gravely concerned about the effects the legislation may have on industry and employment prospects."

That is a very responsible statement by Mr. Swinstead. One wonders why the same responsibility could not have been shown at that stage by Mr. Schrape. I was also asked to comment on Mr. Schrape's speech, and the report of what I said (and I think it should go on record) is as follows:

Mr. Wright said last night it was abhorrent that the Chamber of Commerce and Industry had made a public statement while negotiations on the Bill were continuing. "Having entered into an agreement with employers and trade unions to consult about all matters in the proposed legislation, I find it abhorrent that parties to that agreement make public statements during the process of these negotiations," he said.

Mr. Wright said he did not intend to make any public statement on the matter until negotiations were completed, and he expected all other parties involved in discussions on the Bill to honor their obligations.

One can understand that the platform was set at that stage by the employer organisations in this State, and they took the first opportunity to give this Government a going over. We know that, when the election was announced, they collected between \$50 000 and \$60 000 from employer members and staged an all-out attack again by way of advertising. No credit is to be given to the employer organisations for their actions either before the election was declared or during it. We know that the advertisements of Mr. Black and Mr. Buick and these other third party people were in all probability paid for by the employer organisations. It is obvious to me that, long before the election was announced, the pattern was designed and set in collaboration with the Liberal Party to destroy the Labor Government.

I believe that another party deserves some discredit in this onslaught on the Labor Party and that, of course, is the *News*. I had something to say about the *News* for a few minutes in the last session of Parliament.

Mr. Keneally: You could say it all in about three words.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I do not intend to do that

today. What I intend to do is to leave the matter to the judgment of the people of South Australia who are fortunate enough to read *Hansard* and who will get for the first time the full facts of the inquiry initiated by the Labor Party for the Australian Press Council's adjudication.

I am quoting from adjudication No. 75. The facts of the decision in this matter have never been properly written. What the *News* printed appeared a long way back—

Mr. Keneally: Page 63.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: On page 63, I am reminded. It wanted to hide what was said, but it had to say something. The *Advertiser* did fairly well and picked out some pertinent points, showing clearly that there had been bias, and consistent and extreme bias, from the *News* in the last election campaign.

I do not think it stopped there. The *News* still has the A.L.P. to deal with, probably on the instructions of Murdoch. The journalists are quite friendly, and I have had lunch with one of the managers, who was quite friendly. I tried to find some reasonable grounds for settling the differences the paper created. Certainly, they were not created by the Labor Party, but by the *News*, under the instructions of a person who does not even live in this country, Rupert Murdoch. This country is not good enough for him to live in. He has chosen to live in the great city of New York, but I understand that he is tired of it and is coming back. I wish he would sell all of his newspapers and stay there.

The Party gave serious consideration to whether or not it would bother to take a case to the Press Council of Australia. It was finally thought that, in the interests of fair play in the press, of all political Parties being given sufficient space, and of honest and fair reporting, it was only proper to see what guidelines the Press Council was prepared to lay down. I shall read extracts from the decision which speak for themselves. The council set down its guidelines. The decision states:

The council has previously affirmed the right of newspapers to be partisan; i.e., to espouse and advocate particular opinions and policies and to attack others, to support particular persons, organisations or movements and to oppose others. The council will not censure a newspaper for being partisan or require newspapers to be impartial in the sense of being non-partisan.

Having said that, having agreed that it is the right of a newspaper to be partisan, and to attack the Opposition or the Government, the Press Council made the following comments:

The right of a newspaper to be partisan is a logical consequence of the notion of the freedom of the press. Equally, that right is a necessary condition for the existence of a vital and vigorous press: newspapers which had imposed upon them a requirement to be non-partisan or impartial would not contribute effectively to the discussion of controversial public issues. On the other hand, although newspapers are privately owned, many of them claim to be exercising (and are in fact exercising) vital public functions and have therefore public responsibilities, the most important of which is to give the public accurate information about matters of public concern.

Members opposite who have not read this decision should listen to what I am saying, although my speech is not for them, but for public consumption. We will be circulating some copies so that people can understand it. Item 7 on page 3 of the decision states:

That the *News* was intensely partisan during the South Australian election campaign can hardly be seriously questioned. No-one who wanted to find the best that could be said for the then Labor Government would have consulted the *News*. The *News* did not disguise the fact that its object

throughout the campaign was to present the case against the Government.

They are the words of the Press Council of Australia, saying that the *News* deliberately set out to put the case against the Government. The member for Henley Beach looks to be a fair man, and I put this to him: would he like the *News* to be attacking his Party in the same way? He should bear in mind that the *News* can turn on his Party just as quickly as it turned on the A.L.P. I do not want the *News* to support us any more than I want the employers of this State to support us, but I want—and I am entitled to—honest reporting and integrity, and surely they are two things that a Government or an opposing Party or any person is entitled to.

Reading now from paragraph 17 onwards, starting on page 6, which is quite an interesting part of the document, the decision states:

These two stories might be taken as affording some evidence of the *News's* partisan stance, but no evidence of distortion or falsification. The next two instances alleged by the A.L.P. present greater difficulties. The first of these is an article printed on 5 September under the headline "\$40 Pay Shock: Government Backs Rise". The article referred to a claim by the Metal Trades Federation, then before the Australian Arbitration Commission, and reported that the South Australian Government had intervened to support the union's claim. The origin of the story was a phone conversation between the *News's* industrial reporter and Mr. Lean, who is also Assistant State Secretary of the Metal Trades Federation.

The A.L.P.'s complaint was that the story and headline conveyed a seriously distorted impression of the Government's intention and action on two main grounds: (a) that the union's claim naturally included a considerable "ambit" component and the union therefore would not have expected to obtain the full sum mentioned; and (b) that the union was well aware that any award made by the Arbitration Commission must fall within the wage-indexation guidelines. Further, that the Government was aware of these two conditions and its intervention assumed that they would be met.

There was a conflict of testimony in this matter also. The industrial reporter said that Mr. Lean, far from speaking of an "ambit" component in the claim, rather emphasised that his members would settle for nothing less than the full \$40. Mr. Lean in his written statement says that he had mentioned to the reporter on several occasions that the Government had decided to support the union's claim "within certain guidelines" and that, in the conversation which had prompted the story as printed, he had not said to the reporter that the Government had intervened to support the \$40 claim (or that he had mentioned any figure at all in that connection).

Given the fact that claims of this nature are very well known almost always to include a significant "ambit" component; and also that the Arbitration Commission does seek to work within its wage-indexation guidelines, we conclude—

I would like the member for Henley Beach to listen to this conclusion—

that the *News's* reporting of the Government's intervention was misleading. Neither the headline nor the opening paragraph in heavy type that "The South Australian Government has intervened in a national wage case to support a union application for a \$40 weekly wage rise for more than 300 000 metal workers" gives a reasonably fair account of the Government's intention or action.

That is the decision of the Press Council. The document states:

The council believes that an experienced editor—

they go right to the editor on this—

and especially an experienced industrial reporter—
one Greg Reid—

would have had a better understanding of what really was involved.

I put it to you, Sir, that the Press Council could not have been stronger in its condemnation, not only of the reporter who blew up the story but of the editor who allowed it to run. I have had it on extremely good authority that, after the defeat of the Labor Government, the new Government was asked (by the Full Court, I imagine, or by someone else) to make some submission regarding this wage claim. I understand that the Minister, Mr. Brown, replied that he stood by the previous Government's submission. I do not blame him for that, because it was a proper decision in the first place, but that shows how the *News* tried to twist that story. The Press Council document continued:

It is true that in the continuation of the story on page 4, a quote from the then Minister of Labour and Industry, which gives an explanation of the Government's intention, might serve to correct the impression created by the opening paragraphs on page 1. Nevertheless, we think it reasonable to expect that the story should have been written in such a way as to put the Government's intervention more clearly into the context of "ambit claims" and wage-indexation guidelines. We conclude that this was unfair reporting and uphold this particular complaint by the A.L.P.

They go on talking about an item by the then Premier, and the document states:

In an editorial (24 August) entitled "Playing to Lose", the *News* conveys the impression that the Premier, Mr. Corcoran, may have been not unfavourable to the idea of imposing a State income tax.

The editorial speaks of the Premier's "extraordinary tacit admission that he may have to impose an income tax after the poll". It goes on to say that the Premier thought that would be necessary "if he could not get the money he needs from Canberra", on which the editorial comments, "State Labor is all things virtuous. It's those wicked Feds who are our undoing." The *News* then asks that "before Mr. Corcoran thinks about imposing an income tax of his very own, what about cutting back his own absurdly bloated Government?"

On this question the *News* said:

The editorial was inspired by a statement by Mr. Corcoran reported in that morning's *Advertiser*. According to the *Advertiser*, Mr. Corcoran had said that "an income tax surcharge is one tough decision he will have to make as Premier". Mr. Corcoran referred to the new Federal-State financial agreement the States had to negotiate with the Commonwealth after the November 1979 Premiers' Conference. He went on to say that he was sure that Mr. Fraser "would try to force the States . . . to accept an income tax surcharge . . . That is double taxation and it is something I have never intended to put into effect". He said that "a vote of confidence by the people would give him extra bargaining power in Canberra when it came to negotiation with Mr. Fraser about the possible introduction of a surcharge. He would not say that his Government would not introduce the surcharge scheme—he wanted to keep his options open". In the same issue of the *News*, but on another page, Mr. Corcoran is quoted as denying his intention to introduce a surcharge.

It seems to us that this editorial seeks to gain an unfair advantage by somewhat distorting the thrust or emphasis of Mr. Corcoran's reported statement. It fails to do justice to Mr. Corcoran's stress on his opposition to the introduction of State surcharges. As for the admission being an "extraordinary" one, and the sarcastic allusion to the wicked Feds, State surcharges forced by Commonwealth pressure was at

the time regarded as being a real and discussable public issue by Premiers other than Mr. Corcoran. Thus we do not consider this editorial to be a fair and responsible comment on what was a responsible statement by the Premier. In our judgment, the A.L.P.'s complaint about it is justified.

I want to let the State of South Australia, through *Hansard*, know exactly what the findings of the Press Council of Australia were. I think it is important not only to the political Parties of Australia but also to democracy in this State, because if we allow this sort of thing to develop in our community I certainly believe democracy will fail. We will go to another system rather than the system we know at this moment if one man can exert so much power, as can Mr. Rupert Murdoch. I had the advantage of talking to a Canadian, who holds a high office, when he visited South Australia late last year. I showed him some of the material I have been talking about, and other material, and he was amazed that this sort of situation could be allowed to exist in what he termed the Australian democracy. I will leave that question on that basis; I think it speaks for itself. It is a complete and utter indictment of the activities of the *News*, through its master, Rupert Murdoch. I sincerely hope that that man does not bother to come back to Australia to live. I hope he finishes his days in New York.

I now want to say something about the promises made in the policy speech of the Liberal Party. The main policy speech stated that pay-roll tax cuts would mean 7 000 new jobs. Overall, I do not believe it has created any new jobs. Some people may have found refuge under this system, I am not denying that, but I do not agree that a certain number of these people would not have been employed, anyway. The employers wanted to employ them, and have taken on these lads and received the Government benefit. That is nothing new; it is old hat. It happened under schemes introduced by the Federal Government previously, and there would be little question that it has happened here.

There may be 1 000 young people who according to the Premier and the Minister of Industrial Affairs have found jobs since this scheme was introduced but, if they have, it would have been to the detriment of people who are not so young. People over the age of 20 would not qualify under the incentives scheme and they would be placed in jeopardy when looking for jobs. For the purposes of this debate, let us say that the Government has been able to organise 1 000 more jobs for young people because of this scheme. That is a long way from 7 000. At the last count, the A.B.S. figures showed clearly that South Australia was now in a much worse position than it was at the same time last year. The overall unemployment figure in South Australia when the A.B.S. figures were released last year was 8.1 per cent (not that I am skiting about that because the figures are drastic), but the important thing is that the figure is now 8.3 per cent. There has been an increase in our overall unemployment position. How can we equate that with the statement that the Liberal Party's policies in this area are working? According to the costing document, 7 000 more jobs would be created, and the *Sunday Mail* of 9 September 1979 carried the following headline:

Liberal plans for development of mining and resources will create 10 000 more jobs.

I would not suggest that anything done by this Government to date has created one job in the mining industry. The total number of new jobs promised by the Liberal Party during its electioneering was 17 000. I have asked the Minister of Industrial Affairs Questions on Notice, seeking precise answers as to the identification of employers who have been responding to this scheme and also as to how many of the young people employed would

have been employed whether or not this scheme was operating. After a close examination of these figures, I believe that the answer will be under 500. I am not pleased about that; I wish it was 5 000. I do not support unemployment; I support as high a figure of employment as we can manage in our community in this particular economic downturn situation.

My objection to the philosophy and present policy of the Liberal Party is that I do not believe that these schemes work. I believe these schemes are an advantage only to employers. Employers take full advantage of them, using them to the fullest extent, employing young people under them and then putting them off and employing again. That is not what I call getting people back to work. It has never worked. It has not worked federally. Federally, we have gone on and on with all these incentive schemes, providing all these payouts to employers. There is no doubt that that is what is happening. Employers are receiving the benefit and employees are not, except for the few who have been employed under these schemes at the whim of the employer, who in many cases would have needed them, anyway, and who takes advantage of the schemes.

I ask the Government to give consideration to job creation schemes. It is the only way to get this stagnant economy moving. The Government's present policies are negative ones that are not working. I do not care how long we go on; we will find that the figures will not increase very much under the schemes operating at the moment.

Finally, I refer to the Norwood by-election. I congratulate Greg Crafter on being re-elected to come back to this august Chamber with his friends and colleagues. I have known Greg for many years. I have always been one of his supporters and main admirers. He is a fine, upstanding young Christian man who will represent the people of Norwood excellently. In the short time that he was there he proved that he could handle the constituency in an able and capable manner, and he kept a record of those people he assisted in the community. He handled some 800 constituency complaints in the short time he held the seat previously. We do not win them all but we win some.

He was able to become well known and to establish himself in the area and that has stood him in good stead in the by-election. He is an acceptable person in that community, and those who have not worked with Greg in this House will find that he is an acceptable person within the confines of this House as well. I want to congratulate him on running a magnificent campaign and on getting himself re-established with the people of Norwood, who will not regret re-electing such a fine young man.

I have some late figures to hand which may be of interest. At the moment, it appears that first preference votes are apportioned as follows: A.L.P., 48.9 per cent; Australian Democrats, 4.5 per cent; Marijuana Party, 2.3 per cent; and the Liberal Party, 44.4 per cent. On a two-Party preferred basis, with some of the preferences probably counted, it appears that the vote for the A.L.P. is 53.1 per cent and the Liberals 46.9 per cent. I believe that the Premier has conceded defeat and, if he has not, he is carrying on quite foolishly. I am delighted at the resurgence of the A.L.P. in Norwood. It is the start of better things to come, and we have issued a warning to the Liberal Party that we are back fighting.

The Hon. D. C. WOTTON (Minister of Environment): I move:

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

Motion carried.

Mr. BLACKER (Flinders): I support the motion. I take this opportunity to congratulate new members who have come into this House after the 1979 election. I believe men of calibre have entered this Chamber on both sides. Hopefully, it will make for a better standard of debate in future years.

I take this opportunity to thank my own supporters in my electorate for the way they assisted me in winning back the seat of Flinders. It is the fourth campaign I have had and as such I was very gratified at the slightly improved vote that I received. That is one of the things that every candidate has election jitters about, wondering whether his constituents are accepting him or intending to show some rejection. In this case I was able to improve my vote to 53.8 per cent in the primary count. This meant that the remainder of the vote was divided—27 per cent to the Liberal Party and 19.1 per cent to Mr. Terry Krieg representing the Australian Labor Party.

The fact that it was a snap election certainly caught the local Labor Party off guard. Some of their workers were quite upset to think that only two weeks before the election was called two Ministers were in the electorate and gave no indication that a snap poll would be held. The candidate, Terry Krieg, was on holidays for the first fortnight of the election campaign, and I think it was for that reason that the Labor vote declined in that election. In all deference to Terry Krieg, the previous election campaign which he conducted in 1977 was of a far more professional nature and far more concentrated than was the campaign he was able to run in the short time available to him on this occasion.

The Liberal Candidate ran a different campaign again. I was somewhat disappointed at some of the innuendos made and the type of campaign that was conducted. Even though it is only my fourth election, it was certainly the election that caused me the greatest concern and disappointment about some of the things being said. I leave it at that as I believe the nature of the innuendos made is known and can be evidenced if one checks the polling booths in my electorate. Almost without exception one can identify, as a result of those votes, the exact cause or reason for any fluctuation. I did lose ground on three extra polling booths but that can be identified in most cases with the type of campaign that was conducted and the person conducting it.

The other aspect that I was rather pleased about was the fact that Lincoln city had shown a greater acceptance towards my representation and more particularly the polling booth of Lincoln South. Lincoln South is the only polling booth which traditionally has had a Labor Party majority. At times that majority has got as high as 70 per cent. On this occasion the Labor Party majority was down to 43 per cent, and I was able to build mine up to 40 per cent. I am very pleased to find that the support I have received does not always necessarily come from non-Labor sources but rather the middle-of-the-road Labor Party person who is prepared to accept the work that hopefully I am able to do for him.

The two-Party vote is difficult to calculate because, in this case, the Liberal Party and the National Country Party combine to make up that two-Party vote, but it would indicate a non-Labor vote of 78.2 per cent and an A.L.P. vote of 21.8 per cent. That would have to be the lowest vote that that Party has ever received at an election in that district. It was only six or seven elections ago that it was up as high as 46 per cent. I believe local issues pertaining to the rural industry and commerce generally were as a result of that high Labor vote.

The member for Napier referred to the number of "oncercs" that came in at this election. He was implying

that a number of members who were elected would see only one term in Parliament. It is only fair to point out that nobody can necessarily be classified as a "oncer". I was a oncer when I came in; I do not believe there is much doubt about that, but I have been able to prove that it is possible to win an election the second time around.

Following the opening of Parliament and on 15 December this year, I had the honour to be appointed to the Public Works Committee, and I hope that I can serve this Parliament well on that committee. As I say, I consider it an honour to be appointed to it, and I pledge myself to the activities of this House in that capacity. Just prior to the 1979 election, when many election promises were being made, my electorate was visited by the Hon. John Burdett.

One of the major concerns in Port Lincoln at present is the future of the Matthew Flinders Nursing Home. The Hon. Mr. Burdett gave an undertaking that if the Liberal Party was elected to Government it would give a sympathetic hearing to this project. I was pleased he said that. His statement was then published and I was able to raise the matter later in Parliament and, as a result, apply a little more pressure on the new Government.

I am pleased to say that, following my speech in Parliament and the invitation given to the Minister of Health, in whose lap this project was put, the Government has been able to look favourably upon giving some assistance towards the Matthew Flinders Nursing Home. I would like to commend the Minister publicly for the way she handled this matter, because it was not a run-of-the-mill type of project.

We have been given an indication of a \$700 000 grant being made available by the Federal Government and, on that basis, it was necessary that additional funds be made available to increase the number of beds from 40 to 44. The original \$700 000 proposal would have provided only 40 beds, and it was important to make available funds to build an activity centre, which is a valuable adjunct to such a building.

Following the inspection by the Minister in Port Lincoln and the subsequent correspondence involving the Minister of Industrial Affairs, who originally was to sponsor this additional \$200 000 through the SURS scheme, and with correspondence to the Premier, I am pleased to say that Cabinet looked favourably upon this project. We have now been told that the Government has guaranteed a bridging loan and bridging finance to the amount of \$890 000, which will enable the immediate start in the construction of the building.

Eyre Peninsula does not have one nursing home bed, and honourable members would appreciate the urgent need and desirability of such a project. Rather ironically, only 10 days after the State Government had given an undertaking that it would provide bridging loan finance, the Federal Minister for Social Security (Senator Guilfoyle) publicly announced that \$663 000 would be made available in 1980-81 financial year.

The project is under way in respect of its book value and in relation to initial planning. Actual turning of soil and construction is to commence within a few weeks.

The Chairman of the Matthew Flinders Nursing Home Board has asked me to express the board's gratitude to the Government for the manner in which these arrangements have been carried out. It involved a new idea and, in effect, it has meant that the State Government has provided a bridging loan. There are no grants; merely a bridging loan to enable this building to be started and for its ultimate completion.

The Government and the South Australian taxpayers are not forking out and paying for this project. The funds

are being provided through a loan to get the project under way. The local community has collected \$370 000 towards the project. Every organisation of which I am aware that is involved in the health field, including the Corporation of the City of Port Lincoln, the district council and neighbouring district councils to the north, have been fully behind this project. I have nothing but the highest commendation and thanks to give the Government for enabling the project to proceed. There are a number of other projects that have caused me some concern.

Mr. Keneally: The commitment was made two years ago by the former Premier when he was at Port Lincoln. He promised that, if the Federal Government money was forthcoming, the bridging loan would be made available by the State Government.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. McRae): Order! The honourable member for Stuart has made his speech.

Mr. BLACKER: I must take up that comment in relation to the undertaking given by the former Premier (Hon. D. A. Dunstan) when he visited Port Lincoln. He said he would provide a bridging loan for the Federal funding that would be made available. If I omitted that fact, then I apologise. That was the case. The new Government gave the undertaking that it would continue that previous commitment, but the extra \$190 000 enabled the project to commence. The \$700 000 promised by the Federal Government relates to the provision of 40-bed accommodation and makes no reference to the activity centre, the administration section, various other projects, and the additional four beds. It was absolutely necessary that we have more than 40 beds; we had to have an ancillary section to go with it.

The new Government was able to make that possible. I stress that it has not spent funds of South Australian taxpayers on the project, other than by way of a loan.

Mr. Keneally: That is interesting, because we are undertaking a similar project at Port Augusta.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I hope the honourable member will maintain Standing Orders and have a discussion with the member for Flinders at a later stage.

Mr. BLACKER: I now refer to a situation concerning farmers and residents of Eyre Peninsula. I refer to the future of road trains; that is, over-length and over-weight vehicles. In 1974 Eyre Transporters commenced a project and obtained a contract for carrying grain from road-serviced grain silos to the Port Lincoln terminal. In co-operation with the then Government the company used vehicles known as "doubles", which comprise two semi-trailers connected together and one prime mover. The construction detail indicates that it is a bogie-drive truck with a bogie trailer behind which is towed another large trailer with bogie front and back wheels, giving an all-up carrying capacity of 46 tonnes. That company operated on those roads until two years ago, when the contract was lost and another organisation won the contract.

The then Government of the day saw fit to allocate permits for an additional six or seven road trains to operate to transport that grain. However, within a matter of months after the granting of those permits (road trains involve a considerable capital investment; in one case \$116 000 for a truck and trailer) and in one case, after the permit having been granted for nearly three months, notification was given by the Road Traffic Board that doubles units would be phased off the road within three years. Obviously, that comes as a tremendous shock to the transport industry. It comes as an even greater shock in respect of the integrity of those persons who decided that they should allow such doubles on the road when, within three months of the permit being granted, notice has been given that they will be put off the road within three years.

Obviously, if one is to make an investment to purchase a doubles unit, one would want a programme for at least five years in advance because, as I have pointed out, \$116 000 is a large sum to recoup in the carting of grain. The truck operators were concerned about this and sought the support of the local communities: they sought the support of the agricultural organisations, the co-operation of the Corporation of the City of Port Lincoln, through whose streets these trucks are obliged to travel, and they received the unanimous support of everyone, including the Corporation of the City of Port Lincoln, the district council, and all the district councils further to the north, including Tumby Bay, Franklin Harbor, Cleve and even the Kimba District Council.

It is worth pointing out that I am only referring to those silos serviced by road only. It has been suggested that these trucks should not be allowed to haul through Port Lincoln, and that a bay should be set up outside Port Lincoln. It would be necessary to unhook the back trailer, tow the front trailer through the city, return for the second trailer, unhook the first trailer, hook on the second trailer, and tow it through the city and unhook it. That suggestion is absolutely ridiculous. In terms of long distance haulage, they are short runs, and in terms of the practicality of unhooking and reconnecting 26-tonne trailers, it is very time-consuming and dangerous. Concrete platforms would have to be set up with hydraulic jacks, which is an additional cost. The problems and disadvantages associated with this proposal would result in extra costs being imposed on the grain grower and a resulting loss in commerce to Port Lincoln.

The Spencer Gulf Cities Association discussed this problem and invited two members of the Road Traffic Board to attend their meeting. I have received a copy of the notes prepared at that meeting, and they concern me greatly. The Corporation of the City of Port Lincoln supported the retention of doubles units through that city, and every other organisation was happy with that, and gave support. However, the Road Traffic Board was not so happy. The two officers from the Road Traffic Board who attended that meeting were Mr. Warren Duncan and Mr. Bob Barnard, and it concerns me that they should issue a direct threat to the City of Port Lincoln, by stating as follows:

If you continue to stir the possum on this issue, then we will cancel all road trains within the State.

That statement is almost blackmail. It is waving a big stick at that council, because somewhere along the line somebody is not getting what he wants.

Doubles units are an economic necessity to the Port Lincoln grain industry. The General Manager of Eyre Transporters, Mr. Bill Doudle, has supplied me with two sets of figures. Although outdated, the relevance of the two quotations applies equally. The quotations are for the year ended June 1978, when the fuel cost for road trains was 10.85 cents per mile for trucks loaded with about 46 tonnes. The same fuel cost on ordinary semi-trailers was 13.81 cents per mile for trucks loaded with about 24 tonnes. Therefore, it would require an additional 57.08 per cent fuel to carry each tonne of grain on conventional semi-trailers. That is obviously an economic decision made by these operators. They have been able to keep their prices down because of that decision, but now they have two gentlemen wanting to impose an additional 50 per cent fuel cost over and above the present operating costs.

The other intriguing aspect of this ordeal is that a suggestion was made that these doubles units should be unhooked just outside Port Lincoln and carted through. Those persons who know the city of Port Lincoln would realize that a service bay on the seaside of the main

highway is impractical. It is almost as impractical to suggest that a service bay should be built on the western side of the road, because of the steep terrain. Even if that were available—a flat area of land that would allow at least nine double units to be accommodated (several acres)—there is a safety component to be considered because the semi-trailers would be travelling in a southerly direction, crossing an oncoming lane of traffic, unhooking a trailer, and moving back across the line of traffic. In effect, the trucks would have to cross the main highway five times to meet the requirements suggested by the two gentlemen from the Road Traffic Board. In fact, those requirements constitute a major safety hazard and, as a result, I do not believe that they should be tolerated.

There has never been an accident involving doubles units in this area, although I believe one doubles unit did run off the road. An explanation was given that, because there has not been an accident involving doubles units, we must be that much closer to the first one. I can understand that approach: if we took every car off the road we might be able to do something about preventing vehicle accidents and road deaths. This is an awkward situation. If these double units are to be replaced with semi-trailers, instead of having nine doubles units passing through Port Lincoln twice a day (which is 36 trips up and down Liverpool Street), there would be at least 18 semi-trailers making 72 trips up and down that same street. When considering whether there is a safety element involved, surely having half as many large trucks on the road is being more safety conscious than having 72 single units.

The transport of grain, products, commodities and individuals is a major concern in my electorate, which must have the poorest roads in this State in reasonably built-up areas. Most other areas of this State have sealed main roads, and most arterial roads are sealed. My electorate has a sealed highway from Whyalla to Port Lincoln and from Port Lincoln through Elliston to Streaky Bay. There is no through road across the peninsula, but there is a sealed road from Lock, through Cleve to Cowell. Several years ago promises were made by both Governments that a sealed east-west road was an essential part of the development of Eyre Peninsula. The situation now is that the more concentrated areas of the peninsula, between Lock and Cowell, have a sealed road, but where the population is more sparsely settled (between Lock and Elliston) the road is nothing but a quagmire in winter and dust and rocks in summer. There is no way that it could be considered that that section of the highway is in a reasonable condition.

This matter must be treated as a matter of high priority. There has also been a lot of local support for the Cleve-Kimba Road. I appreciate that there have been a number of hassles over the years in former Governments, going back many years. Those hassles related to the route that that road should take. I do not believe that the local people are necessarily in a position to indicate the route that this road should take. The Highways Department has avenues where it can seek proper guidance as to where that road should be sited.

The Mangalo silo has the only road-serviced silo in the State that does not have a sealed road. When trucks are carting grain from that silo, and there is a choice of roads, those trucks will take the best road available. Because there is no sealed road to that particular silo, everyone of the other four roads available have been chopped up because the road surfaces have not been good enough to handle that traffic.

My reference to the highways situation is really leading up to the problem that concerns me most, namely, keeping on the peninsula the highways gang that is presently

working there. We have considerable roadworks which could be done but which have been left out at the expense of other areas of the State.

Mr. Keneally: Are they going to the Stuart Highway?

Mr. BLACKER: I could not advise the honourable member about that. I might be more tolerant if I knew. Once the section of road at present being constructed has been completed, the gang will move up to a short section of road at Iron Baron, but I am not sure where it will go from there. I have been told that the gang will be dispersed. Certain sections of it might go to the highway, and its members would be spread all over the State. I do not mind lending the gang to the area represented by the member for Stuart if he requires assistance, but my priority is to keep the gang on the western side of Port Augusta. If that could be done, much would be achieved. However, if we lose it, Flinders and Eyre Districts and part of Stuart District will be the losers.

Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question about the Government's sponsorship of the rural youth movement. I was indeed concerned at the reply he gave, because the movement, as I recall it, was a thriving organisation that was able to train, by its own endeavours, young people so that they could fulfil roles and play an active part in the community. The member for Rocky River would be a leading example of that. He was a State Chairman of the rural youth movement, and played an active part in it. Other members have had the same sort of involvement in the organisation. I was indeed concerned that the Minister, in his reply to me, said:

I believe you will be aware that over the years the movement's emphasis on agricultural training has been superseded by activities relating more to personal and social development, leadership, self-expression, and recreation.

I am concerned that the Minister has in many ways been misinformed, bearing in mind the way in which he answered this question, because the rural youth movement has never been an agricultural training organisation. It has had a badge with three links thereon, representing agriculture, social and cultural, in which young people have become involved. However, it has never been specifically an agricultural organisation. I am indeed concerned that the Minister should bring forward such a reply. The Minister continued:

Moreover, it became obvious that servicing of clubs from Adelaide had disadvantages both from the point of view of advisers having to travel long distances and remote clubs receiving poor services.

I make the point here that at one stage rural youth had seven advisers. It had a head adviser and seven zone advisers, with quite a head office organisation that provided a service to the movement. The Minister continued:

Consequently, under departmental regionalisation a Senior Extension Officer has been appointed to the South-East region. He spends 15 per cent of his time servicing rural youth clubs in the region, and this has been a great help to the clubs. Similar officers are needed in the other regions to assist rural youth clubs effectively, but I cannot predict when such appointments will be made.

It is obvious that the Government is at this stage willing to leave the specific departmental support to this organisation at 15 per cent of one extension officer's time. This concerns me considerably, and I hope that those members who have been associated with the rural youth movement are able to get to the Minister's ear and at least put him straight regarding the value of the rural youth movement and the asset that its young people are to the community.

The Minister in his letter then went on to refer to the small sum of \$700 out of an allocation of \$5 500 to be spent

on items such as printing and travel subsidies for members of State Council. I consider that that reply was grossly inadequate, and I hope that the Minister will change his views on this matter. I attended a rural youth rally last weekend, and I do not mind admitting that I showed that letter to many senior members of the organisation. I was not divulging a confidence, because I had a written reply from the Minister before he made his report to this House. Those members were concerned, because they hoped that they would get a better deal from the new Government than that which they got from the former Government.

Mr. Keneally: I got a hearing from them at Port Lincoln.

Mr. BLACKER: The member for Stuart has indicated that he got a hearing from them when he went to open a rural youth rally at Port Lincoln. I think he got a good hearing.

Mr. Keneally: Very good.

Mr. BLACKER: I should like to think that they got a good hearing from the honourable member, too.

Mr. Keneally: Very good.

Mr. BLACKER: I believe that many problems have been experienced by the movement because of the former Government's lack of knowledge and understanding of what the movement is all about. That Government did not have a clue what the rural youth was all about. The honourable member would be the first to admit that he was pleasantly surprised when he had some association with the organisation. I have suggested to local executive officers from time to time that they should perhaps get the senior Ministers of the day to more of their functions so that the organisation's work is made better known to the Government.

I now refer with concern to South Australian Fishermen's Co-operative Limited moving its canning plant from the Port Lincoln area. Port Lincoln would have to be the largest fishing port certainly in South Australia if not in the Southern Hemisphere. It should be able to catch massive tonnages of fish, yet Safcol has seen fit to remove its canning plant from Port Lincoln to Melbourne. We now have the ridiculous situation where fish are caught in Port Lincoln, road-freighted to Melbourne, and sometimes road-freighted back to go on local shop shelves. Some of Safcol's former employees are concerned that, when they go into a shop, they can see, because they know the code numbers on cans, that a certain can that they purchase was canned with the same machine that they were operating six months before. That is indeed important to the whole of Eyre Peninsula and to the economic stability of Port Lincoln itself.

Over the years, Safcol has seemed to scale down its operations. We now find that it is basically purely an exporter of whole fish from this area. One must then ponder why so many other fish-processing organisations should start up. We have had the Bight fisheries, tuna processors and a lobster organisation whose name escapes me. The abalone industry has done the same thing. All have started their own organisations because they have not, in their opinion, been getting a fair deal from Safcol. It reached the situation where insufficient licensed fishermen were supplying Safcol with fish. They used the pretext that they did not have sufficient fish and therefore believed that they were justified in closing the cannery.

I wonder just how the company stands when it sells fish under the "Safcol" name but not one can of it is canned in South Australia. I do not know whether Safcol has any bearing on that. However, it is of great concern to me when I buy a can of tuna to see that it has "Safcol" and "Wright Street, Adelaide" written on it, and then underneath "A product of Japan". The company does not even have a cannery there, so somewhere someone has

been passing off the processing of the product, much to the detriment of our own workers and local industry.

One can go and buy the large red tins of Safcol tuna which have "Wright Street, Adelaide" and "Product of the Philippines" on them. Whilst I disagree with the principle of that, I do acknowledge that they have a cannery plant in the Philippines. It would be their own plant that is doing the processing. However, I fail to see the logic and justice of Safcol tuna being sold under the name of Safcol tuna, when obviously it is not South Australian tuna. Anyway, if it is a product of Japan, it is not even processed here. That concerns me, but the point of greater concern is the effect this could have on the future of the Samcor works in Port Lincoln. Safcol has been a considerable user of steam, which was supplied formerly by the Government Produce Department and is now supplied by Samcor. That is another nail in the coffin of the economic viability of Samcor operations in Port Lincoln.

The Samcor works, as we all know, are old. It is, I would say, 54 years old (it is certainly over 50 years old). Considerable upgrading has had to be done over the years and what we need now is a full United States export licence for the works. I understand that the upgrading of that factory to that level would not be all that expensive. It runs into many thousands of dollars, but when one considers the potential of another export market that could be gained by processing through the local works, surely a few thousand dollars is not much. Further to that, what did concern me was that Samcor actually purchased live sheep in the Port Lincoln market and road freighted them live to Gepps Cross to fill its own market. Why that stock was not processed in Port Lincoln and freighted over in a chilled condition I do not know. If anything could give the impression of deliberately phasing out the Samcor works in Port Lincoln, that did.

I understand that two committees of inquiry into this matter were held just before the election. On one occasion I had reason to ring the Premier and ask what was going on, because rumours were rife that the Samcor factory was to be closed. The Premier (at that time, the Hon. J. D. Corcoran) gave an undertaking that he would do his level best to keep it afloat, but he indicated it was a prop-up measure, so that cloud of uncertainty carries on.

Mr. Keneally: What is the present Government's policy?

Mr. BLACKER: I am endeavouring to get from the present Government its policy on continuity of the Samcor works in Port Lincoln. The matter of most concern is not so much its present viability but the intention of the Government of the day to try to make it an economic unit. Many people on Eyre Peninsula believe that not all is being done that can be done to make it an economic unit. When it was said that only a few thousand dollars was required for it to gain an export licence, I wrote to the former Minister of Agriculture on that issue. He wrote back in what I thought was a rather mundane way, saying that there had never been an inquiry to try to get the abattoirs up to export standard. I was disappointed about that, because I know of a number of companies that had made inquiries (I understand through official channels, but I may be wrong there). This is the whole thing. With the loss of Safcol we have seen about 120 jobs disappear. This was the Safcol cannery part of the operation, because they still export whole fish.

With a cloud hanging over the future of Samcor, one gets dejected. The business houses in Port Lincoln are very concerned. I was told by a dress shop proprietor of a situation where a husband was working and the wife was doing part-time work in the fishing cannery. The couple

had a fairly regular income which allowed the woman to buy the odd dress or two during the year. Because that aspect of their family income has been taken from them, they are no longer in a position to do that. It is that type of luxury business (and I use the word "luxury" with some trepidation) that is the first to show that there is any economic decline in a town.

I was rather intrigued last night when the Deputy Premier gave a lengthy address about the Government's uranium policy to this House. I watched with interest the number of people present on the Government benches: there were three. The Deputy Premier spoke for 20 minutes about the Government's policy on uranium and the most members he could muster on the Opposition benches was six. Today there was not one question about the Deputy Premier's comments yesterday. I raise that point because I seriously question the genuineness of the Opposition when it flouts, for political purposes, the issue of uranium. I am not standing up for any person in particular. What I am saying is that, if the Opposition was genuine, why did it not take the matter up with the Deputy Premier at the time? Why did it not question him today? Why did it not make an issue of the uranium question at the right time? I am rather intrigued, and it has probably been the flaw in the Opposition's argument that it should allow that to go through.

Mr. Keneally interjecting:

Mr. BLACKER: The member for Stuart can rubbish the Deputy Premier and say he is not worth listening to, but it is Government policy of the day and, if the Opposition has been making such a fuss about it, why were Opposition members not here to listen to his speech and to take up the issue?

I received a letter from the Minister of Industrial Affairs about an increase of 20 per cent in telephone allowances for country electorate offices. It may be that I am getting a little parochial on this issue, but it is interesting to note that all members of Parliament receive the same telephone allowance. I welcome any increase we get. I have an account from the Public Buildings Department for my telephone for \$590 for a half-year. That is in excess of \$1 000 a year to service my district. Most other members get the service free. I doubt whether there is a city member that ever exceeds his telephone allowance. I think that is a fair comment. If he was likely to exceed his telephone allowance, he could come to Parliament House and do his telephoning free, anyway. I point out how ridiculous this situation is. I could get on the aeroplane in Port Lincoln, fly to Adelaide, do all my telephoning, get on the plane and fly back and be better off from my pocket's point of view. Obviously, one cannot service an electorate properly if he does that.

Over the past four years my telephone account has been \$1 000 in excess of my allowance. This is a point that should be recognised by Governments of both persuasions. We all have as equal a number of people to represent as possible, so surely we are disadvantaging our electors if we allow the cost of a telephone call to become a consideration in our representation.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Elizabeth.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN (Elizabeth): I start by drawing your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I intend to take the somewhat unusual step of opposing the motion for adoption of the Address in Reply. I do so, primarily, because of the fact that I think this type of wide-ranging debate that we have heard from members in the House

over the past week or so and during the latter part of the session last year is basically a gross waste of the Parliament's time. I think that any member who has sat in this House for some time could not but be concerned about the way members get up and bleat about all sorts of minor, insignificant matters, in many instances, which are of no real relevance to the future of this State or nation.

I think that this type of debate has long passed its usefulness, or any usefulness that it may have once had. Of course, some of the shrewder members of the Parliament are only too happy to use this type of debate for their own political ends, and the member for Mitcham has used it for this purpose on various occasions in the past. I would just like to place on record, Sir, that in opposing the adoption I certainly do not wish to reflect in any way on the Governor of the State. I hold him in very high regard and I believe that since his appointment he has carried out his office in the way in which we all hoped that he would.

I do not believe that this type of debate is of any great benefit either to the members of the Parliament or to the people of this State. Indeed, debates directed at particular issues that are of concern to the people of South Australia and of this nation (and, for that matter, the people of the world) would be of much greater benefit. I do not think that to spend vast amounts of the time of this House in dealing with the sort of trivial matters that we heard from the member for Mallee last night and portion of the matters that were raised by the member for Flinders reflects particularly well either on the members or the House.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Didn't you ever talk about your electorate in the—

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: No, as the Minister will see if he looks back through *Hansard*. I believe that the sort of debate in which this House ought to be involving itself is debate about the real issues that confront the country and this State. I agree with the honourable member who spoke before me that we ought to be having a wide-ranging debate on the Deputy Premier's speech last night. Of course, the Deputy Premier was shrewd enough to slip it into this debate so that there would not be an opportunity for a wide-ranging debate on it.

If the member for Flinders cares to cast back his mind, he will recall that when the former Premier, the Hon. Don Dunstan, gave that Government's policy on uranium, he allowed the House to have a wide-ranging debate on the issue, and that is the only occasion since I have been a member of this Parliament (and that is since 10 March 1973) on which there has been a wide-ranging debate on a specific issue. I think that it is quite a scandal that this Parliament operates in this fashion. We should often have wide-ranging debates on these important questions.

Many questions confronting this State and nation could well be the subject of such debates. Everyone gives lip service to the question of unemployment but rarely does one hear a useful contribution in this Parliament to the unemployment question. A few moments ago we heard the member for Flinders talk of his concern about the closure of the Samcor works in Port Lincoln. Apparently, in this case he believes in socialist principles; he does not mind Government enterprise when it is in his own district, and would even like it upgraded. He wants to see more of this type of enterprise. These comments came from a member who has committed himself to vote, whether it be right or wrong, for the Premier and his Government.

The honourable member expressed his concern about employment in his area in a most shallow way. He said that there seemed to be problems involving the Safcol situation. He said that apparently Safcol has a plant in the Philippines. The honourable member apparently does not

mind that plant canning products.

Mr. Blacker interjecting:

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Well he did not express that in his speech. He did not come to grips with the real guts of the situation at all. He did not roundly condemn the manufacturing interests in this country for exporting jobs in the way they are. Of course, the basic reason why the Safcol cannery at Port Lincoln has been running down is that it has exported jobs from this country. Jobs have been going from Port Lincoln to the Philippines. No-one can deny that; that is precisely what has happened. Instead of roundly condemning that, and saying that the situation in Australia is that manufacturers, simply to make a fast buck, faster than they can make in this country, are exporting jobs, and instead of nailing Safcol as the profit opportunist it is, he is prepared to let such people slip away without saying anything too nasty. We must be realistic.

I believe that this sort of debate, that allows a member to get up and raise a question, fiddle with it a little and drift on to something else without really developing an argument, is not satisfactory. The House should take it upon itself to alter Standing Orders to ensure that in future we can have long, detailed debates which allow as many honourable members as want to do so to involve themselves in debate on matters that really concern the nation and the State. One of those matters is unemployment. Another matter I mentioned was uranium and the nuclear fuel cycle. Apart from that, I think a debate about the economic future of this State is long overdue.

One does not get the opportunity to debate such matters under the current forms of the Parliament. We need the opportunity to debate the issue of where the economy of South Australia is going. We hear many platitudes, with people talking about the current economic downturn. If people were prepared to be honest and confront the issue, they would realise that there are long-term structural problems in the economy of this State that need to be confronted and resolved. We may not like the solutions that must be found if we are to come to grips with these problems. We may have to confront these questions by applying solutions that are new and untried. We may have to look elsewhere but in our own backyard to try to find solutions because, in view of the way in which employment has been run down in the manufacturing sector in this State and nation in the past few years, it is unlikely that we will see any dramatic increase either in employment or the state of the economy over the next few years unless we are prepared to take drastic steps (in historical terms) to try to introduce policies that will come to grips with the problems we are confronting.

An honourable member: Tell us what you'd do.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I will come to that; you can sit back and relax a bit because I have another 51 minutes to go. It is no good your sitting on the edge of your chair agitated for the whole of that period.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I suggest that the honourable member address the Chair and not the honourable member.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I shall be pleased to do that, and to comply with Standing Orders in so doing. The important issues of the day ought to be dealt with and confronted in this House, but that possibly does not suit some members or this Government. I cite the sorts of solutions that they, in simplistic terms, are putting up to the people of this State, for instance, the Premier's talking about Proposition 13 as some sort of panacea for solving all of our problems and the rest of the economic mumbo jumbo he goes on about, such as creating jobs in the

private sector by cancelling them out in the Government sector. There is no evidence to indicate that that kind of woolly-headed thinking will work. Most respectable economists throughout the nation—

The Hon. R. G. Payne: Say the reverse.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Yes, particularly in the instance of a State, which is not the entire manager of the economy. The State Government has a somewhat limited range of options in which it can operate economically, but that does not mean that it cannot take economic steps to improve the position of its people. In particular, it is possible for the State Government itself to invest in manufacturing and other development. Before the last election, any suggestion that the State Government might invest in an industry or enterprise that would produce jobs in this State was seen as some kind of economic madness by the then Opposition; it was a socialist plot that would bring ruination upon this State if we did that. That is not the case and, at least since members opposite have been in Government, we have not had too much of that kind of tripe and nonsense—in fact, rather the reverse. I was interested to see that the Deputy Premier, in his speech in the House yesterday (as sugar coating on the Government's uranium poison package), was prepared to say:

I therefore state that this Government would consider taking up a portion of the equity in any conversion or enrichment plant being built in South Australia.

That is a very different approach from the one they had prior to the last State election. They thought that any kind of Government involvement in the economy was a heinous socialist plot. Of course it is not, and it may well prove to be the case that the only way out of this State's present economic difficulties will be by direct Government investment in the economy.

It is not only Administrations of the persuasion of the Dunstan and Corcoran Governments that believe that these kinds of solution are likely to lead to a resolution of our current economic decline. When we look at the various countries in Western Europe, we see that those countries that have had Conservative Governments or Christian Democratic Governments for a long time have invested heavily in the economies of those States. One need only refer to Western Germany, where it was a Christian Democratic Government that set up, after the war, the Volkswagen enterprise and numerous other enterprises. Notwithstanding that there has not been a socialist Government in France since the Second World War, and we have had all of these Christian Democratic and other conservative-type Governments in France, they have invested heavily in motor vehicle manufacturing, in steel, and in a whole range of other industries. We, in Australia, and the Western Europeans are tied up in the world's capitalist economy.

We are in an economic jungle, and the only way in which we can survive and protect our standard of living from falling even further than it has in the past few years is to ensure that the Government is prepared to protect and defend the economic enterprises, the manufacturing sector, and the like, in our economy. Unless that is done, the future of the people of South Australia, and of Australians, will be bleak indeed.

There is no doubt that there is a continuing white-anting of the controls of our economy by the multi-nationals and by national capital which seeks to increase profits by exporting industry to cheap labour countries in the Pacific basin. That is shown conclusively by the economic indicators over the past three or four years. We will not recover from the economic downturn that has engulfed us without some policies which involve Governments in the economy to a much greater extent than has occurred in the

past.

I am arguing simply for a strengthening of the Government's involvement in the mixed economy. I believe that the sorts of problem that arose, for example, in Whyalla, with the closure of the shipyard, would not have occurred had that been a State Government dockyard, such as that found in New South Wales. It appears likely that big shipbuilding will be seen again in Australia, but that South Australia has lost it for all time. All major shipbuilding will be carried out either at the State dockyard, in Newcastle, or at the Williamstown Naval Dockyard, in Victoria. No longer will there be an opportunity for the people of South Australia to exercise their skills as ship builders and to exercise the associated job skills that go to make up that work force. It is a tragedy for this State and for this nation, and it is a damn shame that the Government of this State—and, for that matter, the Parliament—does not take a more bi-partisan view of the problem.

If this Parliament had a more bi-partisan view, and if we took the attitude that we are concerned to see industry established here and to see industry and jobs develop here, rather than simply saying, "Let's leave it all to the private sector, and whatever they do is O.K.," we would have more industry in this State. It is a sad thing that some members opposite are so blinded by their philosophical bigotry that they are not able to look wider, to the greater good of the whole community. I do not disagree with some of the proposals put up by the Government to transfer some aspects of Government activity to private enterprise.

In some instances that may well be more efficient, and I will be interested to see the results of the suggestions that the Minister of Transport has made. I do not agree with them at the moment but I have an open mind to them. I can see that, when one has a peak period and private bus operators may be operating their vehicles during the 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. period for other operations, and where their vehicles are possibly free during the peak period, it could well be desirable for the Government to enter some sort of contractual arrangements to charter those buses in peak periods. That has a lot of merit and I have no doubt that there are other areas where such sharing arrangements could be undertaken. There may well be, across the Government's range of activities, opportunity for that sort of thing. On the other hand, I cannot understand the attitude of members opposite when the Government establishes a clothing factory in Whyalla which takes a considerable amount of work from some private firms in Victoria and New South Wales and brings it to South Australia. Where is the harm in that? It seems that that sort of action is in the interests of the State and that we ought to be taking that sort of action if we are going to try to improve our manufacturing base.

I think the Minister of Industrial Affairs well recognises the problems that are going to confront this Government and this State over the next three years. There are no real signs on the manufacturing horizon in South Australia that we are going to be any better off over the next three years—quite the contrary. All the indicators are that manufacturing in this State will continue to slide rather drastically if no steps are taken to try to improve the situation over the next few years. I believe that those sorts of question ought to be dealt with by this Parliament in wide-ranging debates.

I sincerely believe that Parliament ought to take it upon itself to change the Standing Orders to provide the opportunity for all members of the House to participate in debates about the economy, about questions of unemployment, the nuclear fuel cycle, the environment, and various other questions that are causing concern to the people of

this State and this nation. If we did that, a lot of the acrimony that occurs within Parliament at the moment would go out of it to some extent. I believe there is a degree of frustration in this House which has existed for some time and which renders the House far less effective than it otherwise would be. I believe that all Parties are well aware of that, and it is long overdue that we make arrangements to change Standing Orders to enable the sort of wide-ranging debates that I have spoken about to take place. It is quite ironical that this House in many respects is irrelevant to the issues that confront the people of South Australia. We heard one report today from the Premier concerning the question of the bush fires yesterday and he gave another brief report at the end of Question Time.

That is a matter of great moment to the people of South Australia and there should have been the opportunity for this Parliament, sitting as it is, to debate that issue today and give consideration to the problems, as well as investigate just what has been done. We should have been able to raise questions about the emergency services and compensation and to ensure that the social services and community welfare facilities available to the people up there are the best possible. This is the place where people from the outside community expect that to take place, but there has been no opportunity for that today. That is a good example of why the Standing Orders need to be changed to ensure that the Parliament can be more effective and can be a repository for public opinion to be freely expressed as the people in the community expect that it will. From my experience here I have found that the people at large are amazed when they come into Parliament. Once it is explained to them that, because of the work of members, there may be only half a dozen members in the Chamber on occasions most people will appreciate the reason for that.

What they cannot understand on coming here, particularly at night, is hearing debate that appears to them to be almost irrelevant to the sort of questions that they think are confronting the State and the nation. Although I am not allowed to refer to the state of the gallery or the staff of Parliament House, many of the staff in the past have told me of their shock when they first came to work in the House to find the low level of debate that takes place here. They do not refer to the low level and actual ability of individual speakers but to the low level of contribution, the low level of concern about the issues that confront the State and the nation.

I have spent almost half of my time in talking about the need to change Standing Orders, and I would like now to spend time on one of the issues in which I have taken an interest over the years. This issue is of great concern to the future of South Australia, Australia and the people of the world. I refer to the question of nuclear power, atomic bombs, the nuclear fuel cycle, and the mining and processing of uranium.

First, I refer to a matter that I raised last year concerning the transportation of a core sample from Maralinga to Adelaide, and its subsequent transfer to Lucas Heights. In preparing some material on this matter I had cause to go back through the history of the struggle of the Maralinga area clean-up, which is indeed an interesting story.

It is a story of subterfuge and camouflage. Obviously, there has been a plot on the part of the Federal Government's officials, people from the Atomic Energy Commission, and the British Government to try to disguise the situation that existed at Maralinga. A Mr. Hudson of Balaklava first raised this matter in September 1978 and said that he was concerned that he had been an

employee at Maralinga at the time the bomb tests were undertaken and that he had seen a number of lead containers of plutonium buried near the airport. The first response to that claim was from Lord Penney, who was referred to in the *News* of 10 October 1978, as follows:

There is none there. The Maralinga plutonium row was thrown into confusion today with claims that there was no deadly radioactive waste left in the area. The claims, by the man in charge of the Maralinga nuclear bomb test in 1956, Lord Penney, the now retired British scientist who was director of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment in the U.K.

He said there was none there. If anyone should have known, he should have known. As things progressed, another gentleman came into the argument and said that he had seen the plutonium buried at Maralinga. That caused the Federal Government to realise that the game was up, and it decided to come clean to some extent. On 16 August 1979, almost 12 months later, under the heading in an editorial "Maralinga truth", the *Advertiser* reported:

Slowly the truth about the former British atomic test site at Maralinga in South Australia's North-West is being revealed to the public. Now a new report underlines again the justification for concern expressed by the original few citizens who had the courage to stick to their stories despite the challenge of officialdom and some ridicule from their peers.

The report, prepared for the Federal Government by the Australian Ionising Radiation Advisory Committee, confirms that radiation levels in parts of the area exceed limits allowed for the public and that safety precautions, including signposting and fencing, need to be upgraded. Significantly, it expresses the opinion that areas near the airfield where plutonium (since removed) was buried should be made more secure—an opinion at variance with the original official response that all was well.

At Maralinga, we have had a long history of camouflage and cover-up. I have little doubt that the reason for that was that the people in the Australian and British Governments did not want the people of Australia to know that dangerous plutonium was buried there. Those Governments did not want any questions raised about the safety of that site. They did not want people to express concern about what might be happening as a result of particle plutonium being blown around on that site, and being blown in clouds farther to the east of Australia.

To some extent, that is water under the bridge, but it does show the way in which the whole question of Maralinga has been covered up. There is still some cause for concern about the Maralinga area. In the past few weeks I have spoken to several scientists about that situation, and there are two areas where there seems to be some degree of concern. First, the two original employees, who were then Air Force employees, at the Maralinga site said that they saw materials from Calder Hall (which is the nuclear power facility in the United Kingdom) offloaded from British Air Force planes, and subsequently buried. They were also told by other people at Maralinga that that material was nuclear waste from the United Kingdom. Those allegations have not been satisfactorily answered. I still have a doubt in my mind as to whether or not Maralinga is a storage facility for waste from the United Kingdom, given that these two original citizens (as they are called in the *Advertiser*) made this allegation along with their allegations about the plutonium. As I have said, I do not believe that those allegations have been satisfactorily answered as yet.

The other matter of considerable concern about the Maralinga site is that it has now been admitted and established that there is a large amount of particle plutonium in the dust and over-burden in the area

surrounding the test site. An ARAC report said that that was of no great concern, but I do not believe that that is so, because that report seems to have been prepared in August and September, when the winds in that area are not as severe as they become in summer. The ARAC report says that, in the event of high winds and high temperatures, the plutonium could become airborne. I believe that that situation has not been satisfactorily dealt with by the ARAC report. It seems that there is an opportunity for the plutonium to become airborne and, as a result, move in clouds across to the heavily populated eastern areas of Australia. I believe that something needs to be done about that situation and, unless something is done, there will always be the possibility that plutonium in particle form from that site will become airborne and will subsequently be lodged in somebody's lungs and, as a result, they will suffer a high likelihood of contracting lung cancer.

This is a serious matter, which should not cause the Commonwealth Government or the South Australian Government a vast financial expense if they were to correct it. I am told by the scientists to whom I have spoken that it would be possible to mix up a solution of bitumen and sand and to coat the area by spraying methods with such a solution, and that that would solve the problem. Apparently, we are not talking about a particularly large area. This is a matter about which the South Australian Government should be concerned. It concerns me greatly, as I believe that, unless we treat this whole matter of plutonium wastes in this area with great caution, further South Australian and Australian citizens will be subject to contracting cancer, and that is a serious situation.

I referred to the earlier history of Maralinga and the way in which the *News* screamed that there was none there and editorialised in a fairly cynical fashion about the two gentlemen who first raised the issue. Unfortunately, the same sort of attitude seems to have been adopted by the Deputy Premier. When I raised with him last year the matter of bringing the core containing plutonium to Adelaide and storing it in the core library at Conyngham Street, Glenside, he scoffed at it and said some fairly nasty things. It is interesting to note (and I want to place this on record) just how his story changed as things developed. Initially, when I raised the matter in the House, the Minister said:

I have been advised by my department that six holes were drilled at Maralinga. Five were diamond drill cores undertaken at the request of the Australian Ionising Radiation Advisory Council, and these were sent direct to Melbourne. One other hole was drilled to a depth of 150 feet at Taranaki to ascertain whether there had been contamination of ground waters. Samples from this drilling were also sent to Melbourne. A proportion of the sludges from this drilling were received at the departmental depot at Thebarton for logging and were discarded after some months. I am advised that these samples were not contaminated.

The department's core library receives samples from drillings throughout South Australia. These are regularly monitored by the Health Department to ensure that the levels of radiation resulting from the natural radiation contained in the samples does not exceed safe levels. I am advised that the monitoring to date has indicated that radioactive levels, such as they are, are extremely low, and well below the levels which would give any cause for concern. In the light of these facts, I can only conclude that the member for Elizabeth is indulging in blatant scare tactics, as is his habit.

In that statement, the Minister denied that any core

from Maralinga had been placed in the core library. However, I think the next week, in reply to a question, the Minister had a further report to make. This time, of course, he was not going off half cocked, but had received advice from his department. He said:

Yes, I have received a report [which it has been suggested I would not bring forward] it is comprehensive and thorough and, to put the record straight, I will read it to the House. It is a memorandum from the Director-General, as follows:

During 1977, the Department of Mines and Energy assisted in an investigation, carried out by the Australian Ionising Radiation Advisory Council, of the radiological safety and future land use of the Maralinga atomic weapons test range. At that time, for obvious reasons, the details of the investigation were confidential. The department's work involved the drilling of seven diamond drill holes—members will notice that previously he said that only five were drilled—

and one percussion drill hole. This work formed part of that aspect of the investigation which was concerned with evidence of residual plutonium contamination.

The drilling operation was carried out under the close surveillance of health physicists and, because of the interest in ascertaining the possible presence of minute quantities of plutonium, extreme care was taken in the method of drilling and the recovery and handling of cores and samples. The material recovered was tested on site using sophisticated radiation detection equipment. In particular, the equipment used was sensitive to alpha radiation, which is the form of radiation associated with plutonium.

For the benefit of members, I am told that that type of equipment cannot be used effectively on a field site; it has to be used in a laboratory. The Director-General's report continues:

Any material showing alpha radiation was carefully removed for subsequent testing by A.I.R.A.C. In fact, it was sent to Lucas Heights. The balance of the material was returned to Adelaide in core trays and sample bags for subsequent geological logging to provide additional information to assist in the A.I.R.A.C. investigation. A.I.R.A.C. has advised that the drilling operation and trans-shipment of material were handled in a competent and proper manner. The drillers were aware of the importance of the job they were doing and the need for particular care . . . Consequently they were not at any time exposed to any abnormal health risks . . .

I am further advised by Mr. O. H. Turner, who headed the A.I.R.A.C. field study team, that the material transferred to Adelaide presented no abnormal health risk to personnel transporting, handling or logging the material. Considering the extreme care with which this whole investigation was carried out, it is hardly surprising that material authorised by A.I.R.A.C. to leave the site in charge of drillers was not considered by the health physicists to present any health risk.

The sample material was received at the departmental Thebarton depot on 24 August 1977. It was transferred to the core library at Glenside, when that building was completed, and it was stored on a pallet containing approximately 10 boxes of material. The cores were logged and, in the case of one core, photographed at the request of A.I.R.A.C. in November 1978, and all the material discarded in May 1979 to make space for permanent storage of other cores after it was determined that it was not further required by A.I.R.A.C. The matter of disposal was first checked with Mr. Watson of A.I.R.A.C. who confirmed that the material concerned could be disposed of safely, using normal procedures. It was accordingly removed by McMahan's Disposals to the sanitary land-fill site at Halls Road, Highbury.

The Minister continued to quote that report, but I want, at that point, to refer to a Question on Notice and the answer given in the House of Representatives. Since I was not getting any truth from the Minister about this matter, I decided that the only other alternative was to try to obtain some information from the Federal Government. The following question (No. 5059) was placed on notice in the House of Representatives:

- (1) Was a drill core from Maralinga sent from Adelaide by the South Australian Mines Department to Lucas Heights, New South Wales, in November or December 1978; if so, why was the core sought?
- (2) In what condition was it transported from South Australia?
- (3) Which firm transported the core?
- (4) How was it received at Lucas Heights?
- (5) What safety precautions were taken in transit?
- (6) How is the core presently stored?

Mr. Anthony, the Minister for National Development and Energy, provided the following answer:

- (1) Yes; it was required for plutonium analysis in connection with a survey of the Maralinga Atomic Weapons Testing Range for residual plutonium contamination conducted on behalf of the Australian Ionising Radiation Advisory Council.
- (2) As extracted.
- (3) IPEC.
- (4) Neither the package, nor its contents, had been damaged in transit.
- (5) To prevent physical damage to the core it was held securely in place by wooden spacer blocks and substantial foam rubber inside a South Australian Mines Department core transport box. Packing conformed with the New South Wales Radioactive Substances Act.
- (6) It is stored in sealed containers, appropriately labelled.

It is clear from that that a core containing particle-active plutonium was sent to Adelaide initially, stored, first at Thebarton, and then subsequently transferred to Conyngham Street, Glenside. It was left there in the core library, sitting on a pallet with no protective mechanism at all for the library staff. It was there for a period of nearly 12 months.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: When was that?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: It was transferred to the core library at Glenside in November 1977 and the photographs were requested by A.I.R.A.C. in November 1978. It was there for 12 months at least.

Mr. Becker: Who was in Government then?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Certainly, we were in Government. As a result of that, the library staff there were exposed to this core for a period of 12 months. I do not see this as a matter which should be one of contention between the Parties. The member for Hanson points out that our Government was in office at that time. I certainly did not know about it; neither did the Minister, Hugh Hudson, and, I imagine, neither did the Mines Department. The point I am trying to reach in all of this is not some sort of persecution of the Mines Department, but simply to illustrate the fact that, in dealing with these substances, people are not as careful and safety conscious as they could be. I believe that we should take a lesson from this episode and that in future the safety aspects of the whole of this matter should be treated with much greater concern than has occurred in the past.

I can understand that it is always the fact (it is almost part of human nature I suppose) that when people are dealing with these dangerous materials they get used to dealing with them. If one cares to turn one's mind to it one can think of examples whereby people become familiar with dangerous chemicals and other dangers, whether they

be workshop dangers or whether they be people becoming *blase* when they drive motor vehicles.

Mr. Slater: Familiarity breeds contempt.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: True. I believe that to some extent that has been what has happened in this episode. What does irk me somewhat is that, whether or not the Minister wanted to tack on a little bit of political stuff and say that it was our Government in office at that time, there was a simple way out of this. He could have been forthright with the House and said that it did happen, that he was concerned about it, and that he was endeavouring to ensure that this sort of thing did not happen again.

If we could do that, I think many people in South Australia who are very concerned about the nuclear fuel cycle and the whole question of uranium mining would feel a greater degree of confidence than they feel at the present time. By taking this sort of attitude, the Minister has not helped to make people feel confident about the future of safety standards. It is all very well to talk about safety standards but it may well be that, if the Mines Department, for example, is responsible for safety standards, this sort of thing might happen again.

In the time I have left, I will deal with the speech made by the Minister last evening. He said that the Government would be introducing legislation on the whole question of standards and safety. However, he did not say whether it would be the Health Commission or the Department of Mines and Energy which would be basically responsible for these standards. I give notice that I would be greatly concerned if such powers and responsibilities were placed into the hands of the Department of Mines and Energy. I believe that the Health Commission is by far the most appropriate body to deal with these matters, and it should have the responsibility for them. That department is arm's length from the whole process, and it clearly should be made responsible.

I turn to the Minister's speech of last night. I thought it was an interesting document—most interesting, I suppose, from my point of view because, in a wide-ranging speech about the Government's uranium policy and energy matters generally, there was not one reference to the question of conservation of energy. It was extraordinary to hear a speech made in 1980 by a Minister responsible for such matters without his mentioning conservation of energy. The Minister has simply taken his base point from a position of accepting that energy demand will increase and we will need vast new amounts of energy, but he has not given any consideration in that document to the question of energy conservation. That is a tragedy. I do not believe that most members opposite would agree with him from that point of view.

I believe that most people are becoming conscious of the need to conserve energy and to make our limited energy resources go further, but we find the Minister getting up in this Chamber last night and giving a speech on this vital subject without reference to conserving energy. His whole thesis is that the world will vastly expand its need for energy and that we will be there, cashing in on the bonanza by flogging uranium to other countries.

The Minister dealt in passing with questions of safety. I am concerned about that aspect, as I have said. I do not believe that his commitment to questions of the safety of uranium mining, safety in milling, and safety in enrichment is nearly as strong as it could be. There is a great need to understand that even if, as some people claim (and I do not accept this), safety standards can be rigorously enforced in uranium mining and milling so that the mine and mill workers are protected and there is no danger, those standards have to be high, and they must be

rigorously policed and enforced. I do not believe that, if the tragedy of uranium mining and associated matters occurs in South Australia, this Government has a sufficient commitment to safety aspects to be able to ensure the proper protection of mine and mill workers.

The Government's attitude to the statistics that are coming from the Health Commission about workers from Radium Hill is a clear indication of that. That matter is serious enough to make the Government set up a full-scale inquiry into the death of Radium Hill workers from cancer and leukaemia, because I believe all those people, or their names, should be discovered and their families compensated. People have lost their lives or had their lives shortened as a result of working at the Radium Hill mine, which was operated by the State Government, and we, as a Parliament, should be concerned to try to ensure that those people are compensated for the loss they have suffered and the tragedy that has entered their lives.

There is an obligation on the Government, now that preliminary surveys have indicated that the death rate

among miners from cancer is much higher than that for a comparable group, to do something to contact the rest of the miners and warn them of the danger and encourage the families of those miners who have already died to seek compensation for the loss they have suffered.

This Government ought to take notice of this matter, and I hope that it will take some action to see that the moral responsibility which rests on its shoulders to compensate these people is carried into effect. I hope that the Government will take notice of that, without having to be prompted by some citizens action group, such as occurred with agent orange. I hope that the Government will see its responsibilities and act accordingly.

Mr. GUNN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.57 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 26 February at 2 p.m.