

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 10 August 1983

The **SPEAKER (Hon. T.M. McRae)** took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION: ADULT VIDEO CASSETTES

A petition signed by 95 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to clarify and standardise the laws on the sale and hire of adult video cassettes was presented by Mr Mathwin.

Petition received.

PETITION: MARIHUANA

A petition signed by 293 residents of South Australia praying that the House reject any legislation which will legalise or decriminalise the use of marihuana was presented by Mr Mathwin.

Petition received.

PETITIONS: MEAT SALES

Petitions signed by 634 residents of South Australia praying that the House reject any legislation to extend the existing trading hours for the retail sale of meat were presented by the Hons Jennifer Adamson and D.C. Wotton and Mr Hamilton.

Petitions received.

PETITION: POLICE HANDGUNS

A petition signed by 302 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to reject any change in policy on the wearing of exposed handguns by the Police Force was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

PETITION: COMMUNITY WELFARE ACT

A petition signed by 12 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to amend the Community Welfare Act so as to prohibit the removal of children from their parents without parental consent or by direction of a court was presented by the Hon. J.D. Wright.

Petition received.

PETITION: SURREY DOWNS DEVELOPMENT

A petition signed by 473 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to request the South Australian Housing Trust not to proceed with its development at Surrey Downs, give consideration to existing residents in any further development, and grant councils more control over such developments within their district was presented by Mr Klunder.

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The **Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of Education)**: I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. LYNN ARNOLD**: In January this year, the Director-General of the Education Department, Mr John Steinle, presented to me a report recommending major changes in the reorganisation of the Education Department. At that time I released the report as a discussion document and invited interested groups, particularly school staff and parent associations, to submit their comments. As schools were the central point of concern within the report's proposals, I subsequently extended the period in which those groups could review and respond to the report.

Several hundred submissions on the report were received and considered. Subsequently, I, in consultation with the department and Public Service Board, undertook a re-appraisal of the proposed changes. An amended form of the reorganisation and an implementation plan were subsequently approved by Cabinet. While the new form retains many of the previous proposals it varies in significant elements. I emphasise that the basic objectives of the Government in undertaking the reorganisation is to ensure an improved education service to South Australia's 700 State schools. Those objectives are:

Maximum resources to be located in the field, either in schools or in regional centres. A prime aim is to reduce the level of resources being consumed in areas other than schools, without reducing services.

Central management must be designed to provide policy direction, leadership, resource control and monitoring of effectiveness through a lean, efficient corporate structure.

Where efficiency in the use of resources is the major consideration, a central service should be provided.

Simplification of decision-making processes between the Education Department executive and schools, supported by clearly enunciated policy and defined levels of accountability and responsibility.

The major components of the new executive structure are as follows: five area directorates; central curriculum directorate; central resources directorate. This executive structure will reduce the executive level of the department from 26 positions, of assistant director and above, to 18 positions.

The previous report recommended the appointment of eight directors of education, responsible to the Director-General. Under that proposal four directors would have headed revamped curriculum, special programmes, personnel and central services, and resource directorates. Four 'operational directorates' were also proposed, all city based and formed by clustering the existing 10 metropolitan and country regions into 'zones'. However, under the new plan, which still recognises the need for rationalisation of the 10 regions, five directorates (two of which are to be in the country) will be created.

We have been anxious to ensure that changes were not simply interposing an additional layer of management. By integrating local regional management responsibilities with those of the area directorates and by clarifying roles and responsibilities of senior officers in regional locations the needs of country schools will be more effectively represented. The previous report's proposal for one curriculum directorate, centrally located, has not changed. However, special programmes will now be directly responsible to Assistant Director-General, Curriculum Directorate. I support the need to develop the directorate as a tightly staffed unit concentrating on development of curricula in mainstream and special programmes.

The need to upgrade the resource management across the department has been recognised throughout. However, central to a revamping of resource management is the appointment of a director of resources with responsibility for co-ordinating the planning, policy development, control and

evaluating of resource management. It is expected that this appointment will develop new resource management principles to apply across the entire department with clear levels of accountability and responsibility. There will be no additional cost involved in the reorganisation. Indeed, it is expected that savings will become available in 1984-85.

The whole exercise is designed to put educational policy development closer to the areas it affects—the schools. We want to move decisions affecting school operations towards the schools, while staff in the department's central office concentrate on their responsibilities of policy making and advising. To ensure the reorganisation proceeds smoothly, a steering committee, comprising the Director-General, Deputy Director-General and a Commissioner from the Public Service Board, will be appointed to oversee the crucial early stages in setting up the executive structure. In addition, a working party comprising Education Department staff and a senior Public Service Board officer will be formed to work with the steering committee.

QUESTION TIME

Mr IVANOV

Mr OLSEN: Will the Deputy Premier say why he told this House on 13 May that he did not know what Mr Ivanov wanted to offer him when the replies given by him yesterday show that from 25 April he was made well aware by at least one member of his own office staff, as well as Mr Combe, that Mr Ivanov wanted to invite him to Russia?

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I have made my position very clear on this matter. We are dealing with a very dishonest Opposition.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Moreover, we are dealing with a deceitful Leader of the Opposition who may be taken to task over this whole matter. Let me give that warning. I have made clear to the House that any questions I answer on this matter shall be answered by a considered reply.

TORRENS RIVER WORKS

Mr PLUNKETT: Will the Minister of Water Resources say what is the present state of the Torrens River linear park and flood mitigation scheme, especially when the flood mitigation package for the western suburbs will be completed?

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: Only yesterday I addressed a seminar, in relation to the Torrens River linear park, at the Underdale campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education, under the auspices of the Institute of Parks and Recreation.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: Work on the Torrens River linear park and flood mitigation scheme has now been in existence for some 20 months and the total of \$5 600 000 had been spent on the project to the end of the 1982-83 financial year. In all, it is estimated that the scheme will cost something like \$22 000 000 in 1982-83 values. Out of a total of four flood mitigation packages, the two in the western suburbs (which includes the electorate of the member for Peake) are nearing completion and will soon be handed over to the West Torrens and Woodville councils. The total flood mitigation work is expected to be completed in 1984-85 and, when that is completed, some 12 000 home owners will receive full protection from what might be described as a one in 200 year flood.

Mr Becker: How can you predict that?

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: Nobody can foresee any eventuality in regard to the matter but we are providing the opportunity for people to be protected. The assessment is on a one in 200-year occurrence. As Minister of Recreation and Sport, I also have an interest in the linear park and I assure the councils that the Department of Recreation and Sport would also be available to provide planning expertise to give consideration to assisting councils to develop recreational facilities for the community along the river. I am pleased to report to the member for Peake and to the House that the River Torrens linear park and flood mitigation scheme is proceeding satisfactorily. The two work packages in his electorate are nearing completion and it is expected that the whole project—linear park and flood mitigation work—will be completed in 1988.

NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION: DEPUTY PREMIER

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move the following motion without notice:

That this House no longer has confidence in the Deputy Premier because he has deliberately, consistently and blatantly misled this Parliament and therefore should resign. If he fails to do so this House calls on the Premier to dismiss him.

The SPEAKER: I have counted the House and there being present an absolute majority of the whole I accept the motion. Is it seconded?

Opposition members: Yes, Sir.

Mr OLSEN: In seeking to suspend Standing Orders to move a motion of no confidence in the Deputy Premier, I remind the House that a matter of such gravity is but unprecedented in this Parliament. I seek the suspension because the Opposition has clear and absolute proof that the Deputy Premier has deliberately and blatantly misled the House in answer to three specific questions. On Thursday, yesterday and again today the Opposition has put questions to the Deputy Premier so that he could explain his actions in this House in May and June. The Deputy Premier was well aware of the grave allegations I have made about his propriety and integrity in this matter, yet he has failed—

The Hon. J.D. Wright: You'll be well aware, too.

Mr OLSEN: We seem to be getting continuing threats from the Deputy Premier. I will not resile from taking up a matter of principle in this Parliament. He has failed totally to refute those allegations. The deception that he has attempted to apply in this House has, if anything, been accentuated. By raising the matter in a series of questions, we have given the Deputy Premier every opportunity to explain his unprecedented and reprehensible actions.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OLSEN: I am seeking the suspension of Standing Orders to enable this Parliament and the people of South Australia to focus on the fundamental issue: that it has been proved beyond doubt and dispute that the Deputy Premier has deliberately told a series of untruths to the House. Research indicates that no member of this Parliament has ever resigned a Ministerial post or been stood down by his Premier for telling calculated untruths to Parliament. If the Government is prepared to indicate that it will accept the suspension—

Members interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: If the Government wants me to give detailed reasons, I will continue to do so. The suspension is necessary so that the Opposition is able to put to Parliament detailed

accusations and the Deputy Premier can put forward his defence, because he has not sought to put forward his defence to this House in either a Ministerial statement yesterday or in response to legitimate questions, which he has continually refused to answer. Members of this Chamber can then have the opportunity—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader will resume his seat. I want to make clear that the context of this motion raises a matter that I consider, and so rule, to be of the utmost gravity. Let it be clearly understood by members on both sides of the House that, if there are breaches of Standing Orders, then each member will accept the inevitable result.

Mr OLSEN: The suspension will give the Deputy Premier the opportunity to respond, and give other members of the Chamber the opportunity to condemn or defend him. Again, I remind the House that there is a single fundamental issue for debate: the undeniable truth that the Deputy Premier has deliberately told untruths to Parliament. As members are acutely aware, no more serious allegation can be levelled in this Parliament. Therefore, I assure the House that, in seeking the suspension of Standing Orders, I do not take that action lightly.

If any member is allowed to tell untruths with impunity, to deceive and mislead without discipline or punishment, particularly a Minister (and a senior Minister at that), then the basic fundamentals of Parliamentary democracy in this State, and perhaps in other Parliaments in Australia, are under threat. No member on either side of the Chamber will again be able to question members of the Government, confident in the knowledge that they will give precise and honest replies. In seeking the suspension, I remind the House that the Premier has condoned the actions of his Deputy, saying that his answers—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have been extremely lenient with the Leader. I now rule that he has transgressed into the area of debate, and I ask him to refrain from doing so.

Mr OLSEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think that I have detailed concisely and accurately the specific reasons why this Parliament needs to suspend Standing Orders so that we can debate a matter of immense importance, a fundamental issue, a matter of principle, accountability and responsibility by a senior Minister of the Government to this House. There is undeniable proof in the questions posed in this Parliament in the past, and in the opportunities that have been given to the Deputy Premier over several days to respond to those questions, and the opportunity to put the matter to rest through a Ministerial statement. He has been unable to do so. Therefore, I seek the support of the House to suspend Standing Orders so that, for clear and concise reasons, the debate can ensue as to why we believe that the vote of no confidence should be passed on the Deputy Premier because of his actions in this House.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): At last it has come to the point where the Leader of the Opposition is seeking a suspension without notice in order to allow (as he puts it), or give the opportunity to, the Deputy Premier to give his defence. This is the issue on which the Leader wrote to me on 21 July, stating:

This matter is of such gravity, you should arrange to have a new session of Parliament opened as early as possible next week, so it can be debated fully. This can be achieved by tendering advice to His Excellency the Governor seeking an earlier calling together of Parliament than originally announced. Parliament is not due to open until 4 August. A fortnight is too long.

Today, on the third day of the present sitting, the Leader, out of the blue, without any respect for the conventions of this House as exercised over the 100 years of its operation, moves a censure motion, expecting the Government to

simply say, 'All right, finally you have moved this motion that you have been posturing about for the past three or four weeks, perhaps we should let you have it.' I am not so inclined to do that. Westminster tradition is being invoked in this matter and the great issue, we are told by the Leader, concerns a Minister's misleading the House, and that the matter must be debated fully in these Chambers. That is fine, that it is the Westminster tradition and we will answer to it, as my Deputy has done in his observation of it.

I suggest also that there is another Westminster tradition equally important, and equally observed in this House as in other places, namely, that due notice is given by any member or Party seeking to bring down a Government by way of a censure motion. On one or two occasions during the Labor Party's period in Opposition during the previous three years, we moved such a motion in circumstances where an issue had arisen out of the blue. However, there is no way in the world that it could be said that this matter has arisen out of the blue: in the words of the Leader, 'A fortnight is too long', as he called for his urgent summoning of Parliament. On one of two occasions the previous Opposition attempted to move such a motion without the appropriate notice having been given, because we believed we had valid reasons. On each and every one of those occasions the Government refused suspension: it would not tolerate, without the appropriate notice, the moving of a no-confidence motion. In doing that it invoked the Westminster tradition; in doing so it maintained that that was never allowed by Mr Dunstan or Mr Corcoran, that it was not a tradition of the Playford days.

Now, suddenly, the present Opposition, the upholders of the great canons of tradition of Westminster, jump up in Parliament, after all the fooling around that they have been doing while the House has been in session over the past two days, demanding out of the blue without proper notice that the Government accept a censure on it.

I want all members to understand the perspective of that. This not the first time that this has happened. It is so hard for the Opposition to get its act together, to get their motions drawn up and tactics organised that it—

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: There have been other occasions when the Opposition has attempted to move a censure motion, and on at least two or maybe three occasions the Government has allowed the Opposition to do so and for it to go ahead with it, which has caused some embarrassment to members opposite. The Government is not afraid of debate, but we are interested in Parliamentary traditions. We know the tradition and we observe it. Such an argument was used against the previous Opposition time and time again by the man who is sitting next to the Leader of the Opposition. I should like to see some of his speeches brought up and hear them recounted. Further, the former Premier told us that we could not move such a motion, because we had not given the requisite two hours' notice. On three occasions the Opposition has had the opportunity to give the Government the requisite notice, but on each occasion it has failed to do so.

What is the Leader's excuse? It is hardly a reason for moving this suspension: it is so that it can give the Deputy Premier the opportunity to give his defence. The Opposition maintains that he has refused to answer questions and that he will be given an opportunity to respond, because the accusations should not be taken lightly. Let me point out that those scurrilous accusations have not been taken lightly from the first day that they were made. They have been answered specifically and appropriately in the public forum and in this House.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: We assembled for the opening of this session (a fortnight too late, according to the Leader, in regard to having this matter aired) waiting and expecting to have that opportunity to respond in debating the matter. Was it offered? Did the Opposition seek to do so? On the contrary, members of the Opposition chose to ask a series of questions, more questions, more twisting and turning of words, and quite appropriately the Deputy Premier said on that occasion, 'I am prepared to debate this issue with you, and will do so, but I will not answer questions off-the-cuff that you have obviously worked out, devised, and prepared to try and trip me up. I will give considered replies.' At the first available opportunity those considered replies were given.

They were in the hands of the Opposition yesterday. Did it move a censure then, did it give notice of the debate? Not at all, because those answers covered precisely and accurately all the matters raised and, in so doing, completely explained the position of the Deputy Premier. He went further, because by then (this is the second day of sitting, a fortnight too late, and two days of opportunity in Parliament had passed) there was still no censure, still none of the threatened huffings and puffings that reminded us very much of the Leader's predecessor.

The Deputy Premier decided to take the initiative, and as well as tabling full answers to every one of those questions, he also gave a full Ministerial statement supplementing it. So, the Deputy Premier has put his case. He has answered the Leader's questions. He has also answered all those down that front bench who have exchanged their questions and worked out what they were going to ask. Every single one has been answered, and the statement has been made. I could almost concede that, having missed the opportunity for the first two days of the sitting not to have debated the issue, the Opposition would be feeling a little embarrassed and uneasy. They have a dilemma.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Do they abandon the issue? Are they going to get any more headlines out of it? What is the new angle? It has obviously caused a lot of the burning of the midnight oil on the second floor. So what have they come up with? At 12 o'clock today the Opposition could have done what every Opposition before it has done, and presented to this Government the motion that the Leader has moved, and we would have accepted it and we would have had our debate: they chose not to.

The Opposition could not find an urgency motion to put up at 1 o'clock, and I can understand that: they would be too embarrassed to call it 'urgency' in the light of the nonsense that has been going on over the past few days. In fact, an urgency motion would be out of the question. So what happens? We assemble at Question Time, the Leader rises to his feet and he has another question. I do not know whether he misread his typing but it made absolutely no sense. I would be interested to see how it is recorded in *Hansard*, because it was quite unintelligible.

As he has done before, the Deputy Premier said, 'I will give a considered reply to that question.' I suggest there was nothing in that question that was new, nothing different from what had been said. But he asked this question, he sat down and then, on the pretext that the question had not been answered and that the Deputy Premier had not had an opportunity to debate it, the Leader expansively said, 'I will move suspension so the matter can be debated'. What sort of a farce is this? The higher traditions of the Westminster system are being invoked against us. It is a lot of nonsense; it is headline seeking; it is stirring, and it is an

attempt to try to besmirch the reputation of a man who is doing an important and vital job. We are not going to run away from this debate despite the unprecedented way in which it is moved: we accept the motion, and we will state our case.

The SPEAKER: Order! No further speakers are permitted in the debate.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the time allotted for this motion be three hours or until 5.30 p.m.

Motion carried.

The SPEAKER: Before the Leader commences, it would be appropriate if the Chair was supplied with a copy of the motion.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That this House no longer has confidence in the Deputy Premier because he has deliberately, consistently and blatantly misled this Parliament and therefore should resign. If he fails to do so this House calls on the Premier to dismiss him.

This motion is about a series of deliberate untruths told in this Parliament by the Deputy Premier—not one untruth but a series of untruths. The Deputy Premier told this House untruths because he wanted us to believe simply that he had been approached by a bumbling Russian spy who had suddenly and spontaneously appeared on the Deputy Premier's doorstep to offer him a trip to Russia.

The Deputy Premier tried to make a joke of the whole thing in his answer to this House. He tried to conceal the real story, the fact that the Deputy Premier was seriously interested in visiting Russia, that he had asked Mr David Combe to use his contacts at the Soviet Embassy to arrange the visit, and that as a result Mr Combe had attempted to arrange a meeting between the Deputy Premier and Mr Ivanov one day before Mr Ivanov's expulsion as a KGB agent. The Deputy Premier tried to conceal these facts after Mr Ivanov had been exposed as a KGB agent and after the Federal Government had announced that Mr Combe was or might have been compromised in his dealings with Mr Ivanov.

The Deputy Premier was clearly embarrassed by the fact that a KGB agent wanted to invite him to Russia. He was also concerned about the involvement of Mr Combe (a very close friend) in the expulsion of Mr Ivanov. So, the Deputy Premier misled this House when the Opposition attempted to obtain information about his knowledge of the association between Mr Combe and Mr Ivanov and how that association may have been used to arrange the Deputy Premier's visit to Russia.

Now that he has been found out, the Deputy Premier, after first trying to tough it out, wants this House to accept his excuse that he forgot some things. That is simply not good enough. Yesterday, he attempted to excuse his misleading of this House on a defective memory, but did he apologise for that? Of course he did not. All we got was arrogance, abuse and further pathetic answers. They were given after three weeks of mounting public criticism of the Deputy Premier and the Premier over their handling of this matter.

The Deputy Premier tried to maintain at first that he had not misled anyone over anything. Then the Premier admitted that his Deputy had fudged answers and had given incomplete and ambiguous information to Parliament. Yesterday, the story changed again. The Deputy pleaded a less than precise recollection of a phone call with Mr David Combe; confusion over his state of knowledge at a particular time; and an inability to recall facts; and he repeated his contention that in answer to one question he had been responding to

an implication rather than to the question itself. Those excuses simply are not good enough.

Let me say that the Opposition does not expect the Deputy Premier to recall every word of every telephone conversation he has, but we do expect, and rightly so, that he should inform this House about pertinent facts when he is asked about them and when he is asked about them not once but on three distinct occasions. This he completely failed to do. The answers given yesterday did nothing to explain or excuse this misleading of Parliament by the Deputy Premier. They only confirmed his culpability, and they also demonstrated that on other pertinent facts the Deputy Premier gave answers to this House which were not true.

I refer, for example, to his admission yesterday that he had first raised with Mr Combe his interest in visiting Russia, whereas in his answer to Parliament on 13 May the Deputy Premier said it was Mr Combe who had initiated discussions on the matter. While the Deputy Premier told Parliament on 13 May that he did not know what Mr Ivanov wanted to offer him, the answers yesterday made clear that he had known since 25 April that Mr Ivanov wanted to invite him to Russia, wanted to invite him 'as an honoured guest' of the Soviet Union.

There are other, much more serious and fundamental, untruths which I will deal with in some detail. In setting out the case against the Deputy Premier, let me make clear that it is not about whether it was proper for him to want a free trip to Russia; it is not about whether it is right to tap telephones in the interests of national security; it is not about whether the civil liberties of Mr David Combe have been improperly infringed. The case which must be answered is on the public record in the words which show that the Deputy Premier misled this House on 13 May and 2 June this year.

In his lame attempts so far to defend his Deputy, the Premier has emphasised his Deputy's 13 years of service to this House and his even longer membership of and service to the Australian Labor Party. That is not in doubt; nor is it relevant. The same was said of Jim Cairns when he was sacked in 1975 by a Labor Prime Minister because he misled the House of Representatives once, in reply to one question out of the many he had answered as a senior Minister. The same was said of the late Mr Rex Connor whose service to the A.L.P. was equally selfless but whose resignation was accepted by the same Labor Prime Minister in 1975 for the same reason Dr Cairns was sacked—one indiscretion in a lifetime of Parliamentary service.

The same can be said of the Federal member for Port Adelaide (Mr Young), whose resignation was accepted by the present Labor Prime Minister because, again, Parliament had been misled through his actions. As these precedents show, the responsibilities on members of any Parliament are heavy. The consequences of failing in those responsibilities, even once, even for a moment, are severe, but there can be no other way.

Cairns, Connor and Young were stalwarts of the Labor movement, but that did not allow any of them to evade the consequences of Parliament's being misled through their actions. Nor can the Deputy Premier, in this House, escape those consequences. Ministerial accountability and responsibility to this Parliament must be paramount. If Dr Cairns, Mr Connor and Mr Young were guilty, the Deputy Premier stands guilty many times over, because he misled Parliament on two separate days, telling a series of clear and deliberate untruths.

I have detailed the gravamen of the case against the Deputy Premier in two letters to the Premier. I did not seek to hide behind Parliamentary privilege to accuse the Deputy Premier of telling untruths in this House. I have stated my

case publicly, openly and frankly, and I have been and remain prepared to put up publicly.

The Deputy Premier's culpability and complicity in this matter began on 25 April in his telephone conversation with Mr Combe. The Deputy Premier had contacted Combe because Ivanov was using Combe's name in revealing that he had attempted to invite the Deputy Premier to Russia. Combe explained that he had told Ivanov that the Deputy Premier was interested in visiting Russia and had twice attempted, through the Deputy Premier's office on 21 April, to arrange a meeting between Ivanov and the Deputy Premier.

The key point to understand here is that Mr Combe told the Deputy Premier that it was he (Combe) who had tried to set up the meeting on 21 April. But when it came to deciding how much the Deputy Premier should tell the *Advertiser*, Combe wanted his name to be kept out of it. Combe suggested that all the Deputy Premier needed to say to the *Advertiser* was that he understood Ivanov had contacted his office. Combe suggested this without having any knowledge of whether Ivanov had in fact contacted the Deputy Premier's office. Proof of Mr Combe's lack of knowledge in this respect is contained in Mr Combe's statement released last week by the royal commission.

Why was it necessary to lay this false trail away from Combe's involvement? It was because Combe also knew his association with Ivanov could damage his business and that he felt, to quote his words, 'very uneasy about the whole situation'. So, Combe suggested a concocted story to keep his name out of it, and the Deputy Premier became a willing participant in laying this false trail. Mateship is a fine ideal, but accepted behaviour in the shearing shed or the bar can be no substitute for required behaviour in Parliament. One cannot deliberately mislead in this place—even for one's best mate.

I turn now to the subsequent events which have exposed the Deputy Premier's breach of the fundamental principle of Ministerial accountability and responsibility. On 11 May, the Prime Minister told Federal Parliament of an association between Ivanov and Combe in which Combe was or appeared to have been compromised. No more damaging accusation is imaginable against a man in Combe's professional position.

The Prime Minister's astounding announcement immediately raised questions about statements by the Deputy Premier, reported in the *Advertiser* on 26 April, that a Labor Party contact may have passed on to Ivanov the Deputy Premier's interest in visiting Russia and that, as a result, Ivanov had wanted to issue an invitation to the Deputy Premier. Because the Prime Minister's announcement about Combe raised so many unanswered questions and because, on the face of it, the Deputy Premier may have been involved. The Opposition asked two questions in this House on 13 May.

The first question asked whether the Deputy Premier (or an agent acting on his behalf and with his knowledge) had made contact with Combe about a visit to Russia and, if so, what was Mr Combe's response. The truthful answer would have been that, yes, the Deputy Premier did tell Combe he was interested in visiting Russia and that as a result Combe had contacted Ivanov about making the necessary arrangements. But, the Deputy Premier attempted to make light of the matter in his reply and, in doing so, he misled this House. At no stage did he mention Combe's involvement. He said only that Ivanov had attempted to contact his office 'in a quite a sloppy manner' and 'without any prior attempt being made to made an appointment'. The Deputy Premier repeated this untruth yesterday.

But, the facts revealed in the transcript of the telephone discussion between the Deputy Premier and Combe on 25

April clearly exposed this answer on 13 May as completely misleading by deliberate omission in that it was silent about Combe's involvement even though the Deputy Premier had been specifically questioned about it. No wonder the Deputy Premier ignored this answer completely in his Ministerial statement yesterday! As for the Deputy Premier's attempt to dismiss the whole thing as inconsequential and a sloppy piece of work by Ivanov, the telephone discussion with Combe on 25 April again reveals otherwise. In that discussion, the Deputy Premier did not question or criticise Combe's approaches to his office on Ivanov's behalf. He even maintained his interest in going to Russia after he knew of Ivanov's attempted approach to his office. Far from referring in critical terms to Ivanov, the Deputy Premier said to Combe on 25 April, 'I don't want to knock the idea of the trip.' So much for Ivanov's sloppy work! This was, in fact, a serious and determined attempt initiated by Combe to obtain the trip to Russia after the Deputy Premier had expressed his desire to go there.

But, by this time Mr Ivanov had been exposed and expelled, and Combe had been implicated, so let him be seen as a bumbling spy to cover up for the Deputy Premier as well as for Combe.

Ms Lenehan interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: I do not think the member for Mawson has any pedestal on which to stand in this place. That was clearly the Deputy Premier's motivation when he embellished in his answer the original story concocted on 25 April by Mr Combe.

The second Opposition question to the Deputy Premier on 13 May sought to press the matter of any involvement by Combe. But the Deputy Premier told the House:

I am not sure whether or not he [referring to Mr Combe] then went back to the Embassy, and I do not know whether or not he positively spoke to Mr Ivanov.

He repeated that contention two sentences later when he said, 'Maybe he spoke personally to Mr Ivanov—I do not know'. Of course the Deputy Premier knew! He had known since 25 April that, three weeks before, Combe had spoken to Ivanov about the matter—not once but on three occasions. The transcript of their telephone discussion on 25 April quotes Combe as follows:

I said to him [Ivanov] that I had seen you in Adelaide and that you were interested in visiting the Soviet Union.

Combe also told the Deputy Premier that he had spoken to Ivanov again on 16 April and 21 April about the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier's inept statement yesterday pleaded that he had less than a precise recollection. He is prepared to repeat the untruths despite the telephone call transcript which reveals that he and Combe concocted the story. The tapes are not hearsay.

We believed by this time that the Deputy Premier may well have concealed pertinent facts in his answers on 13 May and in his comments in the *Advertiser* on 26 April in view of what was by then being alleged about Combe's association with Ivanov. On 2 June, therefore, the member for Davenport asked this question:

Before the Deputy Premier made a statement to the *Advertiser* relating to an approach to him by the expelled Soviet diplomat, Valeriy Ivanov, was he given information associating Mr David Combe with Mr Ivanov?

The member for Davenport repeated the point of his question at the end of his explanation, when he said:

Therefore, I ask the Deputy Premier whether it is the case that he was aware of Mr Combe's involvement in this matter when he made his statement to the *Advertiser*, which was reported on 26 April and, if so, who was that informant?

It was a clear question, capable of a simple answer. The only truthful answer was 'yes,' and that the Deputy Premier's informant had been Mr Combe himself. However, amidst the bluff and bluster of the Deputy Premier's reply are these

words—'The answer is 'Absolutely no', whereas the ASIO transcript shows Mr Combe clearly telling him in their telephone conversation of his association with Mr Ivanov. Mr Combe even used the word 'association' in that conversation, and said that he was implicated.

I have exposed not one but a series of untruths by the Deputy Premier. I have called them something else outside this House, but Standing Orders do not permit me to give that description here. I could settle instead for fudge, I suppose, but that means dishonest and to fake, and you, Mr Speaker, might object to that as well. Even the Premier is trying to retreat from that word. There is a limit to the excuses.

Let me repeat those untruths in summary form. First, on 2 June the Deputy Premier told this House that, at the time he spoke to the *Advertiser* on 25 April about the expelled Russian spy, Mr Ivanov, he was not aware of any association between Mr Combe and Mr Ivanov, whereas Mr Combe had already made the Deputy Premier well aware of this association and the fact that it could have serious implications for Mr Combe.

Secondly, on 13 May the Deputy Premier told this House that he did not know if Mr Combe had passed on to Mr Ivanov his interest in visiting Russia, whereas the Deputy Premier had known since 25 April that Mr Combe had done so, and had in fact discussed the matter with Mr Ivanov on three separate occasions.

Thirdly, on 13 May, the Deputy Premier in this House accused Mr Ivanov of a 'sloppy' attempt to meet him on 21 April, whereas the Deputy Premier had known since 25 April that Mr Combe had made two attempts to set up the meeting. This untruth was designed to hide the serious effort made by Mr Combe to arrange a visit to Russia for the Deputy Premier after the Deputy Premier had expressed a clear wish to go there.

In relation to this last point, I have also raised the lack of evidence of any telephone call by Mr Ivanov to the Deputy Premier's office. I asked the Deputy Premier a fortnight ago to produce proof of the call. Yesterday the Deputy Premier said that Mr Ivanov had spoken to two people in his office on 21 April.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope that all honourable members recall my warning at the beginning of this debate.

Mr OLSEN: Last Thursday, the Premier told this House that there had been two calls to the Deputy Premier's office about this matter, whereas yesterday we were told there had been three calls, although only two are recorded. Despite the contradictions, the Deputy Premier has named the two people in his office who spoke to Mr Ivanov. Therefore, I accept their word, although the Government has not produced the official (I repeat 'official') record about the calls, which the Premier says does exist.

At the same time, the Deputy Premier's evidence on this point in no way minimises or overcomes the fact that a series of statements he made to this House were misleading. What emerges from an analysis of all the Deputy Premier's statements is a deliberate, persistent and barefaced attempt by the Deputy Premier to mislead this House. There can be no other explanation. The Deputy Premier cannot put his untruths down to a momentary lapse of memory as he attempted to do yesterday, because they were uttered on two separate days in this House. They were in fact premeditated. The Deputy Premier had ulterior motives from the moment he spoke to Mr Combe on the telephone on 25 April. What were they?

Clearly, the Deputy Premier wanted to distance himself as much as possible from any embarrassment as a result of the revelation that a man, subsequently exposed as a Soviet spy, was seeking to invite him to Russia. At the same time,

it was desirable to cover up Mr Combe's association with Mr Ivanov because the Deputy Premier had been made well aware that it could have serious implications for Mr Combe, and so two old mates concocted a story so that the expelled Ivanov would take any rap and they would be spared as much embarrassment as possible.

The point is that the Opposition asked the Deputy Premier three specific questions relating to any knowledge he may have had at relevant times about contact between Mr Combe and Mr Ivanov. Had the Deputy Premier answered the first question honestly, that would have been the end of the matter. But in his answers to this House, the Deputy Premier refused to admit that there had been any contact between Combe and Ivanov, even though he well knew the following facts: that Mr Combe had spoken to Mr Ivanov in Canberra about the Deputy Premier's interest in visiting Russia; that they had subsequently spoken twice more about the matter, at a conference in Melbourne on 16 April and on the telephone on 21 April; and that as a result of this last telephone call, Mr Combe had tried twice on 21 April to arrange a meeting between Mr Ivanov and the Deputy Premier.

These facts were very material to the information that the Opposition was seeking, facts that the Deputy Premier was duty bound to give to the House in answer to specific questions. However, not only did he conceal them, but he misled this House about what he did know about Combe's association with Ivanov. I remind honourable members that I am not the only one to have come to that conclusion. The *Advertiser* editorial on 26 July stated:

... no reading of *Hansard* can conceal the fact that Mr Wright failed to answer truthfully the question put to him. He should therefore have resigned from the Cabinet. Because he did not he should have been asked by the Premier to do so.

In the same paper on 21 July, Matt Abraham said:

The transcripts of the 'phone call on 25 April show Mr Combe told Mr Wright he (Combe) was implicated in the affair. On those facts, Jack Wright misled the South Australian Parliament.

The *News* editorial on 22 July stated:

At the end of another amazing week in Australian politics, a vital principle has been diluted to the point of being meaningless. This is the principle that Ministers who mislead Parliament must resign. The Acting Premier, Mr Wright, has defied it.

The *Melbourne Age*, in a comment on 20 July, referring to the actions of the Deputy Premier, stated:

Mr Wright was clearly concerned when he talked with Mr Combe on 25 April that he might suffer severe embarrassment over the disclosure that Mr Ivanov might have helped him to visit the Soviet Union.

Ric Jay on the channel 7 news service on 20 July stated:

But unfortunately for him that question remains in black and white. Was he aware of Mr Combe's involvement in this matter? According to those ASIO transcripts released yesterday he was aware that Mr Combe was somehow implicated. So Mr Wright still has not, at least to the satisfaction of most of the Adelaide media, given a complete and proper denial of the allegations against him.

Maxine McKew on *Nationwide* of 20 July stated:

There is at the very least a very big question mark as to whether Mr Wright did give a full answer regarding his knowledge of the Combe-Ivanov affair. It's difficult to see how the Acting Premier is conforming to the conventions of the Westminster system.

Finally, the Premier himself on the Phillip Satchell show last Tuesday, said:

Jack Wright had a press conference. I've seen a replay of that and it was an amazingly appalling performance really.

They are words of the Premier. I believe that there is also wide community acceptance of the view that the Deputy Premier has, to quote the Premier's own judgment, performed appallingly after being found out. Many people correctly believe that the second most senior Minister in this Parliament has been guilty of violating the most impor-

tant principle of the Westminster style of Government through Parliament. It is in the Deputy Premier's hands, or, if he refuses, the Premier's, to remove this blot on the community's perception of this Parliament.

The Premier's reply must canvass this central issue in a more adequate way than he has done in his public comments so far about the Deputy Premier's position. I have no doubt the Premier will say that there are other issues the Parliament should be discussing. There are such things as spiralling unemployment and inflation; the Government's dishonesty on taxes and charges (although I suggest that it would not want to discuss that too much); the situation at Yatala gaol; and the incompetence of the Minister of Fisheries. But this issue must be cleared up first because, as I have emphasised, it goes to the heart of how the Parliament must function and the manner in which it considers all issues.

In his defence of the Deputy Premier so far, the Premier first said that a Minister, in answering questions, can imply and can fudge. If we have had untruths for convenience in the past, how can we be sure in this Parliament that we will not have more untruths in the vital Budget session for convenience? That is the fundamental and basic principle at stake. When it was pointed out to the Premier that to fudge meant to be dishonest and to fake, he said that was not what he had meant. So, instead, he said the Deputy Premier had given incomplete and ambiguous information.

I remind the Premier that, on the charge of having given incomplete information to Parliament, Mr Dunstan sacked a Police Commissioner and today's Premier fully supported that action. Justifying his action in this House Mr Dunstan said:

The Executive Government of the State is responsible to Parliament and to the people. It must account for its actions and account for them fully and effectively. Should any member of a Government of this State deny this accountability, mislead this House, the penalty is clear: resignation or dismissal from office.

I suggest to the Premier that the fact and the proof that his Deputy has misled Parliament are far more clear cut than the wrongdoing alleged by him, amongst others, against Mr Salisbury. If Mr Salisbury had to go, according to the canons of accountability defined by Mr Dunstan, then so must the Deputy Premier.

The Labor Party's double standards and hypocrisy on this whole question of accountability and responsibility to Parliament defy explanation. They have been nothing short of scandalous in recent weeks. The Premier suggests that there are degrees of untruth, even if they are premeditated or told persistently. Apparently, there are small untruths and big untruths. But if a senior Minister has clearly told a series of untruths to cover up his own embarrassment and to hide the involvement of a friend in a potentially most difficult situation, is that trivial or of no concern to this House? If he has done it on one issue, how can we be sure he will not offend in this same way again? I suggest such behaviour must be held to be completely unacceptable by every member of this House, no matter what the untruths are told about.

Let us further examine the context of the untruths. They relate to the Deputy Premier's knowledge of an association between two people which is at present the subject of a Royal Commission called by a Labor Prime Minister. One of the commission's terms of reference is to inquire into all the circumstances surrounding Ivanov's expulsion, and the involvement of Combe in those circumstances. The Prime Minister has given some very alarming evidence about those circumstances. I suggest that when the Deputy Premier's behaviour is considered in this context, his untruths must be seen as very deliberate. But all the Deputy Premier said when first faced with the irrefutable evidence of his wrongdoing was that enough A.L.P. blood had already been spilt in South Australia over this matter. It is the old Labor Party

maxim—never complain, never explain, never resign—jackboot contempt of Parliament. Their view is that the Party must come before this Parliament and the people, so the Deputy Premier will remain in office while the Parliamentary rule book burns. It is obvious that the Deputy Premier is the powerbroker and the Premier is but the puppet.

Concealment and containment rather than confession and contrition are the Party's and the Premier's criteria to tough this one out. There can be no doubt that the Deputy Premier has flouted the principle of Ministerial accountability and responsibility to this House—a principle which should and must remain uppermost in the minds of all Ministers when they answer questions in this House. For that, the Deputy Premier should no longer be on the front bench opposite, and the Premier himself is on the verge of culpability as well. There is quite obviously further information to come forward as a result of this Royal Commission and I suggest that the Premier consider this fact very carefully in his reply. We sent Ivanov back to a country where the Government is not accountable to the people. Australians will not tolerate such behaviour in their own country, yet the Premier will be setting off in that direction if he does not support this motion.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT (Deputy Premier): I have said before, outside this House, that I have not lied nor misled the House in answers to questions on my conversation with David Combe and my knowledge of his dealings with Valeriy Ivanov. Now, for the benefit of all members, and in order that it can be entered in the Parliamentary record, I repeat: I have not lied, nor have I misled the House in giving my answers to questions regarding my conversation with David Combe or my knowledge of his dealings with Ivanov.

I gave honest answers to this House that were not designed to mislead or misrepresent the facts, and the House knows that. My answers were given under difficult circumstances in the face of repeated interjections by members opposite. The questions asked by the Opposition were accompanied by long rambling explanations that put a slant on the questions, to which I not unnaturally responded. In attacking me, the Leader of the Opposition has selectively quoted from my answers, and conveniently and dishonestly ignored the context within which the answers were given. The result was a total misrepresentation of the answers I gave to this House. By taking my comments out of context and making totally unfounded assumptions, the Leader of the Opposition has twisted the facts almost beyond recognition.

The Leader of the Opposition and his Party have turned the issue into a witch hunt which they are now pursuing to the point of obsession. It is a crying shame that the Opposition does not put the same time and effort into making a constructive contribution to this State Parliament on the serious economic problems that face this State. Whilst the sight of the Opposition wasting time and energy over issues of no substance does not disturb me greatly, since that is all they are capable of, the attack on my integrity built up over 30 years of public life does. I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition will be able to bear the same qualifications as I do in 30 years time. In view of the Leader's distortions of the facts, I wish to set the record completely and utterly straight. The background to this whole affair is as follows: the first I heard of this matter of Combe and Ivanov was on 25 April, when I received a telephone call at my home from my press secretary. The previous two weeks I had been off work sick, and had been at home.

On the night of 25 April, a reporter from the Adelaide *Advertiser* contacted my press secretary asking for a comment on a report that a Soviet Diplomat, Valeriy Ivanov, who was to be deported from Australia, had said that one of the

reasons he visited Adelaide the previous week had been to arrange a trip for me to the U.S.S.R. As I have previously told the House, the principal reason for his visit was to address a Liberal Party function, and that has not been denied by the Liberal Party.

My press secretary telephoned me at home to pass on the reporter's request for a comment. As I had been away and as it was now pertinent information, he also told me that Ivanov had made a call to my office the previous week while he was in Adelaide, and while I was home sick. That is the first time I learnt that Ivanov had made a phone call to the office: just remember that, because it is pertinent to the whole argument. I repeat that 25 April was the first time I heard that Ivanov had tried to contact me at all.

Quite frankly, I was a little puzzled as to why he should have tried to make contact, until I recalled a conversation I had two months previously with a colleague of long standing, David Combe, during which we discussed the possibility of my being able to visit the Soviet Union. Before replying to the *Advertiser* query, I telephoned Combe at his home in Canberra to see if he could shed some light on the issue. He was unavailable, but later returned my call. That conversation clarified some of the questions surrounding Ivanov's contact with my office. I later spoke to the *Advertiser* reporter and confirmed that Ivanov had spoken to someone in my office the previous week.

I told the reporter that Ivanov had apparently wanted to issue some sort of invitation to me to visit the Soviet Union. I told him that a Labor Party contact had raised the matter with the Soviet Embassy because previously I had shown some interest in visiting the Soviet Union. I want to make absolutely clear that the only reason I made any statement to the *Advertiser* was in response to the *Advertiser's* request. I did not make it, as has been suggested, to save myself from embarrassment. I was, in fact, contacted by the *Advertiser*. Remember that also, because allegations have been made about that particular point.

Now we move on to 13 May when I was asked two questions in the House by the Opposition. In answering the questions put to me on 13 May, I told the House that Ivanov rang my office while I was on sick leave. When asked by the member for Davenport the question 'Who was the Labor Party contact referred to in the *Advertiser* article? In particular, was it David Combe?' I answered quite plainly in the course of my reply that it was David Combe. No attempt was made to cover up in answering either question. It is no good the Opposition trying to make out that I did try to cover up. That is in *Hansard* for all to see.

Once again, in an effort to be as open and frank as I could about the question, I even offered to the House the details of my conversation with David Combe in February this year during which the subject of visiting the Soviet Union arose. I did not have to volunteer that information. If I was trying to mislead Parliament, or tell lies, as the Opposition is suggesting, I would hardly have volunteered information I need not have. I could have been silent but I told the House, with my usual frankness. According to the Leader of the Opposition, in my answers to those questions on 13 May I misled Parliament on a number of points. I shall deal with them one by one.

First, the Leader of the Opposition alleged I lied when I said Ivanov contacted my office on the day he was in Adelaide, 21 April. The Leader of the Opposition may regret having made that statement publicly. What is the evidence for this? The evidence on which the Leader of the Opposition relies is that there is no mention of a telephone call from Ivanov in the transcript of a taped telephone conversation between David Combe and me, therefore he assumes the call from Ivanov was never made. What sort of logic is that?

I remind the Leader that there is no record in the transcripts released of the taped telephone conversation with David Combe that Norwood won their football match that weekend, yet its absence from that conversation does not make it any less true, because that is what happened that particular weekend. The fact is that Ivanov did phone my office that day: two of the staff in my office spoke to him and Ivanov explained to the clerical officer who initially spoke with him that he wanted to see me. He was then transferred to my appointments secretary, who informed him of my absence. She made a note of his call, dated it, and retained it to pass on to me when I returned to work. I now table that note and statutory declarations from the staff members affirming that Ivanov telephoned my office. Lie No. 1 disputed completely and lie No. 1 of the Leader of the Opposition holds up strongly, because that was the allegation. Does someone want this?

Mr Becker: No.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Of course you don't want it, because it puts you in a very bad position.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Hanson. I hope the honourable member heard me. The honourable Deputy Premier.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The note shows Combe rang my office on 21 April to alert my staff to expect a call from Ivanov, and confirms that Ivanov subsequently made a call on the same day, and one of the statutory declarations shows that Combe's office then checked back to see if the contact by Ivanov had been made. That, according to the Leader of the Opposition, is the first example of my misleading Parliament. I have produced evidence to show it is baseless, false, and untrue. I am then alleged to have deceived Parliament by saying Ivanov had not made any prior attempt to make an appointment to see me before he arrived in Adelaide.

It is true that I had spoken to Combe in February of the possibility of visiting the Soviet Union, as has been already stated. There has been no denial about that: I have admitted it clearly publicly and also in Parliament. However, there had been no direct contact between Combe and me on that or any other matter from that day until 25 April when I was approached by the *Advertiser*. Ivanov had made no attempt to contact me prior to arriving in Adelaide. Ivanov telephoned my office the very day he wanted to see me, so by no-one's definition can that possibly be construed as a prior attempt to make an appointment.

As I stated in this House on 13 May: 'Nevertheless, he rang my office. I make no denial about that. It was one of the weeks I was unfortunate enough to be sick. He (Ivanov) said he had no prior appointment.' There was no deception in that statement, and the allegation is totally unfounded.

It has also been alleged that I misled Parliament by saying that ringing the Deputy Premier on the day that one wished to see him was a sloppy way of doing business. I still maintain that for a diplomat to make no prior arrangement to see the Deputy Premier of a State and then just ring up and expect to waltz in and see him at a few hours notice is sloppy indeed, especially when that Deputy Premier had been on sick leave for nearly two weeks and his illness had been public knowledge for that time. The Opposition Leader may say that that is not sloppy: I am glad I do not do too much business with him.

I allegedly also misled Parliament on 13 May when I had problems recalling whether Combe had spoken directly to Ivanov about the possibility of my visiting the Soviet Union or whether he had spoken to someone in the Soviet Embassy who passed it on to Ivanov. My expression of uncertainty on this obscure point amounts to a lie, according to the Leader of the Opposition. What utter nonsense! At page 1618 of *Hansard* I am reported as saying:

I am not sure whether or not he (Combe) then went back to the Embassy and I do not know whether or not he positively spoke to Ivanov. However, it is obvious he spoke to someone in the Embassy who passed on the information to Mr Ivanov. Maybe he spoke personally to Mr Ivanov. I do not know, but he did pass on that information.

There is no denial in that statement at all: indeed, nothing in the statement could be construed as a denial. The Opposition has simply lifted the words 'I do not know' out of their context, ignored the other 60 or so words in that passage, and said on the basis of that selective quotation that I was guilty of a direct lie. It should be remembered that I was speaking two and a half weeks after the telephone conversation with Combe. When speaking in this House, I had to recall a long conversation with Combe. I simply could not remember every detail and, in particular, whether Combe had said he had spoken direct to Ivanov or to the Soviet Embassy. I was honest enough to admit my memory on this point was uncertain. I said that maybe Combe had spoken personally to Mr Ivanov. I was emphatic that Combe had passed information to someone at the Embassy and I said that the contact could have been Ivanov but I was not sure of this.

I also had in mind when I answered this question the typed note from my secretary, which I received after, not before, my return from sick leave. I have just tabled that note. In part it said:

When he (Combe) got back to Canberra he spoke to the Embassy, and the message came back 'You would be welcomed to the Soviet Union as an honoured guest.'

Small wonder that I was uncertain, 2½ weeks after my telephone conversation with Combe, as to whether or not Combe had spoken directly to Ivanov or whether he had passed the information on to someone in the Embassy who had then arranged for Ivanov to contact my office. In any case, what motive would I have had to deliberately avoid the point. After all, Ivanov's association with Combe had already been public knowledge for two days. No-one has ever tried to attribute a notice to me. I confessed my genuine uncertainty. Since when did that amount to a direct lie? Who in this House can directly recall what was said in a telephone call 2½ weeks ago? No-one can recall—not even the great Leader of the Opposition!

The Leader of the Opposition also alleges that I misled Parliament by concocting with Combe a story to repeat to the *Advertiser* reporter that Ivanov had contacted my office, but there was no concoction or attempt to mislead. As I have already proved, Ivanov did contact my office, and that statement makes a complete fool of the Leader of the Opposition.

I refer now to the questions asked and the answers given in this House on 2 June, in respect of which the Opposition has again distorted the record. However, before examining what happened in the House on that day, I must tell members of some dealings I had with one of Adelaide's news readers. I imagine that it was the same person with whom the member for Davenport had dealings. Sometime between 13 May and the date of the next question on this matter, my press secretary received a request from a reporter from the Australian Broadcasting Commission programme *Nationwide* asking me to confirm or deny that I had been informed of David Combe's involvement in the Ivanov matter by a senior member of the Federal A.L.P.

The same reporter also asked a similar question of the then Special Minister of State (Mick Young): whether he had passed on information to me about the matter. The reporter later admitted to one of my staff that his question to me had been aimed at determining a link between me and the Special Minister of State on this matter. On 2 June, the member for Davenport asked me a two-part question that had similar implications: that is where the member for

Davenport got his information: if he did not get it from there, he got it from ASIO. The first part of the honourable member's question, recorded at page 1868 of *Hansard*, is as follows:

Before the Deputy Premier made a statement to the *Advertiser* relating to an approach to him by the expelled Soviet diplomat Valeriy Ivanov, was he given information associating David Combe with Mr Ivanov?

The second part of the question was, if I had been given that information, who was my informant. Between asking the first and the second parts of his question the honourable member explained the nature of his interest in the matter. Again, quoting from *Hansard* at page 1868:

I have been reliably informed that the Deputy Premier made his statement to the *Advertiser* on this matter after being aware that Mr Combe's involvement in this matter was to be made public and that it could embarrass the Deputy Premier—

what a lot of rubbish!

Honourable members will be aware that a Federal Minister, Mr Young from this State, has already been reprimanded by the Prime Minister for revealing the fact that Mr Ivanov was to be exposed some hours before the Federal Government made the announcement of the expulsion.

First, I remind members that I made that statement to the *Advertiser* in response to a question from one of its reporters: it was not done to stave off embarrassment. I had been asked by the reporter for a comment. However, to get back to the honourable member's question: the clear implication was that Mick Young had somehow tipped me off prior to my making a statement to the *Advertiser*. I accordingly responded to the questions as amplified by the member for Davenport. After mentioning that an A.B.C. reporter had tried to establish a link between me and Mick Young in this matter, I said, as recorded at page 1868 of *Hansard*:

This story is getting around that Mick Young advised me about something. Let me say to the member for Davenport that this information is totally unreliable. It is not reliable at all as he described it. I would suggest that in future he should check his information, because I told the A.B.C. reporter where to go and what to do, and he has not come back.

From that quote it can be seen that I was clearly addressing myself to the central point of Mr Brown's question: namely, whether there was a link between Mick Young and me. In fact, my use of the word 'unreliable' was a clear rebuttle of the honourable member's assertion that his information, which he subsequently linked to Mick Young, was reliable. Not satisfied with my answer, the member for Davenport, in his usual aggressive way, then said, 'Answer the question.' My immediate response was as follows:

I have answered the question. The answer is 'Absolutely no'.

I again emphasise that the only answer I have previously given related to Mick Young's involvement and it is therefore patently clear that the words 'absolutely no' referred to Mick Young's involvement, and that cannot be denied by any honest person. Why otherwise would I then have gone on to say:

The same A.B.C. reporter who tried to pursue me with this stupid line also rang Mick Young, who in that very good Australian vernacular told him what to do as well, and I tell the member for Davenport to do exactly the same thing.

The whole answer was directed at the implication that Mick Young had tipped me off about something. One only has to read it to understand it, unless one wants to misconstrue it. The member for Davenport can laugh as much as he likes. That is the truth, he knows it is the truth and he admitted it in the press.

Why on earth would I yet again mention Mick Young's name unless I was rebutting the allegation I have already mentioned twice: that Mick Young had somehow informed me of some thing he should not have? What the Opposition has done is take two separate passages from *Hansard* and joined them together to provide the answer it wanted, rather

than place the quotations in their proper context and end up with an answer which did not suit its purpose. The Opposition has completely ignored the fact that the questions asked of me on 2 June were part of a continuing debate.

As is the case in most debates, even in ordinary conversation, there was more intended than just the question taken at face value. There can also be an implication, as there was in this case. Of course, my contention that the question was directed at a possible involvement of Mick Young has been supported by none other than the member for Davenport himself.

In an article in the *Advertiser* on 22 July, the member for Davenport told a reporter how clever he had been in framing the question on 2 June. In the article, the honourable member was reported as saying:

The question on 2 June had been framed to have Mr Wright reveal his links with the Federal Government which had enabled him to obtain information on Mr Ivanov.

The quote stated 'Federal Government'. I interpreted the question correctly. Of that there is no doubt. The article further stated:

Mr Brown said the strong old boy network in the Labor Party made it almost certain Mr Wright would have had information on the Ivanov affair from Mr Young or other Federal colleagues, in addition to the proven link with Mr Combe.

So, he was giving me a wide ambit. I could have talked to any Federal member who had this information—not only Mr Young. It further stated:

At the time of asking the question he had suspected Mr Wright had spoken to Mr Young.

That is the proponent of the question admitting the very fact of the implication that I have been asserting since this matter started. The Leader of the Opposition would not be too pleased with the member for Davenport, one would think. In other words, the member for Davenport admitted that the purpose of his question had been exactly as I had interpreted it: to get me to admit that I had received information from Mr Young. My subsequent answer was absolutely consistent with the publicly admitted purpose of his question. I therefore repeat that I have not lied to this House, nor at any stage did I mislead the House.

The Opposition has tried to smear me by association with David Combe. This was the favourite tactic of the McCarthyites in the United States in the 1950s. The Leader of the Opposition is heading directly for it. It is guilty by association and smear. I would have paid him more credit than that but he has come out in his true colours in the last couple of weeks. He has not specified any wrongdoing. When I refused to bow to that sort of blackmail, when I told the truth and talked of my contact with David Combe (a colleague of long standing), and when I readily acknowledged that an attempt had been made to contact me by a Soviet diplomat, the Opposition tried something else. It then tried to imply that Mick Young had given me information relating to Ivanov's expulsion. When I knocked that on the head, my answers and statements (which were all openly given) were taken out of context and dishonestly twisted to support the contention that I somehow misled the House. It says a lot about the Opposition's grip on reality when, at a time when South Australia is facing one of the gravest challenges in its history, the Opposition can become obsessed with such questions.

We have high unemployment in this State, and our manufacturing base (the State's very economic lifeline) is facing a shakeout unprecedented in our history, matters which have grave implications for the economic, social and political future of the State. We are at a time when we need constructive, intelligent debate and ideas about which path we should be taking. But, instead of that, we get from the Opposition deliberate distortions of answers given in good

faith and in all honesty to the House, in order to launch a baseless attack on my integrity and honesty. I will not cop it. Honesty and integrity are something that I have scrupulously built up over 30 years in public life.

I have always been open and honest in my dealings with people. The people of South Australia know the attacks on me have been baseless and dishonest. Although they have had to view this saga through a hostile press, the public has concluded that I did not lie or mislead the Parliament. I know this to be the case, because I have had many calls, letters and telegrams from people from all walks of life expressing disgust over the conduct of the Opposition in this matter. I do not think the Opposition would be happy if I named some of the people who have contacted me over this issue.

I want to place on record my appreciation to the many South Australians who have expressed their support to me during this time. The events of the past fortnight have not in any way deterred me from continuing my Parliamentary and Ministerial duties or, for that matter, my social engagements. I hasten to add that the Opposition's attacks will not stop the South Australian Government from doing what it was elected to do. That is the real nub of the matter. The motive behind the Opposition's attacks has been to destabilise the Labor Government and to distract it from the truly important issues facing it. It is a tactic that has been used by conservative forces in Australia before today, but it will not work in South Australia in 1983.

I have not transgressed the principles of the Westminster system. If I had, I would resign without hesitation. I have told no lies to this House, and therefore I will not resign. My colleagues know that I have told the truth, as I believe members opposite know also.

There is no dissension within the Party or the Government on this matter. The Opposition's attempts to destabilise the Government have failed dismally. As a Government we are united in our determination to lead South Australia out of its difficulties, and no amount of innuendo, smear tactics or outright deceptions will deflect us from that course.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): We have had an interesting so-called defence from the Deputy Premier. Before I get on to more substantive matters, let me set him right. His speechwriter cannot even get the elemental facts correct. The Deputy Premier repeated the statement he made earlier in the House when he was being questioned on whether Ivanov had come to Adelaide primarily to talk to a Young Liberals meeting. I will dispose of that minor fact and refer the Deputy Premier to the *Advertiser*, which clearly states:

A silent spy arrived uninvited at the Young Liberals' forum on *The Soviet Union in the 1980s* at St Columba's Church Hall, Hawthorn, on Thursday night. Mr V. N. Ivanov appeared with the invited speaker, the Minister-Counsellor for the Soviet Embassy . . .

The Young Liberals questioned him and wanted to know why he was there. The Deputy Premier cannot even get that correct, let alone the substantive material in the motion.

The Deputy Premier's defence will not stand up. The facts attest to that. The Deputy Premier is loud in self-praise: I have always understood that self-praise is no recommendation, but we have heard plenty of it today—'I have built up my integrity over 30 years; I am clean; I'm the greatest, so I couldn't tell a lie.' That does not ring true. The Deputy Premier has drawn a number of red herrings across the trail but he has not dealt with the basic facts of the case.

The Opposition has not been dealing in selective quotes as he and the Premier suggest. We have been going through the answers that the Deputy Premier gave in this House,

and it is quite clear that he not only misled the House but did so deliberately. Let us go back to the beginning. The first matter which came to the attention of the public and to that of the Opposition was the strange report that appeared in the *Advertiser*. It was that and nothing else which led the Opposition to think that it was a peculiar report and to wonder what it was all about. As for the allegation that the Opposition had information from ASIO—that was another strange statement today—I give the complete lie to that.

At no stage has the Opposition had any information from ASIO. In this wild reply, the Deputy Premier is making that sort of allegation. That is also completely false. We cannot accuse him of deliberately misleading Parliament this time because he just does not know. However, it is a fact that we had no information from ASIO.

This strange report, headed 'Wright asked to Russia by a spy', written by Michael Grealy, appeared in the *Advertiser* on 26 April. I bet that Michael Grealy has a very high opinion of the Deputy Premier as a result of his knowledge of the transcripts. I bet that Michael Grealy has a view not dissimilar to that of the Opposition. I bet that he has a very large question mark over the integrity of the Deputy Premier, because he was taken for a ride. This strange report states:

South Australia's Deputy Premier, Mr Jack Wright, got an invitation last week to visit the Soviet Union—from the diplomat who has now been exposed as a spy.

The report further states:

Mr Wright, who learnt of the offer last night, said Mr Ivanov had wanted an appointment to discuss 'an invitation to call in if I was overseas'.

Of course, the interesting thing is that we now know that the Deputy Premier did not know that the transcript of his conversation was to be made public when he fed this to Michael Grealy. That is where he was caught out, just as former President Nixon did not know that the tapes would turn up in due course and that he would be found out to have told a lie. So, the poor old Deputy Premier is a victim of circumstances in that sense. Nonetheless, he misled the *Advertiser* in the first instance, and subsequently the House, because the night before that report appeared in the *Advertiser*, this came to light as a transcript of his conversation with Combe. Let me quote it to see whether anyone was conning anyone. It defies belief to think that it was not a complete con that was advanced in the first instance to the *Advertiser*, and then repeated in this House by a series of questions. The transcript states:

WRIGHT: 'Now—what do you think I should say to the *Advertiser*—'

here is the man who has been misconstrued—

'I don't want to knock the idea of the trip—'

He is saying, 'I am in this sticky situation, but what am I going to tell these fellows from the *Advertiser* who are sniffing around?' The transcript continues:

COMBE: 'I think, you could say—you checked with your office, your staff and that Ivanov thought he'd meet with you when he was in Adelaide on Thursday that you were on sick leave and were not able to meet with him—eh—But you could say—you in your position believe in trade with the Soviet Union—or something which is in your portfolio area which—'

WRIGHT: 'I need to say that I was not aware he was going to talk to me—haven't had any prior warning.'

This is Wright, the man who has had his 30 years of integrity busted wide open.

An honourable member: Surprise, surprise!

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, it is a problem—Jack did not know that this would see the light of day, but it has. The transcript further states:

COMBE: 'That's right, that right—yep.'

WRIGHT: 'He could have taken your advice and rang—eh, set up an arrangement to have a discussion about it—then ok, one could say yes, certainly.'

COMBE: 'Yeh.'

WRIGHT: 'If, had made arrangements to meet him on such and such a date.'

COMBE: 'You weren't even aware that he was trying to contact you.'

This is formulating the lie, the untruth. The transcript further states:

WRIGHT: 'That's right—didn't know till now because my office never passed it on.'

An honourable member: It is despicable.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It is not despicable: it is here in black and white. This is a transcript of the conversation: do not deny that. The transcript continues:

COMBE: 'The thing—quite honestly even slightest in the shit on it I don't mind if you use my name but—I don't frankly think it's necessary.'

Here is Combe looking after his own skin. If one views it, that is part of the whole scene: Combe is looking after his own skin and Jack is trying hard to distance himself from it. The transcript further states:

'All you could say you were away—you understand he did contact your office to meet with you but for what purpose you would not have known.'

WRIGHT: 'That's right—All right mate, I'll do that—see how it goes.'

We know how it went: he has been found out. That indicates quite clearly that Combe and Wright were concocting a story in the first instance to mislead the *Advertiser* which, of course, they duly did. Then he came into the House and answered a series of questions in an evasive fashion. However, we got all the buffoonery that goes with this. I remember that I asked the first question as a result of that newspaper report, because we believed that it was quite strange. Even Blind Freddie could see that the Deputy Premier was trying to distance himself from this Ivanov affair. We asked a question: we got all the abuse and buffoonery from the other side, and all the ridicule that goes with it.

Therefore, having been here for a number of years, I knew that we were about to strike oil because, when the Labor Party and the Deputy Premier are on shaky ground, that is the treatment we always get. I will stick to the plain facts, and not the embellishments or the red herrings; I asked:

Did the Deputy Premier, or an agent acting on his behalf and with his knowledge, make contact earlier this year with Mr David Combe to seek a visit to Moscow and, if so, why and what was Mr Combe's response?

That is a perfectly clear question. Then we got the sloppy bit about trying to contact him without any prior attempt being made to make an appointment. The Deputy Premier said:

Nevertheless, he rang my office.

However, he really did not answer my question until the second question came from the member for Davenport. That is when it came out, and this is as damning evidence as one could possibly want of a deliberate misleading of Parliament. It will be shown also by another quote from the tapes. In answer to the member for Davenport, the Deputy Premier said this:

I am not sure whether or not he then went back to the Embassy and I do not know whether or not he positively spoke to Mr Ivanov.

His sudden lapses in memory become the excuse. I do not believe that stands up for a moment. Elsewhere in the transcript we read this:

COMBE: 'I tell you exactly what happened—when you—remember when you spoke to me in Adelaide—on 1 February—I came back to Canberra—'

WRIGHT: 'I said to you on that occasion I don't think the Ruskie would let me in.'

COMBE: 'That's right and you said you were interested in going—we talked over lunch about a range of things—and you said you were interested in going; I said "Oh, well that shouldn't be a problem—Yeah, that's right".'

COMBE: 'So, when I came back to Canberra he came to see me—after the election was announced—eh, he wasn't the only bloke I mean. Other Embassies came to see me to get my analysis of what it all meant and what was going to happen, etc.—and in the course of conversation I said to him that I had seen you in Adelaide, and that you were interested in visiting the Soviet Union—and perhaps he should give you a ring and he said, I am going to Adelaide in April—He said, 'I'll leave it till then'—I said—'Well, eh, please yourself' but I said, 'It seems to me that a bloke who has the status of a Deputy Premier of a State says he is interested in visiting your country, well, you don't let it rest for two and a half months—you ought to ring him.'—He said, 'Oh no, no—I am going to Adelaide—so I'll see him then.' I saw him last Saturday at the Australia/U.S.S.R. Tri-annual conference and he said he was going onto Adelaide from Melbourne—that conference was in Melbourne—and he said he was hoping to see you.'

The Deputy Premier is saying that he does not remember that conversation. Who believes that for a moment? In answer to the question from the member for Davenport, which I have just read out, he told the House that he did not know whether he had spoken to Ivanov. There is the transcript of the relevant conversation. Now he is saying that he does not remember it. I do not believe if for a moment and nobody in South Australia who reads that believes it.

The Deputy Premier concocted with Combe a story for the *Advertiser*, in the first instance, and in the second instance, for Parliament. He came in and made that statement. He did not know whether Combe had spoken to Ivanov. I have the transcript of the conversation. It is perfectly clear. No-one believes the Deputy Premier in relation to that matter. Then, of course, there was the questioning later by the member for Davenport when the question was asked:

Before the Deputy Premier made a statement to the *Advertiser* relating to an approach to him by the expelled Soviet diplomat Ivanov, was he given information associating David Combe with Mr Ivanov?

Of course, the answer was, 'Absolutely no.' We know that to be an absolute falsehood. Without embellishing that any further, let me say that everything that has transpired since the clear revelation of those untruths has been a diversionary tactic. There have been all sorts of fulminations from the Government spokesmen. The Premier was placed in one of the most difficult and embarrassing situations that he has had to face since he assumed his present office. Members of the Government say that the Opposition has made up all these lies, that it is members of the Opposition who are putting forward these untruths, these smears. I draw attention to the fact that the daily newspapers have a similar view to that held by members of the Opposition. I refer again to the editorial material which the Leader of the Opposition relayed to the House. The Government is suggesting that the Opposition stands alone on this matter, that we are the only ones who believe that lies have been told to Parliament. That is not the case. The journalists who have examined the matter have come up with precisely the same conclusion; they have read the transcripts and the text of the telephone conversation. Nobody but an absolute idiot could conclude that that phone conversation on the 25th was not deliberately designed to mislead on the 26th, and subsequently to mislead Parliament. No-one but an idiot would believe otherwise. It has led to statements made in the press which I will quote. Such statements have not come only from the Opposition, unless it is suggested that we wrote the editorial, which would be absurd. An editorial in the *Advertiser* stated:

He should, therefore, have resigned from the Cabinet. Because he did not he should have been asked by the Premier to do so. Because of their refusal to do what is required in the circumstances, both must be seen as being prepared to flout the conventions of the Westminster system of government when they feel they can get away with it and when it seems politically expedient to do so. It may be true that those conventions have taken something of a beating in Australia in recent years—

but nothing like the beating they are getting in South Australia—

but seldom have they been so blatantly disregarded as in this case. It is a fundamental principle, essential to the satisfactory functioning of Parliament, that a Minister should resign if he is shown to have misled members by false information. It matters not at all what the untruth may have been, or that it may subsequently have been revealed almost by chance and by means which are deprecated by the teller of the lie. The Wright-Bannon defence rests on the startlingly novel and absurd proposition that a Minister may choose, without saying so, to answer what he perceives to be the implication of a question rather than the specific question itself.

At that stage that was a defence, but that has since changed. Over the last couple of days it has been that there was a lapse of memory. The editorial continues:

It is true that the ability to provide a non-answer—a string of words that evades the question—is a technique highly prized by some wily Ministers. Mr Wright, in fact, set off on that course in his initial response on 2 June. But when directly challenged to answer the question he did so in a completely misleading manner. That he may consider himself unlucky eventually to have been caught out is beside the point.

I point out that this is not comments from members of the Opposition but that which was printed in the morning daily.

Mr Groom: Who wrote it?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I do not know who wrote the article, but obviously they were convinced that the Deputy Premier had lied.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The editorial continues:

The slightly mocking ridicule with which many Australians are inclined to regard their political representatives is not an entirely unhealthy trait. We have never been renowned, as a nation, for showing undue respect or deference to those in positions of authority. But we have the right to expect a certain standard of integrity in our Parliaments. The danger from this unhappy incident concerning Mr Wright is that he and the Premier may be seen as seeking to change the rules of the game which require Ministers to stick to the truth in all their public utterances.

That is the most unfortunate continuing effect of the refusal of the Deputy Premier to resign or the weakness of the Premier in not sacking him. The Government is rewriting the rules for the conduct of the Westminster system of Parliament in this State. All this hoo-hah and their self-praise about 30 years of integrity, and all this business of thanking his mates for sticking with him, and all of this hoo-hah about the fact that the economy of the State is in a shambles is beside the point. Either the Deputy Premier lied to Parliament or he did not. I have read the transcript of the telephone conversation. Nobody, but nobody, could believe anything other than the fact that the Deputy Premier set out on a deliberate course first to mislead the media and then to mislead the Parliament. The fact that he was found out was his bad luck, but he was found out, and if further information comes to light, as it well might, he will be further in the soup. This is breaking new ground in Australia and across the world in the Westminster system.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon: It's what?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It is breaking new ground. Why did McKellar go? He was not a Minister who lied to Parliament. What was the sin of McKellar? Why did he go? He went because one of his staff filled in a form incorrectly and brought in a six-inch television screen. It went through customs, and McKellar lost his job. So too did one of his colleagues. Why was Lynch dropped? It was because there were accusations made, and he was dropped until they were cleared up. Why did Withers go? It was because he made an unfortunate phone call. Cairns went because he misled Parliament. Why did Connors go? It was because he misled Parliament. Why doesn't Jack Wright go? It is because there is a new set of rules applying in South Australia. The Premier has been wriggling around.

He is becoming equally culpable. Tennyson medal or not, he stated that the Deputy Premier fudged. Then he thought that he had better back down. Apparently, that was a word that he had not learned when he was doing his Leaving Honours. The Premier backed off; he said that he had been a bit sloppy. Now we have a new twist—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY:—with the statement that the Deputy Premier had a temporary lapse of memory, that he did not remember the telephone conversation. I do not believe that for a moment; members of this House do not believe it for a moment and the public certainly does not believe it.

This will be one of the most disgraceful episodes in the history of this Parliament if the Deputy Premier is allowed to get away with it. As the Leader said, we can tear up the rule book on those two counts. The record is clear: the Deputy Premier knew the facts and he came into Parliament and said that he did it. For that reason he should go. I support the motion.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): After six days we now have the debate (although the requisite notice was not given, mention of which has already been made), and a pretty pitiful performance it has been from the Opposition, just as their shabby behaviour over the whole course of this event has indicated. I am not surprised that Opposition members are finishing it in the way that they began it.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Members opposite know what the true facts are. They know how they have deliberately attempted to twist and obscure. They know how their message, certainly in the initial stages, has been communicated, which is why the Deputy Leader did not have anything to say about the Deputy Premier's speech and the substance of it. There was not one word. Instead, in a self-congratulatory manner the Deputy Leader read what has been said in editorials in newspapers about this matter, which supported his case.

They were articles and editorials, I would stress, which were written without allowing the Deputy Premier to put his side of the story clearly on the record. I think it has been a great pity the way in which, as I guess part of the excitement, emotion and enthusiasm of the local media in having an angle on the big Canberra story, they jumped in without giving a fair go to the Deputy Premier on this issue, a man of integrity. I stand completely by the statement I made on the Philip Satchell show. We are all politicians, whatever our political ideologies or attitudes are, or to whatever Parties we belong. I ask members if they looked at that press conference in which the Deputy Premier was the object (I could almost say the victim), to say whether they thought that was fair treatment and a fair way in which somebody under attack was being allowed to get his message across.

That is in the past. It is raked up again because it suits the Opposition who have no new material, who have nothing new to say. It suits them to ignore the fact that each and every question they have raised has been answered, and answered adequately. All they can do is keep drawing out the same material. Further, they are all darkly hinting there may be more, there may be something else cropping up, all part of this attempt (quite rightly described as a McCarthyite attempt) to try to destabilise the Government and bring down the reputation of somebody trying to do his job honestly and properly.

I would like to make a passing reference to the Deputy Leader's contribution. It in no way attempted to address itself to the points made by the Deputy Premier, but it was interesting that he took up very early this point about the motives behind asking the questions in the first place. He was saying very vigorously, 'We had no information from ASIO, it was just that a strange report appeared in the paper, and that made us curious and we decided to ask questions.' Why did he say in the explanation of his question, 'I have been reliably informed that' and go on to make a series of statements? He referred later to the newspaper articles—was that his reliable information or did he have some other information? He has never answered that question. What was the reliable information? We were told later that the Leader of the Opposition at the Federal level, who was privy to certain information in advance about this particular incident, had had some contact with the Opposition.

The Opposition Leader admitted that he had some contact; we are not sure whether with Mr Peacock himself or with his office. Be that as it may, again I ask the question, if we are to play around with this sort of game, and the Deputy Leader is there saying, 'We have no information, we just thought it strange that an article appeared,' why did he tell this House that he had reliable information, reliable information in addition to what was on the public record? We have never had the answer to that question, but apparently that is not relevant, and that is not something we bring up because there is no point or mileage to be gained in accusing the Opposition of the way in which they twisted this whole incident, and the purport and thoughts behind their questions, and their attempts to try to mislead Parliament, because the sort of questions they were asking and the way they chose to interpret the answers, I believe, constituted misleading, misleading of the grossest sort.

They are all sitting there in their positions, large and secure, and feeling very pleased with themselves that they have helped to stir up this scandal, but the facts are that the Deputy Premier in this State discharged his obligations to this Parliament and has explained what he said and why he said it. The Opposition just chooses simply to repeat the accusations it made right from the beginning.

Finally, we have had the debate and, of course, one can now see why it has taken the Opposition so long to bring this matter of gravity which had to be debated as a matter of the utmost urgency before the House. We have seen them trying to probe and discover further information because the total weakness, the lack of substance of their case, has been exposed. It does not stand up to the rigours of Parliamentary debate; if it did, they would have been debating it on Thursday last. If it did, at the very least, they would have had a debate yesterday, but no. Finally, they got around to it today without the requisite notice (and I have already dealt with that point and I do not wish to go back over that on this occasion) but that indicates how, placed in the embarrassing situation, the Leader of the Opposition, having demanded an urgent debate on the matter and having it fully ventilated in Parliament, simply had to go ahead with it.

When he realised that there was no real substance, no real point to be made, nonetheless the pressure remained, so, finally, he is forced into moving this motion. He gets his speech well prepared and he delivers it in the course of the debate in these circumstances—a very pathetic attempt indeed! It was the way which he rushed into it in the early stages that made it impossible for him not to go on in some way. Let us hope this matter can be disposed of because for too long this Opposition has been attempting to distract the Parliament, to stop us from getting on with the important work in Government that we require.

There is no real coincidence about the timing of this with the Liberal Party in turmoil in so many States in Australia, with the economy in a situation which requires some kind of community coherence and joint effort, and the role of the Liberal Party at the moment is to attempt to stabilise that consensus wherever and however it can. They have one aim: to get back on the Government benches as fast they can and they do not care what they do to achieve that.

I would like to move on. However one responds to the sort of points that have been made, there has been nothing new turned up in the course of debate by the Opposition, but I would like to reiterate the points that have been made by the Deputy Premier.

He has explained the facts of the situation, he has explained what he said and what he meant and how he did not mislead the House. Also, it is very cheap indeed to quote (as the Deputy Leader did) from transcripts of conversations with no attempt to introduce the nuances of conversation, the bald transcript interpreted in his way with his inflection—good Lord, that is the oldest trick in the book; it can be done by anybody. I suggest that members look at what the Deputy Premier has said and they will find that it stands up very well.

What was the political situation when these questions were asked? What was already known publicly? What was the matter of public debate or public knowledge that has made this such a grave matter of misleading the House? The first question from the Opposition was asked on 13 May. By 13 May the Prime Minister had told the Federal Parliament that Mr Combe was involved with Ivanov; there was no question of it. It was a matter of public record. The Deputy Premier had made it clear that Ivanov (while in Adelaide to attend the Liberal Party meeting) had attempted to contact his office; again, it was quite clear. It was on the public record and in the *Advertiser*. He mentioned that he said to a Labor Party contact that he would be interested in visiting the Soviet Union; it was in print. There was nothing to hide about that. Obviously the question of 13 May was designed to ascertain who was the Labor Party contact, because in some way the Opposition believed that to link Combe with the Deputy Premier would cause some embarrassment; there could be no other motive. However, the fact that Combe was linked to Ivanov and the fact that he contacted the Deputy Premier were matters of public record.

In the course of his reply at one stage the honourable member for Coles interjected and said, 'Who was your contact?' The Deputy Premier clearly at some length explained how Mr Combe had come to act as an intermediary between himself and the Russian Embassy. He was hiding nothing. He volunteered more information than the question required. Was that the act of someone who wants to mislead? Of course not. What would be the motive of his doing so? Why should he bother? It was already there on the record. We come to the political context in which the question in June was asked. Again, the fact that Mick Young had spoken about the Ivanov-Combe connection to people before it was announced publicly had been the subject of debate in the Federal Parliament and enormous comment in the media.

It was a matter that for some time had been common public knowledge, recorded and admitted, and by 2 June when the question was asked it was an old story, so what new information was the Opposition seeking? It could not have been, as it has tried to imply more recently, to find out if there had been contact between the Deputy Premier and Mr Combe; that had been admitted weeks ago. He had said that his contact was Mr Combe. There is no question of that, so what was the Opposition trying to find in answer to that question?

Quite clearly it was looking for a link between the Deputy Premier and Mr Young. It is not necessary to read anything into the question or the explanation given by the member for Davenport to come to that conclusion. It is there, if the question is read, and particularly if you were in this place and heard the way in which the debate developed and heard some of the interjections; there was no question in my mind or in anyone else's mind that that was the link that was being sought to be established. However, fortunately for honesty in this debate, admittedly after a few of the editorials had chundered and done their work, the member for Davenport admitted that that was in fact the case. He is reported as saying, as has already been quoted, that he believed there was some connection between Mr Wright or Mr Young or other Federal colleagues in the Federal Parliament. In addition, he referred to the proven link with Mr Combe. Yes, he admitted a proven link, which was already on the record. That was not what the question was seeking. There was no question of the Deputy Leader misleading the House by saying, 'Absolutely no' to the question, implying that he had spoken to Mr Combe. That was not the question and not the import of the question.

The question was all about that connection with Mr Young or one of his Federal colleagues, although Mr Young was primarily the target. That is how the Deputy Premier answered the question. If one reads *Hansard* it will be seen that that is the question he answered because he was talking about Mr Young. If one reads the words of the member for Davenport on 22 July, it will be seen that that is what he was seeking as part of this question, and I thought that was disposed of.

Again, there is no motive involved in the Deputy Premier attempting to say that he had not spoken to Mr Combe, none whatsoever. There is no reason for it. Now we are told, of course, after those two so-called substantive attacks failed, the nit-picking continued and, by going through a long transcript of a telephone conversation, chapter and verse, and trying to line it up, an attempt has been made to try to suggest that the Deputy Premier deliberately set out to mislead this House. Again, that does not stand up to the record.

In fact, as I have said before, the Deputy Premier was indeed proffering more information than was required. He made it clear that Combe was his contact with the Russian Embassy but he said he was not sure, he did not know whether Mr Combe had spoken to Ivanov or whether he had gone to the Embassy. He said, 'I don't know'. It was not a case of his saying affirmatively, 'I don't know; I have absolutely no information about this.' He said, 'I don't know, I'm not sure, I can't quite recall.' I ask members here to think back on conversations they have had on the telephone, even as recently as yesterday, and try to think if they can remember the precise details of what information was actually passed on during the conversation; they would be battling.

On this occasion we are talking about a telephone call more than three weeks earlier, a call between which and the event of the question in Parliament there has been a lot of distance, a lot of activities and a lot of work, and yet the Deputy Premier is supposed to have remembered precisely and exactly that sort of interchange. He did not mislead the Parliament by saying that there was no such interchange. He said, and I repeat in the inflection he would have used, 'I don't know, I'm not sure, I'm not quite clear.' That is what I was talking about when the press drew this to my attention and said that surely this is a point of substance. The Opposition has been unable to prove it. I think they offered six points, one of which was that Mr Ivanov had not contacted the Deputy Premier's office when he said he had and he had not. That has been effectively disproved.

We were told by the Opposition to forget about that because it is not very important, but it was a vital and important point, the day it released that letter, the day the Opposition Leader wrote to me for the second time. That was a central point, but now it is of no consequence because it has been disproved.

An honourable member: That's one of three.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Yes—33 1/3 per cent of the points upon which the Deputy Premier was going to be asked to resign—and it was made much of in the course of his press conference and discussion; no question of that. He was left with this one residual issue and, confronted with that, I made the point, which I think is perfectly valid and perfectly sustainable, that in saying what he said the Deputy Premier did not mislead the House: he had left the question open and he has explained why he left the question open. Where is the import of that? What, in fact, is the grave travesty of the Westminster tradition of which the Deputy Premier is in breach?

Let us have some form of perspective on this issue and not the sort of nonsense that has been around. The record clearly shows that the Deputy Premier attempted to answer the questions completely, to give full and detailed answers, and to be perfectly honest and open about what is a very minor connection with events that are happening in Canberra. He could easily have refused to answer the questions, because they had nothing to do with Government policy, nothing to do with his portfolio and did not affect the business of this House, but he did not; he treated the Parliament with respect, and responded. Look at the nonsense that has followed since then!

I suggest that it is not a case of the Deputy Premier blowing his own trumpet when he attempts to say to this House that he believes that he is a man of integrity and sets out his understanding of his rights, his duties and his obligations as a member of this place. Again, in the carping snide style of the Opposition, he is told that he is blowing his own trumpet. I suggest that what the Deputy Premier was doing today was explaining to this House sincerely and honestly what he believes to be the principles under which he has been operating for 13 years in this place. I suggest that many people in the community from all walks of life who have dealt with him would testify to that. It is scandalous that he has to stand here and say that personally to this House, but he is doing it in order to impress upon this place that he understands the obligations. I know that and I know that he does, because I have discussed the matter with him. If the Deputy Premier had misled this Parliament he would have had his resignation in front of me at the first opportunity and, I might add—

The Hon. D.C. Brown: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Yes, the carping cynicism of the member for Davenport! I remember him telling his electorate at a massive meeting that he was going to defy the Government to the bitter end as their member and not pay his water rates. Then, he shamefacedly, having made these great public declarations and done so much grandstanding, crept in and paid the bill because it might have threatened his seat in this place. That is the sort of man who is making snide remarks about my Deputy. I suggest that he listen to what a lot of people are saying about the Deputy Premier. He would have tendered his resignation, and let me add that if I had believed that he had misled Parliament I would have called for that resignation, and it would have been instantly given; no question of that. But the issue did not arise, nor need it have arisen because, as has been explained again and again both in the press and in this place, the Deputy Premier did not mislead this House.

He is not a man to place the Government he serves in a position where it might be compromised or this Parliament in a place where it might be compromised. On the contrary, his record speaks for that fact. I think that over the past few weeks we have had far too much of this issue. I have had these turgid letters from the Leader of the Opposition setting out more facts, demanding an early recall of Parliament and that this matter be debated. Right, it has been debated, and it will shortly be voted on. However, I suggest that we now get down to the proper business of this State and this Parliament. I reject the motion out of hand.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN (Davenport): This motion is the most serious of any matter that can be brought forward. The Leader of the Opposition has clearly stated the grounds for moving it. We have heard a couple of rather long-winded diverse speeches from both the Premier and the Deputy Premier, and I would like to reply to them in some detail. The purpose of this motion is that the Deputy Premier has misled this Parliament, not once, not twice, but three times. It was up to the Deputy Premier this afternoon either to explain clearly to the House why he had misled the House, if he had a justifiable reason, or to point out to the House that he had not misled it.

He did neither: he had no chance of doing either because the facts condemn him. Obviously, the most important thing that members need to do this afternoon is to look at the facts before them, and forget the rhetoric of the Premier about how the motion came to be debated today and not yesterday or last week. The latter point is irrelevant: the important thing is whether the Deputy Premier misled Parliament, and the answer is clearly 'Yes'.

Let me present the evidence to members opposite, because it is on their conscience that they must decide on what basis the conduct of this Parliament will proceed in future. Are they prepared to tell their constituents that they voted to defend their position and that of the Deputy Premier in government even though that means a gross breach of the Westminster system? Do we as a Parliament wish to uphold the principles of that system, or throw them out the door and vote for the Deputy Premier this afternoon in the hope that he will stay in Government a little longer?

Before proceeding to discuss the grounds on which the Deputy Premier I believe has misled Parliament, I refer to the transcript of the telephone call between the Deputy Premier and Mr Combe. This is most damning, because it shows clearly that Mr Wright and Mr Combe set out to concoct their own interpretation of events so that certain matters could be protected. At page 15 of that transcript, Mr Wright is recorded as saying, 'What do you think I should say to the *Advertiser*?' Members should note that he did not say, 'I shall go to the *Advertiser* and tell them what happened.' He made a statement on the telephone as a man wishing to concoct a story. In response, Mr Combe said, 'I think you should say . . .' and then he went into the lengthy explanation that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has spelled out this afternoon in this House.

Members should consider the three clear misrepresentations (or, as we would call them outside the House, lies) expressed by the Deputy Premier, misrepresentations on account of which he has been asked to resign this afternoon. The first misrepresentation is recorded on page 1618 of *Hansard* (13 May) when the Deputy Premier said:

To the best of my knowledge, I do not know what Mr Ivanov wanted to offer me, because I did not contact him, nor did he contact me.

That is a black and white statement from the Deputy Premier, but let us look at the events. On 25 April, Mr Combe said to Mr Wright, 'All right, you can say you were away: you understand that he contacted your office to meet you,

but for what purpose you would not have known.' Mr Wright said, 'All right, mate. I'll do that. See how it goes.'

So it was worked out between Mr Wright and Mr Combe on 25 April that Mr Wright would tell that mistruth to this Parliament and to the public—that he did not know what Mr Ivanov wanted. However, we all know that he knew what Mr Ivanov wanted. For further proof, I refer members to the statutory declaration tabled by the Deputy Premier this afternoon, because the attachments to that statutory declaration clearly spell out the very reason why Mr Ivanov contacted the Deputy Premier. So, we have a new piece of evidence this afternoon: on the very first misrepresentation that occurred, the Deputy Premier has produced even further evidence to show that he misrepresented the position to this Parliament. Attachment A to the statutory declaration states:

Telephone message for Deputy Premier. Message from David Combe re 2 February luncheon when you mentioned that you would like to visit the Soviet Union. When he arrived back in Canberra, he spoke to the Embassy and the message came back that you would be welcome to the Soviet Embassy as an honoured guest.

Then the statutory declaration goes on to say that Mr Ivanov from the Embassy was in Adelaide today and would like to speak to you. That is clearly spelt out in the telephone message that the Deputy Premier admitted he did not see on the day it came but on a subsequent day. It is thus clearly spelt out why Mr Ivanov came to Adelaide.

So, we have irrefutable evidence that the Deputy Premier misled Parliament on 13 May. He did not want to reveal it because Parliament did not know the details of the telephone conversations and of the message left for the Deputy Premier. Therefore, on 25 April the Deputy Premier said that he intended to misrepresent the facts and to fool people. Later, on 13 May, we have the answer, and we have evidence produced this afternoon that the Deputy Premier as far back as 26 April knew why Mr Ivanov had contacted him.

The second irrefutable case which shows that the Premier misrepresented this Parliament is as follows (and it also goes back to an answer that the Deputy Premier gave to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on 13 May):

I am not sure whether or not he then went back to the Embassy and I do not know whether or not he positively spoke to Mr Ivanov.

There was again a black and white statement by the Deputy Premier: he was not sure whether Mr Combe went back and contacted Mr Ivanov or whether he just went back to the Embassy. The evidence is quite clear, and it was presented when the transcript of the telephone conversation between Mr Combe and Mr Wright was made public. The evidence is this (and I quote Mr Combe):

So, when I came back to Canberra, he came to see me.

That is Mr Ivanov. So it was stated:

Mr Ivanov came to see me.

That is what he told the Deputy Premier on 25 April, and yet on 13 May, only two and a bit weeks later, the Deputy Premier tried to make out that he was not sure. The only defence that the Deputy Premier put up to that misrepresentation this afternoon was:

The phone call was almost two weeks ago and I wasn't sure what had been said.

It was not what he said: it is what he was told. He was told in black and white language. I quote from that telephone conversation, which proves more than ever that Mr Wright clearly understood what happened, as follows:

In the course of conversation I said to him that I had seen you in Adelaide—

That is David Combe to Mr Ivanov—

and that you were interested in visiting the Soviet Union—and perhaps he should give you a ring, and he said I am going to Adelaide in April. He said, I'll leave it till then. I said—

Mr Combe speaking—

'Well, eh, please yourself but I said it seems to me that a bloke who has the status of a Deputy Premier of a State says he is interested in visiting your country, well, you don't let it rest for two and a half months—you ought to ring him.' He said, Oh no, no. I am going to Adelaide, so I will see him then.

That is what was said to Mr Wright over the telephone. In fact, Mr Wright acknowledges that in his next reply to Mr Combe on the telephone. A major portion of a telephone conversation clearly spells out the detail, not in a broad brush sentence, but gives every detail of when Mr Ivanov came to see Mr Combe, and spells out the fact that it was not once but three times he had been to see him to talk about this matter, and Mr Wright knew it.

In fact, Mr Wright knew on 25 April that, only the weekend prior to that, Mr Combe had met Mr Ivanov at the Australian U.S.S.R. triennial conference in Melbourne. So, how could the Deputy Premier this afternoon stand up and try to put up as his only defence that it was two or three weeks earlier that the telephone conversation had come in, when so much of that conversation had dealt with the very specific detail that Mr Combe had been in direct contact with Mr Ivanov not once or twice, but on three occasions. He then turns around and says that he forgot the detail.

I put to members of this Parliament, who will have to vote on this important issue this afternoon, that, under no circumstances, can we accept such a weak defence as was offered by the Deputy Premier this afternoon. We cannot accept that his memory is so poor that he cannot recall great slabs of the conversation, even though he acknowledged, in replying to Mr Combe during that conversation, that he clearly understood what was being said.

The third important issue—and the one that has not been answered satisfactorily this afternoon by the Deputy Premier—is the third major misrepresentation that took place in this House on 2 June. I asked a question of the Deputy Premier that was quite clear-cut. I asked:

Before the Deputy Premier made a statement to the *Advertiser* relating to an approach to him by the expelled Soviet diplomat, Valeriy Ivanov, was he given information associating Mr David Combe with Mr Ivanov?

Was he given information associating those two people? I explained the question—it was very simple. I then finally came back and reiterated the question, as follows:

Therefore, I ask the Deputy Premier whether it is the case that he was aware of Mr Combe's involvement in this matter when he made his statement to the *Advertiser* which was reported on 26 April and, if so, who was that informant?

The question was not whether Mr Young contacted him, as the Deputy Premier has tried to suggest this afternoon. Why would I have asked who the informant was, if I thought that it was certainly Mr Young? I asked whether there was any contact linking Mr Combe with Mr Ivanov, and whether he knew of that contact before he made that statement to the *Advertiser* on 25 April. He fudged the question. He went off and ranted and raved. He tried to embarrass me, as he so often does try to do in the House. He has been here long enough to know that if one blusters and throws out accusations across the House that perhaps someone might forget the question.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Like the bully-boy tactics this afternoon.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is right.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: We heard the threats from the Deputy Premier across the House this afternoon several times. Referring to the vital question, I interjected (and the Deputy Premier does not like to be interjected against, particularly when he thinks he has the upper hand), and I

said, 'Answer the question.' He knew what the question was only too well. His response was 'Absolutely no'. The question or the answer could not be misunderstood by anyone.

The question was, 'Had there been any contact and, if so, who was the informant?' The Deputy Premier has put forward no excuse except to say that he thinks he misunderstood the question. On an important issue like that, where the question was so clear-cut and had been repeated, I suggest that there is no chance for a man, particularly a Minister with the experience of the Deputy Premier, to misunderstand the question. There is no chance whatsoever.

I put to the House that the Deputy Premier gave an answer which he knew was false. He believed that there was no chance of this House, or the Opposition in particular, ever finding out that that answer was false; so, he took the punt as a betting man. He said, 'I'll smudge the whole issue; I'll come out and give them a definite answer. After all, I knew from a telephone conversation, and how could they ever prove it from a telephone conversation?' So, he came out with that black and white answer, 'Absolutely no,' thinking that there the issue would die, because he had now well and truly killed the story. By sheer chance, out came the evidence.

The point was raised: why was the question asked? I believe that there is justifiable reason for asking that question. Go back to what the Deputy Premier told the *Advertiser* on 26 April. He said two things: first, he had found out that Mr Ivanov had telephoned and indicated what the matter was about the night before—the 25th. Obviously something had come up on the night of the 25th. Mr Wright even admitted that something had come up, obviously indicating that he had been given certain information.

Secondly, Mr Wright said that a Labor Party contact had set the whole thing up (the trip to Russia) with Mr Ivanov. So, it was obvious to any person in the Opposition that some contact had been made between someone in the Labor Party—probably in Canberra—and Mr Wright and that he had been informed of that the night before. We find out, now that the telephone transcript has been released, that that is exactly what occurred. So, we have these three clear-cut cases where the Deputy Premier has made misrepresentations to this Parliament, and nothing that he has said this afternoon has cleared the air on those misrepresentations.

Mr Lewis: On the contrary.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: As the honourable member says, on the contrary. In fact, he produced a statutory declaration with some attachments which further deepened the fact that he had misled the Parliament. The motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon is:

That this House no longer has confidence in the Deputy Premier because he has deliberately, consistently and blatantly misled this Parliament and therefore should resign. If he fails to do so, this House calls on the Premier to dismiss him.

There are three clear-cut cases where the Deputy Premier misled this Parliament. As the motion says, it was done deliberately. If members want proof that it was done deliberately, they should go back to the transcript of the telephone conversation on 25 April, where the Deputy Premier and Mr Combe even set out to say that they would concoct a story to give to the *Advertiser* and the public—'What do you think I should say to the *Advertiser*?' So, the misrepresentation that occurred was quite deliberate. The Deputy Premier clearly knew the facts as they stood. It was consistent, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, because the Deputy Premier did this not once but three times.

Thirdly, it was quite blatant. Why was it blatant? Because the Deputy Premier knew the trouble that the Ivanov-Combe affair was getting the Labor Party into. He wanted to protect, if possible, his old mate, David Combe, in Canberra. He wanted to try to give the impression that all the

contact—at least after the initial luncheon in February—had been between Mr Ivanov and Mr Wright or Mr Wright's office. Nowhere, if members look at what the Deputy Premier said, did he admit, until it was found out from the telephone conversation, that in fact it was Mr Combe who had passed on that information. Why? Because in that telephone conversation Mr Combe himself asked that if at all possible Mr Wright should leave the involvement of Mr Combe out of it.

Again, it was a concocted, deliberate set of objectives that Mr Wright set out to achieve. He gave an undertaking: in fact, when Mr Combe asked whether he would if possible leave out Mr Combe's name, Mr Wright came back and said, 'That's right. All right, mate. I'll do that. See how it goes.' So, he deliberately set out not to tell this House of the involvement of Mr Combe except for that one occasion where lunch was held in February at Asio's.

That lunch was at a most inappropriate restaurant, considering the subsequent events. The whole of the Westminster system is at stake here. The integrity of Parliament is under question. What is the point of having questions, Questions on Notice and Ministerial statements if we cannot rely on the answers given by the Ministers? The Westminster system is meaningless without honesty from its Ministers. In fact, the Ministers swear to an oath that they will uphold the principles of the Westminster system. It is quite clear that the Deputy Premier has breached those principles in trying to save his own neck and that of his mate, David Combe. He must suffer. He was caught out. It has been clear that it is not on any issue where any misrepresentation or misunderstanding could have occurred. It is clear that he misled this Parliament and he must now suffer the consequences.

If the Deputy Premier refuses to resign, the responsibility for upholding those principles must lie with the Premier and, if the Premier fails to carry it out, he must carry with him the same degree of guilt that the Deputy Premier carries in having misled this Parliament and not being prepared to uphold the principles of it.

It is for those reasons and because there has been a clear misrepresentation of this Parliament on three occasions, with no attempt at a justifiable excuse given by the Deputy Premier this afternoon, that I now strongly support the motion. I urge all members, particularly those members who have some conscience and feeling about the integrity of Parliament, to support the motion as well, because Parliamentary democracy is at stake this afternoon.

Mr GROOM (Hartley): I oppose the motion. It is nothing more than another episode in a shabby attempt to discredit the Deputy Premier—an attack which on the facts is totally unjustifiable.

An honourable member: He invites it though, doesn't he?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GROOM: It is an attack which is untruthful in itself.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GROOM: Is the Opposition so devoid of initiative and so bereft of ideas? Is the cupboard so bare that this is the best it can do? Various speakers from the Opposition have said, 'Let's get to the facts.' However, without exception they all carefully avoided proper reference to the facts. They used some ASIO tapes of telephone conversations. We all know that ASIO's reporting of the facts is notoriously inaccurate. One has merely to refer to the Cameron-Hogg situation—notoriously inaccurate. ASIO gets things mixed up: fingers on the files as opposed to fingers on the pulse. They are the sort of sources on which members opposite were seeking to rely. However, they did not go to the primary sources and examine the questions and answers, because that is the proper starting point to try to assess whether

there is any substance in any of the allegations made by members opposite.

In relation to 13 May, a proper, objective and honest reading of the questions and the answers that the Deputy Premier gave on that occasion reveals absolutely nothing of the sort that honourable members opposite have been parading about. In fact, the substance of their arguments in relation to 13 May boils down to this: who invited whom to Russia? Members opposite will spend three hours of Parliamentary time debating who invited whom somewhere. I ask: what sort of a minor matter is this? Is the cupboard so bare that the Opposition has to carry on in this manner? Is it so devoid of initiative? So much for the 13 May allegations!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Up to this point a serious motion has, on the whole, been treated with appropriate calm. I want the debate to continue in that way. I ask all honourable members to remember the warning that I gave at the beginning of the debate.

Mr GROOM: In regard to 13 May, the best the Opposition can come up with is a play on words about who invited whom somewhere. It was on the events of 2 June that the Opposition went to the media and paraded its wares. I would like to analyse the questions and answers of 2 June. The Hon. D.C. Brown asked this question:

Before the Deputy Premier made a statement to the *Advertiser* relating to an approach to him by the expelled Soviet diplomat, Valeriy Ivanov, was he given information associating Mr David Combe with Mr Ivanov?

The very form of the question was in the third person. If one sought an answer along the lines of whether Mr Combe gave the information, why did not the member for Davenport say that? Why did he not ask, 'Did Mr Combe give you information?' The very form of the question is in the third person and suggested someone other than Combe and Ivanov. I refer to the member for Davenport's explanation of his question, which is clearly set out and which states:

I have been reliably informed that the Deputy Premier made his statement to the *Advertiser* on this matter after being aware that Mr Combe's involvement in this matter was to be made public and that it could embarrass the Deputy Premier. Honourable members will be aware that a Federal Minister (Mr Young from this State) has already been reprimanded by the Prime Minister for revealing the fact that Mr Ivanov was to be exposed some hours before the Federal Government made the announcement on the expulsion.

That was the substance of the member for Davenport's explanation, an explanation which is part of the question. By its very nature, he was seeking to explain his question. The member for Davenport started off asking his question in the third person. In other words, he was asking, 'Did he receive information other than from Mr Combe or Mr Ivanov?' and then he went on to refer to Mr Young as the person. Quite properly, the Deputy Premier drew that inference from the member for Davenport's question. In the summary to his explanation, he stated:

Therefore, I ask the Deputy Premier whether it is the case that he was aware of Mr Combe's involvement in this matter when he made his statement to the *Advertiser*, which was reported on 26 April and, if so, who was that informant?

One does not inform on oneself. An informant is a participant other than Mr Combe and Mr Ivanov.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Eyre will come to order.

Mr GROOM: The whole question and answer was in connection with whether the Deputy Premier received information from Mr Young, and that is exactly the way in which the Deputy Premier took the question and gave the answer. An honest, objective and proper reading of the member for Davenport's question and explanation substan-

tiates what I have said, yet not one member opposite properly analysed the question and explanation given by the member for Davenport. Subsequently, they sought in the media nothing but a play on words. The Deputy Premier's explanation was quite clear when he answered 'Absolutely no.' I will not continue to go through all this, because it is patently clear to all members if they want to search their consciences and examine the question honestly. The Deputy Premier stated:

The answer is 'Absolutely no.' The same ABC reporter who tried to pursue me with this stupid line also rang Mick Young, who, in that very good Australian vernacular, told him what to do as well, and I tell the member for Davenport to do exactly the same thing.

How can any honest person objectively assessing the Deputy Premier's answer to that question of the member for Davenport and the explanation to bolster his question conclude other than that the Deputy Premier was answering in connection with Mr Young?

I say clearly that the Deputy Premier has not misled the House on any question or answer. The member for Davenport went one step further, and in the *Advertiser* of 22 July he is reported as saying:

Mr Brown said yesterday the question had been framed to attempt to have Mr Wright reveal his links with the Federal Government which had enabled him to obtain information on Mr Ivanov. ASIO had not supplied any information, directly or indirectly, to enable him to frame the question.

Mr Brown said the strong 'old boy network' in the Labor Party made it almost certain Mr Wright would have had information of the Ivanov affair from Mr Young or other Federal colleagues in addition to the proven link with Mr Combe. At the time of asking the question he had suspected Mr Wright had contacted Mr Young, or another Federal Minister, but he had not expected to find Mr Wright had spoken to Mr Combe. On his reaction to Mr Wright's 'Absolutely no' answer on 2 June, Mr Brown said, 'I almost had a warm glow.'

I know that the member for Davenport has all sorts of warm glows; he is often throbbing in this House. He said, 'I thought you hit the nail on the head.' We all know that he was rapped on the knuckles by his Leader for the answer that he gave to the *Advertiser* because he told the truth. He was rapped on the knuckles by his Leader for telling the truth quite simply because it destroyed the argument of the Leader of the Opposition. That is why today they had to go back to 13 May, because honourable members opposite simply cannot substantiate matters in relation to 2 June.

Any honest, objective person would have to conclude that members opposite were simply concocting the matter. They therefore tried to drag up some concocted version of the answer on 13 May, which is nothing more than a play on words in regard to who invited whom to Russia: a matter that they feel should occupy three hours of the time of this House. So, the answer given by the member for Davenport to the *Advertiser* clearly puts down any suggestion that the Deputy Premier misled the House in relation to answers on 2 June or, indeed, at any time. His answers were absolutely clear. It was quite clearly in the context of Mr Young. A proper and honest analysis shows that the Deputy Premier has not misled this House in any shape or fashion.

The tactics of the Opposition are simply to squeeze as much mileage out of this matter as possible in an attempt to seek to gain whatever political advantage they can. The reluctance of members opposite to debate this matter is quite simply because it is boring to the public, and they know that they will appear boring to the public, in seeking to squeeze and drag as much mileage as they can out of this. They have been forced into the situation in relation to this debate. The hollow arguments of members opposite are quite patent.

On occasions I have seen the Leader of the Opposition on television displaying symptoms of near hysteria over this matter. He has succumbed to repeating an untruth in the

hope that somehow it will be accepted as the truth. Again today he has repeated it in this House. History is full of failures who have adopted this sort of line. Honest people just do not take that line.

With respect to the Leader, his political motives are apparent and the Opposition's behaviour in relation to this matter quite clearly has been pathetic. A very fundamental element in allegations of this nature, that of misleading Parliament, is the gravity of the situation. It must be a matter of considerable substance. The gravity of the mistake must be such that it elevates such matters to the degree where it can be said that Parliament has been misled. So, it must be a matter of substance and not a minor transgression. I draw the attention of honourable members to Pettifer's 18th edition of *House of Representatives Practice*, which is comparable to our own practice. In dealing with Ministerial responsibility at page 82 some basic principles are set out. It is quite clear that it is not a matter of law but a matter of constitutional convention that should be known to everyone, and that it is not a mere fiction. It is stated at page 82:

The gravity of the mistake would be an essential factor to any requirement of resignation.

A minor transgression is not a matter for resignation. I do not concede at any point that the Deputy Premier has transgressed in any way. But the gravity of the mistake is quite an essential element.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition began by saying, 'Let's get to facts', but he then sought to avoid them. He quoted editorials and ASIO tapes, but he failed to indicate how the 13 May answer could possibly have misled Parliament. He said that we have a new set of rules, that we now have something new, and referred to Cairns, Connor, and Crean. However, he did not at all attempt to analyse any of those situations.

I draw members' attention to the Howson situation in 1967. Honourable members would recall that Mr Howson was the Federal Minister for Aviation in the Holt Government. He made certain Ministerial statements in regard to V.I.P. flights, and the allegations of misleading Parliament on that occasion concerned questions and answers, and wrong information relating to whether detailed records had been kept of who travelled with an applicant on a particular flight.

That was known as the 'v.i.p. affair'. Mr Howson, in his capacity as Minister, answered that no detailed records had been kept of who travelled with an applicant on a particular flight. In fact, such records were kept. His answer was quite wrong, quite untruthful, and, more than that, was grossly negligent, because there were air regulations in force that required the keeping of passenger manifests. How did Mr Howson get out of that situation? He is recorded in *Hansard* of November 1967 at page 2276 as saying:

But it is true that I have failed to establish as soon as I might have the fact that the records were maintained and that this was required by orders—

that is departmental orders as well as the regulations—

It is true that this led to subsequent and further misunderstandings. It is true that I might have taken earlier steps to examine records that were available.

He said in grandiose fashion that he had offered his resignation not to the House but to the Prime Minister. What did Mr Holt, the Liberal Prime Minister, say on that occasion? He said that whatever mistakes were made were made honestly—that the Minister had no intention to mislead the House. So he was importing a new element into the matter, that not only is the gravity of the mistake the real matter of substance but also that you have to have an intention now, so you do not look at the objective facts. At page 2780 Mr Holt is recorded as saying the following:

An honest reply was given, it is true, with a mistaken impression of the facts, but the intention was to deal fairly with whoever was involved in the question.

The then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, clearly pointed out that the answer was blatantly untruthful, that records were kept and that there were Air Force regulations which fell within the Minister of Air's portfolio and which required passenger manifests to be kept.

How can the Deputy Leader of the Opposition stand in this House with any credibility and utter the matters that he has uttered in relation to so-called precedence? Did he conveniently forget the Howson situation, because, even on the most generous interpretations of Opposition allegations, if the Howson situation was the bottom line, this situation is so far below the Howson situation as to be a complete non-event, which it is. It is one of the most minor matters that I have heard debated in this House.

Another attempt was made to use the Salisbury situation as some sort of precedent. However, honourable members' memories seem to be fading because the allegations in connection with Mr Salisbury were that he had admitted quite openly that he deliberately chose to mislead the Chief Secretary and in so doing had misled the Parliament. He said, and I will quote for honourable members opposite—

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: He was an honourable man.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GROOM: Now the Opposition is trying to switch ground, as it does quite often, although I read recently that members opposite are incapable of thinking on their feet. Mr Salisbury said that the third alternative was to treat the matter generally in some, but not all, detail, but not revealing the more delicate aspects—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GROOM:—and very real requirement of the secret work. He chose the third. He admitted by a deliberate act that he set out to mislead the Chief Secretary and the Parliament. Of course his resignation had to be requested! His dismissal was the ultimate consequence.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Deputy Premier and the honourable member for Davenport to refrain from continually interrupting across the floor of the House.

Mr GROOM: Let us look at the Cairns situation. The Deputy Leader cited but did not go into the Cairns situation of 1975 when he resigned over a matter of grave substance. There was no dispute about it, because there was a discrepancy between information supplied to the House by the Minister in relation to the Harris letter. There was also a report and several other matters involved, but the Harris letter was the most important thing.

It was a matter of substance, a matter of gravity. There was no satisfactory explanation, because Mr Cairns had signed a letter that was subsequently revealed. He had said that he had no recollection, but he admitted it. Everyone agreed that it was a matter of substance, and his resignation consequently followed.

The other matter concerned Mr Connors. Again, Mr Connors's resignation was over a clear matter of substance. It related to continuing loan negotiations when, in July of that year, he had said that he had tabled all documents of substance in relation to the negotiations with Khemlani. It was subsequently revealed that, contrary to a Cabinet direction, he had continued loan negotiations and did not reveal that fact to the House. Quite clearly on any objective test that was a matter of substance.

I think in the Connors situation there were other documents not tabled, but they were quite clearly considered to be matters of minor transgression and did not fall within the requirement of being a matter of substance. Both the

Connors situation and the Cairns situation were grave and weighty matters, matters of substance. They were not matters of argument, plays on words, of who had invited whom for an overseas trip, or a play on words on the 'absolutely not'—not a play on words. They were grave and weighty matters of substance.

Let us consider Mr Garland. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not quote the Garland situation. I quote from the *Parliamentarian* of October 1976. Why was his resignation requested? I will read from the October 1976 edition of the *Parliamentarian*, which stated:

In December 1975, a complaint was made to the Attorney-General's Department in relation to the double dissolution election then in progress that a sum of \$500 had been offered to a candidate for election from the Australian Capital Territory to the Senate in return for the direction of the preferences of that candidate to a certain political Party.

Of course a prosecution was taken out against Mr Garland. He had to resign his commission; it was an alleged breach of the law. The bribery case—he had tried to bribe someone in return for a direction of preferences. Of course, his resignation was requested and obtained, because it was quite clearly a matter of substance. There is another Liberal Minister, apart from Mr Howson, on quite clear matters of substance. Mr Howson should have resigned; there is no doubt about that. I should like to see honourable members opposite justify the Howson situation.

In relation to Mr Withers, one only has to turn to the Royal Commission Report into the Queensland Electoral Redistribution to find out what Senator Withers, the then Minister, had done. He tried to interfere in electoral redistribution, and it was over the McPherson-Gold Coast situation, the change and swapping of the names so that Mr Robinson could be protected from being opposed by National Country Party candidates. I quote from page 243 of the Royal Commission's report, as follows:

However, believing they were being invited merely to correct an error on their part, they went along with the suggestion which was put to them. Whilst Senator Withers did not seek to influence, or influence, the commissioners in any way about how they should perform their duties of distribution of the electoral divisions in Queensland, he did seek to influence them, and he did in fact influence them, through an intermediary, as to something which they proposed to say in their report, that is to say, the names which they tentatively attached to two electoral divisions. What he did, having regard to the purpose with which he did it, in my judgment constitutes impropriety.

It was impropriety of a grave and weighty nature. Senator Withers had to resign from the Ministry because he certainly misled the Prime Minister of the day. It was one of his own Party members on that occasion (the member for Fadden) who kept persistently at this, because he was going to get the axe from Parliament; he was going to be given the marginal seat, but Senator Withers sought to quite improperly interfere with the administration of the electoral laws.

Next we had Mr Sinclair. Why did Mr Sinclair (then Minister for Primary Industries) resign? Another grave and weighty matter. He resigned because he was charged with fraud and conspiracy in connection with private companies with which he and his family were associated and had an interest in.

Of course he had to resign. The jury deliberated its verdict for about seven-and-a-half hours (one of the longest periods of time one can imagine) before it came to the conclusion that it should acquit him. Of course, that was a grave and weighty matter. The common thread through all the situations that I have outlined, starting from the Howson situation and including Cairns, Connor, Withers, Garland, and Sinclair, is that they all involved grave and weighty matters. That is the common thread. If the Howson situation is the bottom line, the Opposition's allegations against the Deputy Premier, even with the most generous interpretation, pale

into insignificance and become a complete non-event. In fact, the allegations amount to nothing more than a play on words.

At no stage during my speech have I accepted that the Deputy Premier misled Parliament. I do not believe that that is the case for one moment, and I never have. A proper, honest, and objective reading of the questions and answers in relation to this matter reveal that to any reasonable and honest person. The Deputy Premier's answers to the questions and the explanations of the questions, particularly the member for Davenport's question, were completely accurate. The Opposition has come up with nothing more than a play on words—something of the most minor nature. It is quite clear that it is not the Deputy Premier's credibility that is in issue—it is that of the Opposition.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): First, I will respond to one or two comments made by the member for Hartley, who said that the Opposition had not analysed the facts. I remind the honourable member of the words of the Premier during the debate today when he said that he had received turgid letters from me setting out the facts and analysing them. Clearly, the Opposition has listed the facts, not only in correspondence to the Premier but also in my speech to Parliament today, where I went through each one of the facts step by step.

I highlighted the four sets of circumstances involved in this matter; three of which have not been refuted by the Government nor, more particularly, by the Deputy Premier. I will also respond to a comment of the Premier. I at least paid the member for Hartley the courtesy of remaining in the Chamber during his contribution to this debate, which is more than can be said for the Premier or the Deputy Premier (who is the subject of this motion). The Deputy Premier was so interested in this motion and obviously has such contempt for the Parliamentary process that he was absent from the Chamber for much of the debate on this motion. The Premier gave a speech lasting a full 15 minutes this afternoon explaining why Standing Orders should not be suspended, but then allowed the suspension. I remind the Premier of the words of the Deputy Premier on 4 August, as follows:

I stand ready, as I said at the beginning of Question Time today, to debate this matter at any time the Opposition wants to bring it on.

The Opposition has merely responded to the Deputy Premier's invitation.

Mr Trainer: It's still very rude, though.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OLSEN: So much for the substance in the responses of Government members. The Opposition gave the Deputy Premier ample opportunity to come before this House and make a Ministerial statement, which is what he told the media in this city that he would do. The Deputy Premier refused to make any statement a week or 10 days before the opening of Parliament, and indicated that he would make a statement to Parliament. That statement was not forthcoming. Instead, the Deputy Premier continually refused to respond to any questions asked by the Opposition. The Opposition gave the Deputy Premier every opportunity to do the right thing: either resign or come into the House with some remorse, but he did neither. I remind the Deputy Premier of the actions of two of his colleagues, the Minister of Education in March and the Minister of Transport yesterday, who informed the House that some information that they had given Parliament was misleading. They both sought to correct the record of their own volition.

What of the Deputy Premier? He took no similar course. He was not going to come into this House with any remorse. He was not going to make an apology to the House for his

actions, because he clearly knew they were actions for which he could not apologise. He had little ground on which to stand to defend his position. Therefore, we have had a continuation of this attempt by the Deputy Premier to fight it out, to withstand the justifiable criticism that has been heaped upon his shoulders.

When this issue started on 2 June we had the bully-like attitude and tactics of the Deputy Premier, the scorn with which he treated this matter before Parliament. That is how this matter started and today that is how the matter has ended. The Deputy Premier has not in this debate on this subject at this time ended it in a way other than the way in which it was started. A new phrase has been introduced into the debate. We are now hearing about 'a loss of memory for convenience' and that is really the excuse that has been put up. A loss of memory is now the reason why this situation came about.

I want to respond to the inference of the Premier that Mr Peacock, the Federal Leader of the Opposition (who is briefed as everyone knows by ASIO, as is the right of the Opposition, from time to time), passed information to me. Let me say clearly and unequivocally that I had not had prior to 2 June, when those questions were framed and asked in this Parliament, any discussion at all with the Federal Leader of the Opposition (Andrew Peacock) on this matter, not one. That inference was made in this Parliament but it has no substance whatsoever.

It was interesting to hear some of the Premier's defence today: that the Deputy Premier was open. So, we can now structure an answer so open that it can deceive, and that is the import of what he was basically saying. The member for Hartley referred to a play on words. I suggest to the member for Hartley that the two words 'absolutely no' are quite clear and concise. That is not a play on words; it quite clearly describes the situation.

Another point the Government seems to forget, despite the fact that we have put it right and the *Advertiser* has put it right, is that Ivanov was not asked to South Australia to speak to a Liberal Party function; in fact, he was asked to leave when he fronted up at the show. Quite clearly, and this is on the public record, that red herring is dragged back into this debate by this Government, which is in a tight corner because the Deputy Premier failed to answer the untruth—he has not been able to justify his position in regard to the clear untruths that have been told to this Parliament. Nothing can get around the words already on the public record in this Parliament. None of the rhetoric put forward by the three speakers from the Government qualified that point. They show that when this matter was raised in the House the Deputy Premier attempted to treat it as a joke, and that has been referred to again today. It is quite clear that the simple reason for this situation is that the Deputy Premier, having had contact with Combe and Ivanov, Ivanov having been exposed and expelled, took the view that this was to be of some embarrassment to him, and rightfully so. He had the association with a K.G.B. agent in arranging a trip to Russia. The Deputy Premier wanted to distance himself from that because the *Advertiser* was making some inquiries. This could have been embarrassing to the Deputy Premier and to the Government, so he sought deliberately to lay this false trail after discussions with David Combe. The transcripts from the Hope Royal Commission, the ASIO tapes, clearly put the lie to the fact that the Deputy Premier was prepared to tell this Parliament a lie in the first instance, and because he told a lie in the first instance he had to—

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: On a point of order, Mr Speaker! The Leader of the Opposition has used the word 'lie' three times, whereas previously you, Sir, and other Speakers have

said that the word is unparliamentary. If it is unparliamentary, the Leader should be told what is Parliamentary.

The SPEAKER: The word 'lie' was used in two contexts. The first was not unparliamentary. I think that the phrase was that something before the Royal Commission or in the ASIO tapes gave the lie to something else. However, the second use was clearly unparliamentary, when the honourable Leader said that the Deputy Premier had told a lie. I ask the honourable Leader to withdraw that remark.

Mr OLSEN: Indeed I do, Mr Speaker. The Deputy Premier has consistently told this Parliament untruths. Again today, he ignored completely the very first question he was asked about this matter on 13 May. That questions sought to establish whether Combe had been involved with Ivanov in arranging a trip to Russia for the Deputy Premier. That was the purpose of the question. All the Deputy Premier needed to say in reply to that question was 'Yes'. However, he did not even mention Combe in his reply and he went on deliberately ignoring Combe's involvement when he answered two further questions which were asked by Opposition members and which specifically referred to Combe. In today's debate, members on this side have established that point clearly.

Nor has the Deputy Premier been able to explain away the fact that the transcript of the telephone conversation on 25 April shows them to have been concocting a story. After all, that was what they were doing, and the transcript shows that. Indeed, according to the transcript, the Deputy Premier thought that he was on fairly safe ground. He was faced with an embarrassing situation. He gave the Parliament information by which he hoped to distance himself from it, not knowing that the phone conversation had been bugged and would surface publicly one day, and he has been caught out because of that.

He repeated the story to the House, but the tapes released by the Hope Royal Commission clearly indicate that he had been found out. His story was proved to be concocted; it was repeated to the House by the Deputy Premier, and it had to be followed through. That is what happened. Today the Deputy Premier has tried to make further excuses. He has referred to interjections. Although he has tried to make much of the fact that he has been in this House for 13 years and has had much experience, he also says that he has difficulty coping with interjections.

The Deputy Premier's behaviour throughout the whole of this affair has involved one discrepancy after another and nothing in the replies to questions, in the Ministerial statement, or in today's debate has put to rest the allegations rightfully made and backed by substantive facts. I remind members that we are not talking of only one instance but about a series of instances in this Parliament. It is a pity for this Parliament that the Deputy Premier did not answer the question fully and honestly in the first instance. Had he done so none of this would have arisen. There is now a blot on the public's perception of this place. If Government members vote against this motion, they vote to enshrine that blot for all time and to allow a senior Minister to mislead the House. That would be denying a basic tenet of Ministerial responsibility and accountability by no less than a senior Minister, indeed, the second most senior Minister in this Parliament. It is a tradition and a principle, an accountability and a responsibility from which the Opposition will not resile in bringing the matter to this Parliament. I commend the motion to the House.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (22)—Mrs Adamson, Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, Ashenden, Baker, Becker, Blacker, D.C. Brown, Chapman, Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Ingerson, Lewis, Mathwin, Meier, Olsen (teller), Oswald, Rodda, Wilson, and Wotton.

Noes (24)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs. L.M.F. Arnold, Bannon (teller), M.J. Brown, Crafter, Duncan, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne, Peterson, Plunkett, Slater, Trainer, Whitten, and Wright.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.
Motion thus negatived.

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

SENIOR SECONDARY ASSESSMENT BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of Education) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act, 1983. Read a first time.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

The new Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act, 1983, has been well received in the education community and the Government is anxious that the intent of the Act be implemented as expeditiously as possible. In order to achieve this, I feel that a Chief Executive Officer should be appointed forthwith. In its present form the Act does not include reference to a position of Chief Executive Officer which, in the normal course of events, should be filled by the board in consultation with the Minister.

However, several tasks should be accomplished this year if the intent of the SSABSA Act is to be properly achieved in 1986 and thereafter. Such tasks must be carried out under the authority of a Chief Executive Officer of high competence and repute. The way to ensure this is to enable the first appointment to the office of Chief Executive Officer to be made by the responsible Minister and to provide that the appointee be a full member of the board. The initial appointment would be for a fixed term of five years and the board would thereby be assured that it will get an opportunity to reappoint the Chief Executive Officer or to appoint a replacement. This will require amendments to several sections of the Act as outlined later.

If the Act is not amended in this way it is unlikely that the position of Chief Executive Officer could be satisfactorily filled in 1983. The absence of an appropriate chief would prevent the formulation of criteria upon which Year 12 subjects will be developed and assessed for 1986. Such an eventuality would seriously undermine the credibility of SSABSA as 1986 could be little different from 1983 as far as many students would be concerned. Indeed, as I already indicated in Question Time in this House on 11 May 1983, reconsideration of the structure of the staffing of SSABSA is in response to points made by amongst others the South Australian College of Advanced Education and the present shadow Minister of Education.

I have the unanimous support for this amendment of the chief executives of our tertiary institutions, including the Chairman of the P.E.B. Comments from the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education and counterparts in Sydney and Brisbane also strongly support the immediate appointment of the Chief Executive Officer. I therefore introduce

the following amendments so that the Act can be proclaimed in September.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 inserts a definition of Chief Executive Officer in section 4 of the principal Act. The term is defined to include in its meaning a person acting in the office of Chief Executive Officer. Clause 4 amends section 8 of the principal Act. Paragraph (a) includes the Chief Executive Officer in the membership of the board. The other paragraphs of this clause amend a number of subsections of section 8 that do not have application to the Chief Executive Officer but only to the other members of the board, all of whom will be appointed by the Governor. Clause 5 inserts new section 9a into the principal Act. The new section provides for the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer, a person to act in that office in the absence of the Chief Executive Officer and for other related matters.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON (Torrens): The Opposition will support the Bill and ensure that it has a speedy passage through the House because it is a very important Bill following up the parent Act—the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act. A lot of words were spoken in this House on the importance of that measure when the original Bill was before the House. The Bill purports to allow for the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer and to ensure that the conditions of his employment are laid down in the legislation, because the previous Act did not give power for that appointment.

The Minister will have the power to appoint the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance although the Bill goes further in that, after the first appointment, the board will have the power to appoint its own Chief Executive Officer. It is vitally important that the board be allowed to function as soon as possible. The Minister acknowledged that in his second reading explanation as he did in answer to a question in this House on 11 May. The passing of this Bill will allow the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer before the appointment of the present Public Examinations Board ceases and the new board is set up. By doing so it will allow for a smooth transition. The people who will benefit from that transition will be the secondary students in South Australia. That is what the Bill is all about, and the Opposition supports it for that reason.

The other reason is that the Minister has acknowledged in the second reading explanation that, because of remarks made by members on this side in the second reading debate on the previous Bill and because of representations from the South Australian College of Advanced Education and others, trouble may be caused by having a permanent chairman and a permanent executive officer (as would have been the case in the interim under the parent Act). I reiterate that, in my experience, that can be a recipe for disaster. It is possible to have a permanent chairman and a permanent executive officer but, unless the guidelines and responsibilities for both officers are laid down, we can get divided responsibility and not get efficient management. I gave an instance during the debate on the previous Bill where I had had personal experience of that.

I can only say that I am very pleased to see that the Minister has followed the suggestions that were made. On a more whimsical note, the Minister said in his second reading explanation that the suggestions were made by the South Australian College of Advanced Education and the present shadow Minister of Education. I do not know whether the Minister is feeling insecure and feels, perhaps, that there might be a switch of roles. If he wishes to think that, I am very happy to encourage him in that thought.

I make the point once again that divided responsibility can be disastrous because the prime purposes of a board over which is a chairman are to make policy and assess the

performance of the chief executive officer. This board, of course, is slightly different: it has great and important work to do. It is slightly different from a normal board, say of the State Transport Authority or a board of directors. Indeed, the members of this board have very intensive work to do. Nevertheless, they will still make policy and have to assess the performance of the executive director. Those are two of their most important functions.

I commend the Bill to the House. I wish it speedy passage, and I take this opportunity to wish the members of the new board well in their endeavours. Probably, as has been said in this place before, it is the most important statutory authority set up within education for at least a decade. They have a vitally important job to do.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: A very real task.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: A very real task indeed. I am indebted to the member for Light for the interjection because he is Chairman of the Council of Roseworthy Agricultural College and will know the problems that members of this board will face. The beneficiaries of its work will be the secondary students of South Australia.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of Education): I thank the Opposition for its support, and I thank representatives of all Parties in this House, including the member for Flinders, for their consideration of this issue. The manner in which we have had the support of all sides in this is creditable, and I once again thank those involved.

The points made by the shadow Minister are entirely correct. The effective operation of the legislation requires that we pass this amendment as soon as possible. I want to advise the House that I have had put to me propositions, which I have to consider very seriously, that the proclamation of the Act in September is not the soundest proposition and that the board should be structured as a Ministerial committee in the early days, with the chief executive officer being the chief executive officer-elect, subject to its proclamation early in 1984. Then the P.E.B. can see its charter for 1983 completed and the certificates granted to the students who have entered into P.E.B. subjects believing that there would be a P.E.B. certificate at the end. I advise the House of that as being the reason for any complications that take place with the proclamation date.

Whatever the case may be, it is the anticipation of the Government to have the board in place by late September with a chief executive officer, even if it is a Ministerial committee and chief executive officer-elect rather than the fully proclaimed one. Once again, this legislation will play a very important part in achieving the sorts of things that I am certain all members of this House want to achieve for young people in South Australia, making sure that our education system at the senior secondary level is able to give all that it can.

I have said on a number of occasions since the passage of the original legislation that I am particularly concerned that the needs of our country students will be taken into account. I hope that we will not have a widening disparity between the opportunities for country students compared to city students as a result of the changes in procedures. I am particularly keen that the new board will take that into account and see that whatever we can do we will make sure that the disparities grow no greater and, indeed, if possible are reduced from what they presently may be.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—'Membership of the board.'

Mr GUNN: I hope that this is the appropriate clause on which to raise this particular query. Will the board itself be looking at the standards of education in country schools

and, in particular, those schools that are currently without year 12 subjects? Will that be one of the areas at which the board will be looking? If it is, I can give the Minister a considerable list at which members of the board can look as soon as they are appointed.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: When talking about country students, the point was that this legislation is meant to bring benefits to all senior secondary age students throughout Australia. That will need examination by not only the board but also the Education Department and myself as Minister of the way in which we can guarantee to give the best offerings to students, wherever they may live throughout the State. I think that there are some pretty imaginative ways in which to improve the offerings which presently exist. Certainly, the board will examine them.

I cannot say what the answer will be because, if we knew what the answer was, surely we would have already got there. However, we need to make some improvements in that area, and the board will have that as one of its briefs. I have raised it on a number of occasions outside this House. I choose to repeat it in this House so that the board can take account of those comments when it is able to meet.

Remaining clauses (4 and 5) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BUSINESS FRANCHISE (PETROLEUM PRODUCTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 9 August. Page 52.)

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): First, I want to make the point that we are debating significant tax measures before this Parliament with very limited notice having been given to the Opposition about the content of those measures. We have been asked to debate those measures without proper indication from the Government about what the overall budgetary position will be. In fact, I remind the House that only yesterday the Premier refused to indicate to me, the House and the public of South Australia what the overall deficit would be and what his attitude would be in relation to further revenue raising measures.

Therefore, I oppose this Bill in its present form. In doing so, I give notice that I will oppose clause 3 to ensure that additional funds raised by this measure will be channelled into the road fund and not into general revenue. This Bill breaches a clear understanding about the purpose of a special State tax on petrol. When this measure was first imposed in 1979, the funds were to be used solely for upgrading of the State's road system. It was a tax on motorists for the benefit of motorists.

The Government now proposes to direct a substantial proportion of the funding raised by this tax into general revenue, without giving any indication of how that money will be spent. The petrol pump has become a taxation poker machine, with the Government winning every time. Before dealing with the measure in detail, I want to record my objection to the limited time the Opposition has had to consider, assess and debate this major revenue-earning legislation.

The first time that Parliament was told of the new impost on fuel (imposed, of course, as an increased licence fee on the retailer) was last Thursday when the Premier outlined sections of his Budget to deflect criticism from his Deputy. That tactic failed, as we have seen earlier this afternoon. When the Premier unveiled the outline of this fuel tax, the details were held back. I refer particularly to the fact that the additional one cent a litre tax on petrol can be directed

into general revenue and not the Highways Fund. I believe that that situation is scandalous.

The details of the tax were given to the House yesterday, just over 24 hours ago. Now the Government expects the measure to be debated and approved by the House today. It is a further indication of the panic which is dominating the Government's attempts at economic management in South Australia. The fact that the measure is being rushed into Parliament, with a minimum of opportunity for scrutiny by members or by industry and commercial interests, leaves room for error and confusion. I stress that point.

Already, the inadequate explanation by the Government of another taxation measure has created irritation in the tobacco industry. That will be the subject of debate later today. It is also surprising that the Premier should have revealed the downside—the bitter medicine—of his 1983-84 Budget while holding the details of South Australia's financial position until next month. I have already referred to that.

We have learned from the Premier's announcement last Thursday how much additional revenue he needs, but so far no mention has been made of how that money will be spent. We are being asked today, at short notice, to ratify legislation which will bring in perhaps as much as \$16 000 000 a year in additional revenue to the Government. That money can go directly into general revenue. But no specific mention has been made of what projects or services the money will finance (I refer to the Premier's second reading explanation).

What will the money be used for? Will it be used to increase the number of State public servants, to defray the ballooning State deficit, fired by the Government, to subsidise industry or to fund short-term job creation schemes? The Premier has given no explanation although I asked him to do so. He has simply told the Parliament and the people of South Australia that he wants the money, but he refuses to confide in the electorate on how it will be spent. That is an act of supreme arrogance and contempt.

Imagine what would occur if officials of a union demanded that all members should pay a special levy on their dues, without saying why the levy was required or how it would be spent. I suggest that there would be outrage expressed by members and that union officials would quickly face the prospect of being removed from office. Yet the Premier is attempting to take precisely that action in this House.

Let me take that analogy further. Imagine if those union officials were elected on the clear understanding that they would not allow any increases in union dues. Again, the outrage and anger expressed by members perhaps would force a new election of those officials. Once again, this is exactly what the Premier is doing. Before the last election the Premier, then Opposition Leader, made this now infamous promise:

The A.L.P. will not reintroduce succession duties and will not introduce new taxes nor increase existing levels of taxes during our term of office.

That is clear and unequivocal. That is a quote that this House, and the people of South Australia will hear many more times between now and the next election. It is a quote of deception: it is the quote of a man who lacks credibility and it is the quote of a man who adopted the methods of a bushranger to win Government. Let me repeat the key section:

The A.L.P. . . . will not introduce new taxes nor increase existing levels of taxes during our term of office.

If this new impost, contained in the Business Franchise (Petroleum Products) Act Amendment Bill, is not an increase in the levels of an existing tax, then what is? The only other explanation is that the Premier was fudging, in the fullest sense of that word, in his policy speech. This measure will

cause considerable hardship to hundreds of thousands of people in South Australia. It is a tax which will filter into almost every corner of the depressed South Australian economy. The first, and most obvious, impact will be on the average motorist when he fills his petrol tank. For the average motorist in the city, the new impost will probably involve a direct cost of about 45 cents a week—a direct cost. But what about the motorist in the country, or the outer suburbs? What about interstate hauliers? What about the flow-on cost of prices on supermarket shelves or in hardware stores? The Premier makes no reference to these matters in his second reading explanation.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that an articulated vehicle registered in South Australia travels, on average, 95 500 kilometres a year, using 55.6 litres per hundred kilometres. The increased tax represents an additional impost on these operators of around \$530 a year. Imagine if the Government placed a special tax of \$530 a year on all delicatessens in this State. There would be outrage, yet road hauliers are small business people in precisely the same way as delicatessen owners are. They will be forced to pass on their higher operating costs in just the same way, and this will lead to higher prices for a wide range of goods and services.

The fuel franchise, according to the latest Auditor-General's Report, directs \$23 700 000 a year into the Highways Fund on the basis of a 1.5 cents a litre tax on petrol and 2.53 cents a litre on diesel. The additional tax imposed by the Government will bring in between \$15 000 000 and \$16 000 000 a year which can be channelled into general revenue and not roads. My amendment, to which I have alluded in giving notice that we intend to oppose clause 3 on page 1, would direct the additional funds raised by this measure into the Highways Fund: that is the *status quo*. This would at least provide a boost to the quality of roads in this State and, through the construction industry, create new jobs. This money could be used as part of South Australia's contribution to the Bicentennial Road Fund.

It has been suggested to me that an additional \$15 000 000 spent on road development in this State would create at least 500 new jobs. These jobs would be in regional areas where the impact of unemployment is being felt significantly. That would be the direct effect if this new tax was diverted into the Highways Fund instead of into general revenue. The Premier has not said how this money will be spent.

Another matter of concern is that the amount raised is being calculated on a set price for petrol and diesel fuel laid down by regulation. That price is at present 33.4 cents per litre for petrol and 35.65 cents per litre for diesel fuel. If the Government amends these regulations and increases the set price of fuel to something approaching the realistic market place value then this will impose a further impost on motorists. I seek an absolute assurance from the Premier that he will not increase the regulated set price of petrol and diesel fuel for at least 12 months and that there will be widespread consultation with all relevant groups before any change is considered.

This raises the further question of why the Government has to increase the level of licence fees, and therefore the level of tax on motorists, at all. It would be simpler to adjust the regulated price of petrol, as required under the Act, to bring in the additional revenue that the Government claims is required. The increased funding would automatically flow into the Highways Fund without any need to amend existing legislation. Of course, the reason is plain: the Government is amending the legislation so that it can funnel additional funds into general revenue rather than into the Highways Fund. What we still do not know is how that money will be spent.

The new impost to the average motorist is the equivalent of a 33 per cent increase in registration fees. Fuel franchise was last increased in May 1982, when it went from 1.33 cents a litre to 1.50 cents a litre, a trifling increase that was all directed to the Highways Fund. Registration fees also were last increased in May 1982. I seek an assurance from the Premier that his Government will not attempt to place a further burden on the long-suffering motorist by increasing registration fees in the coming State Budget, or in the near future. I trust that I will get a better answer to that question today than I did yesterday from the Premier when he refused to answer whether he was going to undertake any other revenue raising measures in the next financial year.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Do you think he will?

Mr OLSEN: If one takes on face value what he said yesterday, that is, the deficit blowing out and the income so far will not meet that deficit, so that there is going to be a projected shortfall, then the quite clear implication is that there is yet more to come in the tax slug for South Australia. He has not denied it. The point is that the opportunity was given to the Premier yesterday in the House to deny it and he chose not to take that opportunity.

By directing fuel tax revenue away from the Highways Fund and into general revenue, it is difficult to see how the Government is going to meet the increased cost of road maintenance and upgrading. In the 15 months since the fuel franchise was last increased, the cost of road maintenance and development has risen by 15 per cent. This inevitably means that less money in real terms is being spent on South Australian roads and that fewer people are being kept in work. The Government now has an ideal opportunity to boost that roadwork activity by directing the additional funds raised by the fuel franchise increase into the Highways Fund.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: Where it belongs!

Mr OLSEN: Indeed, where it belongs.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Whitten): Order! The Leader knows that he is not supposed to be answering interjections and members know full well that they should not be interjecting.

Mr OLSEN: You are right, Mr Acting Speaker, but they were such constructive interjections that I felt they embellished my remarks. The only alternative appears to be an increase in registration fees and drivers licences or a significant reduction in roadworks. The inflationary impact of the increased fuel franchise will have a significant impact on the overall South Australian economy. South Australia is already the inflation capital of Australia—a dubious title now sitting on the crown of the Premier. The latest c.p.i. figures put South Australia's inflation rate at 12.3 per cent compared with a national average of 11.2 per cent. The added impact of the fuel tax, the tobacco price increase, the financial institutions duty and hotel licence fees will push South Australia's inflation rate even higher. The most insidious will be the fuel price rise, which will be paid not only at the petrol pump but also at the supermarket checkout, and by Rundle Mall retailers and the corner deli. Obviously, the Premier has never lived in a country area, has never had to understand that the costs of goods and services have a transport cost added on, and the impost that he is putting on to country people is indeed quite significant as a result of this measure. The most unsavoury and unacceptable aspect of this new impost is that the additional revenue will flow into general revenue and not the Highways Fund. We object to the tax being brought on because the Premier made a clear and unequivocal promise to the people of South Australia that there would be no increase in taxes or the introduction of new ones. Now he is going to change the rules so that the tax on fuel, which is supposed to provide the motorist with roads, has the flexibility to be

channelled into general revenue. The Highways Fund has always been spent in upgrading our roads, to create new jobs and to prevent the Government from using the petrol pump as a source of general tax fund.

This Government has no mandate to present these tax measures before this House, no mandate at all; in fact, the position is quite the reverse, based on the words of the Premier during the last election campaign to the people of South Australia. The Opposition rejects the Government's right to introduce this measure, because it does not have a mandate to proceed. Further, at clause 3 on page 1 we intend to oppose the measure, because it attempts to change the rule book upon which taxes have traditionally been collected for the benefit of motorists in South Australia, and for that reason we will oppose that clause in this Bill.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): It goes without saying that we are most unhappy about this Bill. I was interested to hear a comment from the Premier in the last day or so when he was almost deprecating, or bemoaning the fact that South Australia was now the lowest taxed State. I find that quite astonishing, because one of the deliberate aims of the Liberal Government, the Government which he succeeded (as I said yesterday on another occasion, by deliberately misleading the public), was to reduce State taxes so that South Australia had an edge.

To a very marked and successful degree that policy was followed by successive Playford Governments. With no little effort that situation was also achieved during the life of the Tonkin Liberal Government and South Australia regained its status as the lowest taxed State per head of population in Australia. That situation gave South Australia a distinct advantage and put our ailing industries in a better position. The Premier is on public record over the past two days bemoaning this fact. He has set about increasing State taxes and justifying it by saying that South Australia is the lowest taxed State in Australia. I think that indicates what an appalling approach the Premier has to the economic health and well-being of this State. We are really in the doldrums as a result of the Premier's policies.

This Bill bears testimony to the fact that the Government is now legislatively breaking its election promises. This Bill is a clear breach of the undertaking given by the Labor Party before the election. Since the election, the Bannon Government gave the House an undertaking that it would not increase State taxes and charges during the wage pause. Therefore, the introduction of this Bill has broken two lots of promises given by the Labor Party.

I am rather disenchanted with those political commentators, and one in particular whom I have heard on the radio over the past few days, who say that this action by the Bannon Government is par for the course, because all politicians break promises and that it is just a question of how long they go before they do so. I give the lie to that sentiment, because I believe that the previous Tonkin Liberal Government had an enviable record of keeping its promises. One of South Australia's leading political commentators who is a regular guest on talk-back radio said that all politicians break their promises. The Tonkin Liberal Government was elected on a number of issues, one of which was that we would restore South Australia's economic position. As I have said, in the fullness of time that would have led to South Australia once again becoming the lowest taxed State in Australia. We also promised that we would reduce some taxes, which we did. On the other hand, the present Labor Government, in its first year of office, is doing precisely what it said that it would not do. The Tonkin Liberal Government did precisely what it said that it would do.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I will refer to this business of the tax base, which is a lovely phrase used by the socialists. I wish that some of these political commentators would look at the record and stop lumping my Party in with the dishonesty of the present Government. We said that we would reduce some taxes, and we did, most notably succession duty and gift duty. Other States in Australia had already done this and, because of that, South Australia was not competitive. This State was not an interesting place in which to live and it was not attracting investment because of those taxes. The Tonkin Government abolished those taxes by December of its first year of office, within a matter of months of its taking office. Perhaps it would have been more astute politically to spread out the reduction of those taxes over its three-year term. However, by 31 December of the Liberal Government's first year of office, those taxes had been removed.

So much for these gurus who claim that we are all lumped in the same dishonest basket with the Labor Party, which breaks clear election promises. We keep our promises. One of the features of the Tonkin Government was that it sought to keep its promises, and it had a remarkably good record in doing so, particularly in relation to taxation. Therefore, I resent this cynical commentary that one cannot believe any politician, that all politicians make promises to break them. The former Liberal Government made promises to keep them, and we did keep those promises, particularly in relation to taxation, and I can cite instances.

In fact, in 1982 there was a reduction in real terms in taxes in this State. Now, of course, that was no mean feat, particularly in those economic times. I believe that those times were every bit as difficult economically as the situation faced by this Government, but this Government is not showing the same prudent financial management that the previous Government showed. The only way to do it was to proceed in the way in which every other business in this State was proceeding, and that was to keep a very close eye on expenditure items. If all members of the Government had minimal business experience, they would understand that. One has to look at both sides of the ledger. If one is to reduce income deliberately, one must also reduce expenditure. We believed that the level of impost on the public of South Australia was too high, and we deliberately set about reducing that level, to benefit not only the public at large but also the business community.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: What have they done? They have increased the Public Service and housing rents.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. We decided on leaner and smaller government. There was no clamour in our time like the hoo-hah of this Premier that the public was demanding increased services. I wish that some members opposite would undertake the sort of tour I have undertaken in the past months around the industries of this State. I visited a number of industries, and I saw the extremes to which these people have to go to penny pinch and to make a go of things, simply to stay in business. That is completely unknown in Government circles. If members opposite went out into the real world and had a look, they would understand what housekeeping is all about. So much for these accusations that all politicians break promises. The Liberal Administration under David Tonkin was at least an honest Administration that sought to keep its promises.

I understand that about 2 000 more people have been put on the public pay roll in South Australia since the election of a Labor Government. We made no bones about the fact that the Tonkin Government was the only Government in Australia that succeeded in reducing the size of the total public work force over three years by almost 4 000 people, saving the taxpayers \$80 000 000. The public did not suffer. The main areas in which savings were accomplished were

the Public Buildings Department (which was the biggest builder in Australia, I understand) and the E. & W.S. Department. Those two departments in the boom times, in the good times, undertook a lot of work. This was deliberate Labor Government policy.

Instead of letting the private sector take up work, the Labor Government put more and more people on the public pay roll: subdivisions were created, and an enormous amount of construction work was undertaken, such as laying sewers in new areas. There was an enormous growth in the public work force, as the member for Chaffey knows only too well, because he was charged with the job of reducing this work force without retrenching anyone—and he did it very successfully. However, in a comparatively short space of time, a further 2 000 are back on the Government pay roll. If one tots that up, one will understand why this Bill has come before the House. Every man jack in this State who has a car is paying for it. The former Labor Premier, Don Dunstan, would cry, 'We'll tax the tall poppies,' but the Labor Party cannot get away with that now. That was the cry when I first entered Parliament.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Even he found that that wasn't enough.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Even if one took it all, one did not get the sort of money needed for his schemes. Water rates, electricity tariffs, and the price of everything else increased. As I said then, not many homes in South Australia do not have electricity: even the poor people use electricity. The cry was, 'Tax the tall poppies.' Fortunately the Labor Party has got rid of that cry—it cannot sell that one.

So, everybody in this State is going to pay for the profligacy of the present Government. This Bill is the first manifestation of that. It is an absolute disgrace for it to be before the House. I mentioned yesterday some notable quotes during the Address in Reply debate. I will not go through them all again but I will continue to point up that this Government went to the election saying quite clearly that it had accurate financial information. Such dishonesty had been apparent for some months because different statements were made periodically as to what the Government would do. However, when we sum it all up the then Opposition was saying, 'We will put more people on the public pay-roll, we will give them increased benefits and we will reduce taxes.' Members of the then Opposition said all those things over a period of months quite dishonestly, and quite blatantly to get themselves elected under false pretences. However, when we put that package together, that is what it boils down to.

Everyone knows that it was an absurd and completely dishonest proposition. The Government has put more people on the public pay-roll and has sought to give them more benefits through such things as the workers compensation legislation. However, it cannot reduce taxes, cannot hold the line, and has to increase taxes. Members opposite went to an election with that dishonest approach. On the very night of the election the Premier started to back-pedal. Until he knew the result he stayed inside and did not appear until he knew he had won. Up until the election we had the story that he had accurate information, had the Auditor-General's Report and programme performance budgeting papers—the new form of budgeting introduced by a Liberal Government in order to give information to Parliament and make departments more accountable and to ascertain where money was going. Members opposite knew the state of things. They said that they would not fall into the trap that Cain fell into and said that they would not raise taxes. I know, we all know and members opposite know that that was complete dishonesty. Now the public will know. This Bill is the first manifestation of it.

I notice with some interest that tonight's *News* states that the Hawke Government's standing has taken a plunge. I do not put enormous store on public opinion polls but they are an interesting indicator from time to time. Tonight's figures indicate that Hawke would lose an election at present. He has only about a 47 per cent following. I would be interested to see what his popularity will be when the Federal Budget hits the headlines. I will also be interested to see what the Bannon Government's popularity will be when the public realises it has been conned. Today's Bill will be the first real legislative indication to the people that they have been conned and misled by the Labor Government. I am absolutely disgusted. I have said it to people privately and I have said it at meetings.

Politics has reached a new low in this country. I cannot understand the reaction of the public. Have they become so cynical, as one political commentator (who had better remain nameless) observed on the air a day or two ago? Do people expect politicians to tell lies and to be dishonest? Do people give no marks to politicians who try to tell the truth and keep their promises? When it is all said and done, what marks did the Liberal Government get for keeping its promises? People speak on the radio and in other forums saying that politicians are all in the same basket. Have we reached a new low in politics—a complete lack of integrity where we lie our way into situations in Government? We saw it with Cain. The thing that amazes me is that he got away with it.

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

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I suggested that we had reached an all time low in politics in this nation and that the thing that was a matter of great regret to me was that the public seemed to be very cynical about it all. I was concluding by saying that the Cain Government came to office on promises of no tax increases, and proceeded immediately to break them. The Bannon Labor Government came to office with precisely the same tactic—the whole range of promises. It claimed that it had accurate information and would not increase taxes, but has proceeded to break those promises. The same thing, of course, has happened in the Federal sphere with the election of the Hawke Labor Government. This is a source of bewilderment and regret. We have in this Bill the first tangible evidence that the Labor Government in South Australia is about the business of breaking its promises and fleecing the public.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON (Torrens): The public of South Australia is reeling at the succession of increases in taxes and charges that have been introduced by this Government. Any residual respect that politicians have with the public of South Australia in regard to political promises has been destroyed in the first seven or eight months of the Bannon Labor Government. How can it claim before a State election that it is going to provide 950 extra teaching jobs over three years and at the same time say that it will not increase taxes and charges? I would love to be the Minister of Education and be able to place 950 extra teachers over three years; I can think of areas of need for them immediately, but how can one say that when one knows the state of the economy and that the only way one can provide those teachers, other services and meet other promises is to increase charges and taxes?

That was borne out the other night when I was at a function and someone came up to me and said, 'You know what the trouble with you Liberals is, don't you?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'At the last State election you were not prepared to promise enough bikkies.' I said, 'We promised before the last State election to introduce new programmes that we knew that we could afford.'

The Hon. J.W. Olsen: Realism.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Yes, economic realism, so that we could afford them, and we budgeted for a deficit of some extra \$13 000 000. I said to him that we knew that we could accommodate that under the existing state of the economy. He said, 'The Labor Party promised the bikkies and they got into office.' I said, 'Well, they knew what the state of the economy was.' The Premier has admitted that he knew what the state of the economy was, and he said so publicly, but that did not matter. The Labor Party made the promises and within a few months of taking office it has brought upon the public of South Australia this immense burden of a series of increases in taxes and charges.

Not only that: the Premier said to me in answer to a question that he would not increase charges during the wage pause. What was the last increase in public transport fares if it was not an increase in charges during a wage pause? I understand that the wage pause is still in force. I believe that Mr Justice Moore believes that (as my colleague from Davenport says, so does the Prime Minister) and no-one would know better; yet, we get this massive increase in transport fares.

Why are they picking on the poor Minister of Transport? We have a massive increase not only in public transport fares but also an increase which, in six months, is more than the previous Liberal Government provided in three years.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Ministers, including the Premier, must not harass the member for Torrens.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that. He not only has that. The poor unfortunate Minister of Transport has also had the increase in public transport fares, drivers' licence fees, registration fees, and third party premiums (a very large jump in third party premiums), increased. The Government did not have to accept that recommendation if it did not want to do so. Now there is the present measure, in which the Minister of Transport has to wear publicly a very large increase in State fuel tax.

The Tonkin Liberal Government increased State fuel tax, and it did it by the approved means of increasing the proclaimed wholesale price of motor spirit in line with inflation. In other words, as the wholesale price of motor spirit rose in two successive years, the Tonkin Government increased that wholesale price to its correct level. So, by doing it in that fashion (and I think it was a total increase of approximately .52c per litre over three years), that increase in charges was introduced in a way that the economy could afford it and bear the cost, because it was in line with the cost of petrol or motor spirit.

However, what have we here? We have an increase which is more than double that. However, it was imposed not by increasing the wholesale price of motor spirit because, of course, that would not bring the Premier enough money. He has changed the *ad valorem* value of the percentage in the legislation. As the Leader has said, that will bring an extra \$16 000 000 to the Treasury. It would be partly excusable if that money was to go into construction because that would cause jobs, and there is nothing more important than providing jobs. If all that money was to go into construction and into the Highways Fund, as it should be, there would be very little administration charges to come out of that money because it would be coming in at the top end of the Highways Fund after the administration charges had already been taken out.

In answer to a question from me the other day, the Premier said that the money would probably be used to provide matching funds for the Australian bicentennial road grants. If that is so, why does not the Premier leave the

money in the Highways Fund? Then he could still provide the matching quota for the Australian bicentennial road grants, and anything that was over would still go into road construction and maintenance and, therefore still provide more jobs for citizens of South Australia. But, no—that is not what will happen. The Premier is determined that the money will be apportioned to general revenue.

If the Premier is serious in his intention (and we will ask him in Committee about it) to provide matching grants for the A.B.R.D., he should tell us exactly how much will be required. The Premier knows how much money is coming from the Commonwealth for the Australian bicentennial road grants. The Premier would know that as it is the subject of Federal legislation. Therefore, he can tell us how much he needs to pay for matching grants. However, of course, what is happening is that he is taking money from construction and putting it into revenue. In the House yesterday the Premier taxed the Tonkin Government for propping up the recurrent budget with Loan funds, despite the fact that this year the Premier intends to put an extra \$10 000 000 from Loan funds into the recurrent budget.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Perhaps his back-benchers do not know yet.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: He is not only putting in an extra \$10 000 000, but in this Bill he is also transferring \$16 000 000 from construction into recurrent. So, it represents not an extra \$10 000 000 but an extra \$26 000 000, unless the Premier can give us an assurance, an unfudged assurance, that this money will go towards matching the Commonwealth road grants and that it will be all used for road construction and maintenance. Let us hear no more criticism of the Tonkin Government by the Premier when he is doing exactly the same thing, only more so. I wish to bring that matter to the attention of the House.

I give notice to the Premier that in Committee we will be asking him to provide us with details about exactly what he intends to do with this \$16 000 000. The Budget must have been drawn and he must know exactly where the money is going. There would have been some excuse if the Premier had said that the Government had intended to use \$10 000 000 of that \$16 000 000 for the purpose of bringing forward the construction of the O-Bahn system to the original programme that the Tonkin Government had for it, instead of the deferral of it for at least two years. That would have meant jobs. That project involves construction and would have meant jobs becoming available quickly, because it is all geared up to go. However, the Premier has not given us that information, which he should give us.

This is obviously a confidence trick, because the Premier is devastating the Highways Fund, a fund that has been there for years and years. I believe that we have the best Treasury officers in Australia. I agree with what Premier Dunstan used to say, namely, that they were the envy of Australia. I believe that we have the best Treasury officers in Australia, but like all Treasury officers they wish to accrue to general revenue as much money as possible. They are very strong Treasury officers.

The Bannon Government is jumping when the Under Treasurer clicks his fingers, because there is no doubt that the Treasury has had its eye on the Highways Fund for 25 years. I know it, the Minister of Transport knows it only too well, and the Commissioner of Highways certainly knows it. The Treasury has been after that dedicated fund for 25 years.

Mr Becker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the honourable member for Hanson remembers the warning that he has been given.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Previously, Governments could dip their sticky fingers into the Highways Fund

by means of the police contribution. Of course, there has been a Bill in this place recently incorporating a large increase in the police contribution. The member for Davenport handled that Bill for the Opposition. Now we are taking a major step forward because this Bill means that receipts from fuel tax will go into general revenue and not into the Highways Fund. That is a very ominous portent for the future of the Highways Fund and for road construction in South Australia. What the Premier is doing is following in the steps of his master, Mr Wran, in New South Wales, who did the very same thing after the last Premiers' Conference but one, when he went straight back from Canberra to New South Wales and made an announcement that had been prepared beforehand.

Mr Olsen: He is a carbon copy of Mr Wran.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: As my Leader says, we have a carbon copy of Mr Wran here. Mr Wran announced at that time that there was to be a massive increase in the State fuel franchise duty. I do not have the figures with me but only a third of the amount raised, about \$40 000 000, was to go to the Highways Fund and about \$160 000 000 was to go into general revenue.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Do you think they all went to the same instruction course?

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I cannot help thinking that my colleague is correct in saying that. Obviously, the Premier had his instructions. When the Under Treasurer clicks his fingers, the Premier jumps. Treasury has been wanting a large increase in public transport fares for many a long day. My word, it has got it! The increase is 50 per cent in some cases, an enormous increase. I wonder whether Cabinet ever considered the reintroduction of the 5 cent ticket on public transport. That would allow public transport fares to be increased by inflation. However, knowing the S.T.A. and Treasury, that would not be the recommendation because they would rather have a nice, round 20 cent increase using the 20 cent ticket. That is the way it works, and the Minister knows that.

Mr Whitten: Why didn't you consider it?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: You ask Treasury how it got on last year.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should refer to other honourable members by their district appellation.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I will be pleased to do that, Mr Speaker. I suggest that the honourable members opposite who are interjecting should ask Treasury officials how they got on last year when they tried the same approach on Premier Tonkin and me. I will not canvass this matter any further. I think I have made my points quite strongly. I am glad to see that honourable members opposite are embarrassed.

Mr Whitten: No, we are not.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: And so they ought to be, because this is just a confidence trick being perpetrated on the people of South Australia. We have had one succession of rises after another.

Mr Whitten: Mike, you are—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Price is definitely out of order when he refers to the honourable member for Torrens as 'Mike'. The honourable member for Torrens.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: This iniquitous increase in State fuel franchise duty, and not just the increase but the apportionment of part of the money to general revenue, thereby robbing the motorist (because this tax has been paid in the past by motorists for their benefit), has resulted in an unwritten agreement being torn up by this Government.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN (Davenport): The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader, and now the member for Torrens have quite clearly covered the devastating effects and injustice that the tax increase, which has been announced by the Premier, will have on this State, and we are now debating one of those tax increases. I agree with the member for Torrens that the public has been shocked and surprised at the size of the increase, particularly because of the undertaking given by the Premier before the election, not once, but several times, and also the undertaking given by the Premier not to increase taxes or to increase Government fees during the period of the wage freeze. We now have tax increases amounting to about \$12 a week, taxes and other charge increases amounting to \$12 a week which is now having, what can only be described, as a devastating effect on many working families.

Mr Whitten: Pull another figure out of the air.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: We are dealing with people who have had their wages frozen as part of a national policy, and the State Government, during a wage freeze, has imposed additional costs on the average family of about \$12 to \$12.50 a week, and we all know of the hardship that that will cause to those families.

Mr Mayes: You never worried about that before.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I find it incredible. Here is the Party which claims to represent the working people of this State, and who are the people it has hit hardest: it is the working people of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I endorse the remarks of the three speakers on this side of the House and I wish to take up this aspect of Highways funding. In today's press, the R.A.A. (in what it describes as an association which is not a political organisation) has made what it says is its strongest attack ever on any South Australian Government. That is one claim that the Premier can now have: that he has drawn more blood from the R.A.A. than any other previous State Government. I can understand that the Minister of Transport must feel acutely embarrassed by the way the Premier has really knifed him in the back and sent him out to carry the public responsibility.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: An aunt sally.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes, to bear the public responsibility for this tax increase and, more importantly, for how these funds are going to be used. The amount of money spent on highway construction in this State has been declining, in real terms, for about seven or eight years. The graph is very dramatic. We are now at a level of about 50 per cent of the funding for road construction of seven years ago. The only year it has increased during that period was the last financial year, 1982-83, under the previous Liberal Government when, with the introduction of the Australian Bicentenary Road Development Programme, additional funds were made available and there was a slight lift. It is anticipated that those funds could have been lifted substantially this year because of that programme.

Funds for road construction come from two sources. One is the general funds provided by the Federal Government, which is now on a new five-year agreement (it was negotiated by the member for Torrens when he was the Minister of Transport). Those funds no longer need to be matched by State Governments, so those funds are dedicated to road construction and there is no need for the State Government to put in its dollars worth to match that sum. The other major source of funding is the Australian Bicentenary Road Development Programme, which will increase as we approach 1988. It was a major initiative of the former

Federal Liberal Government, and it was adopted readily by the States, and it is certainly the first time for seven or eight years that there has been such a programme to reverse that decline of road construction in Australia. It is a very appropriate time to do so. When one has high levels of unemployment, one of the major construction programmes that one can undertake is to upgrade the nation's roads, especially in a nation with the low population density that Australia has, a nation that is so dependent on road transport. If Australia is to increase its productivity and maintain a high standard of transport, it is essential that hundreds of millions of dollars be pumped into the road system to maintain and, more importantly, improve the road system.

Previously, all money raised through motor vehicle registrations and motor fuel franchise licences in this State went direct to the Highways Fund for expenditure on highway construction and maintenance, administration of the Highways Department, and a small percentage went to road safety programmes conducted either by the police or the Road Safety Centre. The present Government has done a number of things to significantly erode the level of funds for road construction. Earlier this year the Government increased the percentage of Highways Fund money that could be directed to road safety. Therefore, a greater percentage of the administrative costs of the Police Department are now paid out of the Highways Fund and not from general revenue. Therefore, less money was available in the Highways Fund for road construction.

The Premier has taken it a significant step further, because he is not longer putting all money raised from motor fuel franchise licences and registration fees into the Highways Fund. The Premier has the option of how much money he puts into the Highways Fund. I have read the Premier's answer to a question asked by the member for Torrens yesterday during Question Time, and I have also read his second reading explanation when introducing this Bill later in the afternoon. The Premier used select words, which mean very little, in both of those contributions. Perhaps the Premier will explain his comments when he replies to this debate. In his second reading explanation the Premier states:

However, there is provision in this Bill to enable some of the increased revenues to be paid to the Highways Fund to meet urgent and essential needs which may emerge in the roads area from time to time . . .

I am pleased that the Premier admits that there are 'urgent and essential needs' in road construction. The Premier continues:

. . . the fund is also guaranteed an income from petroleum licence fees of an amount no less than that received in the 1982-83 financial year.

There is a national inflation rate of between 11 and 12 per cent in the construction area.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: And 14½ per cent for roads.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes, 14½ per cent for roads in the last year. The Premier has said that a similar amount of money will go into the Highways Fund as was provided last year. Therefore, in real terms there is about 14 per cent less funding available this year from State sources for road construction than there was last year. In fact, it will be even less than that because we must not forget that the Government is using a certain portion of the Highways Fund for increased police administration. It is now obvious that the total funds available for road construction in South Australia from State sources will be at least 14 per cent less than the amount available last year, and probably as high as about 17 or 18 per cent less than last year.

I ask the Minister of Transport to stand up and deny that fact. It is exactly that point that the R.A.A. is so incensed about; that is, that we have roads where money has not

been spent, where the level of funding has been declining in real terms, and we now have a State Government that has moved in and committed the cruellest act of all by taking away the dedicated funds that have previously been spent for that purpose. Yesterday in reply to a question the Premier also said, 'Don't worry, we need to match the Federal road funds.' The Government only needs to match the Federal funds provided under the Australian Bicentenary Road Development Programme. That is only part of the Federal funding; the other part of Federal funding does not have to be matched by the State Government. We can expect to see the State Government's contribution to road funding in this State dropping sharply and significantly, compared to the funds committed by previous Governments.

I would anticipate that it is likely to drop not only in real terms but also in actual monetary terms, in terms of dollars for dollars spent on roads, because of the increased proportion that is now being sent to the police administration. I challenge the Premier to come out and deny that. If he can, the Premier should cite figures tonight to show how much money will be spent on road construction and maintenance by the Highways Department during the 1983-84 financial year. For those reasons, I will very strongly oppose this Bill, particularly the final clause, which provides that the funds that are collected from motorists will no longer be dedicated.

It is interesting to look at the statements that were made by the Hon. Geoffrey T. Virgo when he was Minister of Transport and the Hon. Don Dunstan, because they stressed, when this tax was introduced, 'Don't worry; the motor fuel franchise licence tax is being introduced, but the motorist will get the benefit.' Now we find that a Labor Government is prepared to renege on the undertaking that was given and will no longer dedicate those funds.

I refer now to the effect of any increase in taxation on the transport industry in this State. Transport is really the lifeline of South Australian industry: 85 per cent of our manufactured products go interstate. The major markets of Melbourne and Sydney are the outlets for so many of our manufactured products, particularly metals, but also other manufactured goods. Successive Governments and Ministers of State Development have recognised that and have been very cautious in the sort of taxes they have imposed on the transport industry. Now, the Premier, who is also the Minister of State Development, during the worst economic recession for something like 40 years, has imposed on the transport industry an additional tax that must be passed on to the manufacturing industry. The manufacturing industry will find itself even less competitive on the Melbourne and Sydney markets. In other words, the Premier has dealt a very savage blow at the very heart of this State's economy.

I believe that this action has been very foolish and in a sense shows the Premier's ignorance, at this stage, of important issues in the State's economy. The Premier should go out and talk to the transport companies: the big transport companies would point out very quickly that they have no scope to absorb a 1c a litre increase in fuel tax and that that cost will have to be passed on to their customers—the manufacturing industries. Manufacturing companies have told me that one of the biggest single factors that they face in trying to compete as manufacturers in Australia is interstate transport costs. I suggest that the Minister talk to some of those companies that are so dependent on eastern markets. The Mitsubishi company must export 90 per cent of its products: it also imports a lot of component parts.

The Premier is slowly crippling and strangling the South Australian manufacturing industry. The other factor which we have all acknowledged and which the economic summit acknowledged is that it is absolutely vital to reduce the inflation rate in Australia. I am sure that the Premier would not deny that: he was a participant at the economic summit.

Inflation must go hand in hand with unemployment: we must solve those two problems.

The Premier has imposed, in his attempt to raise additional income for the State, taxation in the very areas that will have the most significant impact on the consumer price index. This State has already had the highest c.p.i. increase of any State in Australia for the past 12 months. He has turned around and imposed a new fuel tax which will directly reflect now in most items, as very few items under the c.p.i. do not include some form of transport component. The Premier has unfortunately again ignored sound economic principle and put additional pressure on the consumer price index which will tend to force it up. It means that once again South Australia is facing a 12-month period in which it could have the highest inflation rate of any State in Australia. Again, that will hit at the very heart of this State's economy. It is for those reasons that I have no alternative but to oppose the legislation.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): In one sense the best that can be said about this Bill is that the Premier came out into the open and clearly indicated the course of action that he was going to take. It has been a very bitter pill and has not gone down at all well in the public arena, as witnessed by letters to the editor. It is not confined to only the issue of the petrol tax. Having said that it is at least out in the open and that the Treasurer has announced it officially, I think it is better than the situation which is occurring in other areas where charges are being made against individuals without there having been any public announcement and, in many cases, after budgets have been set by organisations.

I refer specifically to the situation which currently exists in relation to the services provided to the community libraries where, without prior warning and without there having been any governmental announcement, either by the Treasurer or the Minister of Local Government, who is responsible for libraries, a service charge has been placed on books made available to libraries.

Mr Evans: Every book?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes, every book. In an answer which has been circulated—

The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: If the Premier had listened to the debate he would have heard that there was a real and deliberate involvement. I am congratulating him on the one hand for at least coming out in the open with this measure that we are debating but also drawing his attention to other actions which he and his Government are taking and which are adding a further impost on the people of South Australia and, in many instances, on the people least able to meet the costs. One such area is the impost made in relation to libraries and library services through a service charge which has now been placed by the Libraries Board on the distribution of books through community libraries. Mr J.A. Crawford, who, the Premier will realise, is the Chairman of the Libraries Board of South Australia—

The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to resume his seat. I picked up the interjection by, I believe, the Premier or the Minister for Water Resources (I am not sure who it was), and I am not terribly pleased. The situation is that, in a taxation measure, the width of the debate is enormous. That can be seen by reference to Erskine May, Pettifer or any of the standard text books. It was the standard used by my predecessor, who happens to be speaking at the moment (although that does not over-awe me in the least). It was the standard used by him and by Speakers before him, as far back as I can remember. So long as the remarks

are directed to tax or a comparison of tax-raising measures, they are certainly in order.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Some taxes, Sir, you will appreciate, are direct and some are indirect. They are all taxes and imposts on the people of this State. I was drawing to the attention of the Premier that behind the scenes he is undertaking an impost and an impact on the South Australian public which he has not been prepared to officially announce or to accept as part and parcel of the attack on the living standard of people of this State, one area being the impost which is now being placed on the people who use this State's library services.

In a letter from Mr J.A. Crawford, Chairman of the Libraries Board of South Australia, which he has distributed to a number of councils following their expressed concern—sometimes directly, but more frequently through the members of Parliament who represent them—he has had this to say:

Concern has been expressed by a number of councils at the book processing charge proposed to be applied during this current financial year. Whilst the board regrets the necessity of implementing a charge for processing, the extremely tight financial constraints within which we have to operate and the high cost of servicing the 100 public libraries leaves us with no alternative. The total estimated income from the book processing charge is about \$90 000.

An additional \$90 000 is being extracted from the people of this State. Mr Crawford has just identified that there are 100 libraries. Simple arithmetic gives an average charge against those libraries of \$900. If that is divided amongst the people who are making use of the library services (and I have already indicated that a great number of them are people who are in more necessitous circumstances than those who have free access to the other libraries, to their own libraries, and to works and university libraries) this is an impost and an impact upon those people in precisely the same way that the petrol tax that we are debating as the prime issue at the moment is an impost on the people of this State.

Of that \$90 000, \$30 000 will be used to employ two additional staff to speed up the processing of books for public libraries. Here we have this Government, which claims to be open to the public but which quite obviously is surreptitiously through the back door making an impost and a charge against the well-being of the public, starting to fund recurrent costs out of back door taxation or charging methods. More could be said in relation to that issue, but I raised it in relation to the petrol tax because the Leader, in approaching this issue earlier this afternoon, clearly indicated that it was obvious that the Government really had not thought through the impact that that additional cost would have on the population of South Australia.

The Opposition, as my colleagues the members for Torrens and Davenport have said, has a sympathy with the Department of Transport, more particularly with the Highways Department, in wanting to do better for the public of South Australia by making available better roads. Here is an occasion with the bicentennial grant, when approximately \$78 100 000 (although the figure is not yet completely clear—about \$78 000 000) between now and 1988 is to be available to South Australia provided that South Australia itself matches that sum of money. In other words, we will see the distribution and the use of \$156 000 000 of additional money for roadworks.

That is commendable. If the measure being put before the House by the Premier had been clearly tied to that aspect of road funding (that is, that the Highways Department commitment of \$1 for \$1 alongside the Commonwealth fund would come through this additional sum of money, albeit being directed through Consolidated Revenue, about

which we are not at all impressed), there probably could and would be no real argument.

However, because the Premier failed to indicate that that was a clear conjunction of action, as he did in answer to a question yesterday, the Opposition rightly considers that the funds could disappear into Consolidated Revenue and be used for any one of a number of the extravagances in which the Government is indulging, such as the additional 2 000 public servants, the additional money being expended in education, all of which any Government would want to spend but only if it was within its capacity to raise without impacting upon an already alienated public. I use the term 'alienated public' because, as a result of this Government's taxing measures and the Federal Government's foreshadowed taxing measures, the public will be in very dire circumstances.

Added to those imposts is the fact that the measures contained within this Bill will have an effect on the delivery of all manner of goods to the public. We know what the Department of Transport has done in relation to fares. That department, along with every other person who uses diesel or petrol, will come under attack once the impact of this measure is felt. One can foreshadow that it will not be very long before it is necessary for the Department of Transport to increase the fares even on top of the massive increases which the South Australian public has had to bear in the past month.

That will have a further effect upon the people who are least able to meet the costs. The delivery of groceries from interstate or within the State will have an impact on the shelf prices of all the commodities which go towards those essentials associated with everyday living. The impact upon the family, which is already under seige by this Government, will be quite horrendous.

I want this Government and, more particularly, its silent members behind the Ministry who have not said a word about this issue to come face to face with reality and recognise what they will be asked when they go back into their electorates. What will they say to their electors when the prices of milk, groceries, bread, and meat go up? Every one of those rises will be directly attributed to the support which members opposite are giving to this measure. We want to have it quite clear and on the record that the extravagances with which they are lavishing their cronies—those who helped put them into Government—

Mr Ashenden: SAIT and the P.S.A.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Whitten): Order! Interjections are out of order. The member for Todd is out of order.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It is quite obvious that these impacts will have an effect, and I do not resile from having put them as bluntly as I have this evening.

I put that against the background of the identified further impact on libraries, and the effect that that will have on families and on education, because a number of those books will be on loan for the purposes of advancing the education of people with young families. What other hidden tax or charge increases are already in place which will have an effect on the other services delivered to the people of this State? The effect in regard to transport costs has been shown, in relation to food. Further, we can quite clearly identify the effect in the longer term that increased charges will have on other services such as water and electricity by virtue of the increased cost of maintaining the fleet of work vehicles associated with the provision of those services. The transportation of coal from Leigh Creek, which is based on diesel fuel for motive power, will be affected by this. Further, at the other end of the electricity wire there will be an increased cost for electricity.

These matters influence the determination of the c.p.i.: it means that the rate of inflation in South Australia will increase. Regrettably, South Australia has had the greatest c.p.i. increase over the past 12 months, and yet the present Government, which is supposed to be the salvation of the people of this State, is imposing yet another series of cost increases on them. The Government will rue the day that it took this action. It will use its numbers to roll this measure through, taking no heed of the warnings that it has been given by members of this side of the House—

Mr Ashenden: Or their constituents.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: —or their constituents. Honourable members opposite represent them in theory only, and not in reality.

Mr Ashenden interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I am sure that the honourable member for Light does not need the assistance of the member for Todd. I know that the member for Light can present his case adequately without the honourable member's assistance.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker; your protection is most welcome. The debate on this matter could go on and on with individual members picking up the salient features of the increases that will impact upon the people of South Australia. I am quite sure that my colleagues who will speak on this issue will do just that. My main interest in speaking on this matter—and I note that the area opposite is fairly vacant—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister is not vacant; the Minister is there!

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The public of South Australia would like to believe that members opposite will take stock in regard to what they are blandly and passively running along with. I use those terms because members opposite are silent, because they recognise the effect that it will have on the people that they claim to represent.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): Many years ago when referring to a socialist Government in England someone said facetiously that they promise people everything, give them nothing and take it off them before they get it. We have a similar situation in South Australia under the present Government. The Labor Party made it clear prior to the last State election that there would be no tax increases—none whatsoever. The Labor Party said that it would not increase taxation or charges, that it would not come through the back door, for which it criticised the former Government. The Labor Party claimed to be well informed at that time. If one looks at the Australian Labor Party State platform as amended in November 1981 and the book *South Australia's Economic Future* released in May 1982, to which I will refer later, members can see that the Labor Party in South Australia was well informed and advised about the affairs of the State at that time.

In fact, I have often stated that the Labor Party shadow Ministers at that time (and during the three years that the Liberal Party was in Government—particularly in the latter years) were better informed than back-bench members of the Liberal Party. They were better advised and had direct access to public servants. Indeed, if I wanted information, I had to go through the bureaucratic run-around. Trying to get information today presents the same problems. I would have a better chance of getting information out of ASIO than out of some of the Government Ministers because Questions on Notice and letters take a long time to be answered nowadays. The Minister presently on the front

bench would be a perfect example of a Minister who does this.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Rubbish! Tell me of a question that I have not answered.

Mr BECKER: The Minister has taken a long time to answer some of my correspondence. My whole point relates to the accountability of Governments and the information available to members of Parliament and the public. A member of the public has a better chance of getting some information out of Government departments by going directly to public servants than have politicians on this side of the House. This is an absolutely disgraceful situation. This afternoon the Premier made reference to the Westminster system of Parliament and the conventions of this House. I can inform new Government members that this Government has broken every convention that has existed in this House for the past 14 years. During the worst periods of the Dunstan and Corcoran Administrations the Parliament and people of this State were never held in the same contempt as they are at present.

Never before has a Government come into this House prior to the Budget and announced new tax increases. Never before has a Government come into this House prior to the introduction of the Budget and brought down taxing legislation. And what sort of taxing legislation is it? People talk about double-dipping and bottom-of-the-harbor schemes and the like, but they are chicken-feed compared to what this Government is trying to do and compared to the amount of money it is trying to extract from the people of South Australia.

I turn now to the main area of concern at the moment, the business franchise area. It is most frustrating for members of the Opposition when the latest financial information available to them is the South Australian revenue statement for 1982-83. The statement of consolidated accounts for the month of May 1983 was received by me on 3 August. I understand that a press release was issued by the Premier in June outlining the current situation regarding State finances until the end of May. His statement revealed that for the 11 months to that time the deficit amounted to \$80 400 000. However, members of the Opposition did not receive that information until 3 August, yet it was published in some obscure newspaper circulated by the College of Advanced Education in its June-July issue. In other words, some little publication was given far more information than were members of the Opposition, Parliament or the people. I did not see that information published elsewhere in the major media. If one looks at business franchise provision in the Budget Estimates for the year 1982-83 an amount of \$63 570 000 is shown. In the 11 months to 31 May 1983 the Government had received \$58 500 000, and the figure for May was just over \$4 000 000. I hope that \$4 000 000 will be the monthly amount due. Probably it will be a little bit more than that, and so it is fair and reasonable to say that the business franchise provision will be near enough to the Budget estimate.

The whole of the Budget is distorted because of the huge blow-out that has occurred. I do not agree with my colleagues when they say that we have the best Treasury advice, that we have the best of this and that we have the best of that—I do not go along with that at all. The Treasury in this State has a lot to answer for to the taxpayers of South Australia. When it comes down to accountability, I believe the Treasury owes an explanation to the people of South Australia as to how the Budget for 1982-83 blew out to the level it did, to the huge figure of \$57 000 000, which the Premier told us about. Certainly it is \$10 000 000 more than was anticipated. I do not believe that we have been given a satisfactory answer. I do not believe that the Executive of this State, that is, Cabinet, has exercised proper control over the Public

Service. I do not believe that senior public servants and the Directors of the departments have exercised proper control over the management functions within their own departments, certainly I do not believe that this should be allowed to continue. Every Minister has a case to answer and I can assure Ministers that, if they do not give a proper explanation at the time of the Budget Estimates, then the Opposition and the people of South Australia would be lacking, if we did not start demanding a few resignations from amongst the Ministers.

There is no excuse for the financial situation that exists in South Australia at the present moment. Where and how the people of this State are going to continually afford the increases that are proposed is beyond comprehension. How the people who are unemployed, who are not getting satisfactory support from the current Government, will be able to afford to exist has me very worried indeed. This Government is not doing enough to assist the unemployed in this State to obtain long-term employment. It sat on the money it received from the Federal Government for weeks—in actual fact, I think it goes into months—before announcements were made to release some of that money for employment creating projects. We have no idea how much of that money has been spent. There was one reported figure of about \$5 000 000 creating 500 jobs for a few months. There was no indication of any permanent jobs resulting from that \$5 000 000. Something is drastically wrong somewhere because, if \$5 000 000 is going to be spent, and there are not any permanent jobs in that, then someone has to answer to this House, and I think it is time we took some pretty serious steps.

Taxpayers, who have had to forgo salary and wage increases, have the right to demand to know what is being done with their money. We are asked to debate a tax increase, which we were promised would not occur, without proper information and, for that reason, I would really love to be able to oppose this Bill. In my opinion we should not support it until we are given the information that we rightfully deserve, information that we would be given during the normal Budget debate. We have every reason to reject this Bill. I do not believe in giving an open cheque to anyone; I do not care what organisation it is. The only information I have to go on relates to the business franchise provision in the Auditor-General's Report for the financial year 1981-82, and the estimates were: gas \$2 400 000, actual receipts \$2 370 000; liquor (which is the publican and other licences) \$16 000 000, actual receipts \$15 940 000; petrol \$22 500 000, actual receipts \$23 790 000; and tobacco, \$14 400 000, actual receipts \$14 600 000.

In other words, in the financial year 1981-82 Treasury expected to receive \$55 300 000, and actually received \$56 700 000. At least we knew the break-up and at least we had some indication of how we were going. However, we do not have those figures for 1982-83. As I have said, the latest figures are available only until 31 May 1983, and it is now 10 August. What an absolute disgrace! I do not know of any club, voluntary agency or any organisation whatsoever where members would be asked to increase their contributions without first seeing the organisation's figures. Treasury does not have the figures; it should hurry up and obtain them.

I believe that Parliament should withhold approval of this legislation until we see the figures. That is what I mean when I say that the Government is holding Parliament to ransom with this type of legislation, let alone the taxpayers of this State. This is the most disgraceful breach of convention that I have ever come across. To be informed last Thursday, the opening day of this session of Parliament, that the business franchise tax for tobacco products would be increased by 100 per cent was an absolute fraud. We

were then told that there would be a 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent increase in petroleum product licence fees, a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent increase in other licence fees in relation to alcohol products and a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent increase in stamp duty on insurance—what a nice slap in the face!

The 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent increase in stamp duty on insurance has come about when we are attempting to encourage people to increase their insurance cover and take out more insurance, particularly those people living in the Hills and in fire and flood risk areas. The Government will rue its announcement last Thursday that it would introduce increased taxes (which was simply an attempt to dilute other issues on that day). The Government has no excuse for asking Parliament for a massive increase in taxes without first providing Parliament with true and correct and up-to-date information. This measure is an absolute disgrace.

The point was well made that a petroleum tax is inflationary. I do not like that type of tax at all and I think it is absolutely incorrect. If workers are to be hit by anything, this type of tax hurts most of all. I concede that the average person might like a drink, but it is not essential. I agree that the average person might like a cigarette, but it is not essential. However, if the average person has a job (and, if not, we must help him to get a job) he must get to work. The average person must be mobile, to get from point A to point B. In this State, whether it be in the country or the metropolitan area, access by public transport is not that easy. Most people need their own private transport and, therefore, they must contribute to this tax, which is inflationary. If we continue to support the principle that South Australia will be the inflationary capital of Australia, we are deluding ourselves if we believe that we can pull out of the current recession. It will not be a recession that we are heading for, because we are fast heading for a depression. That is a disgraceful situation. We should not be negative; we must be positive. We must unlock the millions of dollars tied up in the credit unions, building societies and banks. At the moment people lack confidence and will not spend money in this State.

That is what is holding up the progress. People are not buying new cars, white goods, or a whole range of items: they are holding back, because they lack confidence. In the past couple of months I have set up another voluntary organisation office, and I spent several thousand dollars on office furniture and equipment. I have nick-named South Australia the 'week' State, because it takes a week to get anything. One cannot get a photocopier in less than three weeks; certain stationery lines take three or four days to obtain; a desk, a table or a chair are not delivered in less than a week.

Ms Lenehan: Three days.

Mr BECKER: One cannot get anything in less than a week, Madam. One can go from company to company. It is an absolute insult, and the same situation applies to household furniture. Try to get service on machines that break down! If one goes to a retailer, buys a household item and then finds that it does not work, one must wait 24 to 48 hours before someone services it, because the retailer wipes his hands of the customer once he sells a product. The customer has to go to the manufacturer. That is the present racket under consumer legislation, and I hope that the Government will do something about it.

It absolutely infuriates me that we are asked to support legislation that is inflationary, yet the retailers and the manufacturers in this State cannot supply goods in less than a week. Fancy anyone thinking that he can buy a photocopier in less than three weeks: the machine we selected, which was recommended by Government contacts, had to be flown out from Japan. That is a damn insult, as far as I am concerned, and I am absolutely furious to think that this

Government will not move to boost confidence in this State. Let me warn the Minister and his colleagues, 'For goodness sake, realise that we have to learn to live with what we have.' There is no doubt that the Premier will be considering a standstill Budget, particularly in relation to sport and recreation. The Minister knows that the demands and pressures of his portfolio are huge, and requests for funds would run into \$17 000 000 to \$20 000 000.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It has not been measured yet.

Mr BECKER: It has been in the past. The Minister has been given a lousy \$1 000 000 or so. That is not good enough, because that is one area in which we can check some employment and unlock a bit of confidence in the State. That is the one growth industry that we have, and I would support the Minister all the way. We need confidence. We must look to see where we are capable, what we are capable of doing and what we do well. Good horses are bred in South Australia, and some jolly good trainers have come from this State: that can be quite a valuable industry and an income earner to this State. There are other areas in which we can recognise individual effort, but we must be efficient and we must prove to the rest of Australia, as we have done on many occasions and as we did throughout the Dunstan era, that South Australia is an efficient and cost-effective State. In doing so, we will have to be extremely alert and very tough in the administration of the State. To get through this current situation we will have to learn to live with what we have so that when the good times come, which will not be too far away, the people of South Australia will reap the benefits.

We can improve standards of living and we can make South Australia the great place it once was, but to do that we must achieve some of the ideals and objectives that are set out in the Labor Party platform. The platform looks well and reads well, but I believe that the Premier has thrown aside those statements at this stage. He has to get the money in fast and boost his cash flow, and that is why there has been a break of precedent in bringing in these taxes now. I do not like it: I do not want to see a repetition, and I hope that the people of South Australia will do all they can to continually object to any Government that tries this sort of thing in the future.

Mr BAKER (Mitcham): Most of the issues associated with the debate have been adequately canvassed by my colleagues before me. They need no reiteration. They have shown adequately the serious step we are taking in respect to increasing deliberately the price of petrol. We all know how all our goods and services are inter-related with fuel. It is our most basic commodity. Today it is even more basic than food. Anything that we do with that commodity is going to have an impact on so many other things. My colleagues have mentioned the areas that would be affected, particularly our ability to trade interstate. However, I wish to raise a further issue touched on by my colleague, the member for Hanson. I refer to the relationship between revenue and expenditure.

The Opposition does not deny the Government's right to raise revenue. It is a fundamental obligation of Government to balance the revenue and expenditure sides of the ledger. To date, however, we have not seen the expenditure side of the ledger. We have not seen any indication of the Government's programme. We do not know whether increases in charges are warranted. We do not know whether increases in taxes are warranted or what cost-cutting measures are to be implemented. We have had the bold face of increases presented to us in this form without any justification for those revenue increases. If that happened in private enterprise, the person concerned would be out of business. If that person has not gone through the process

of rationalising his resources and finding out where he can save money, as well as where he can raise money, he is a very poor business man and will not last long in the business world.

My complaint to the Government is not that it has not the right to raise taxes but that it intends to raise them without demonstrating clearly to the Parliament for what purpose the taxes will be used. A number of statements have been made by members of the Government concerning the effects of the Budget deficit. As we all know, many of the items involved in the Budget deficit for 1982-83 were unusual items which we hope will not recur. I refer to the \$27 000 000 still not fully spent but allocated for bushfire relief. We would hope and pray that that is not going to occur again in the foreseeable future. If we look at those items which should not recur, we can delete any need for revenue raising in relation to those items. We also know (and have had the admission) that the Government has allowed its departments to overrun their expenditure allocations. Again, if we had a responsible Government we would have no need to raise extra taxes to meet those contingencies because the Premier and his Ministers would control their departments and ensure that they lived within their budgets. We will not have to cater for Budget overruns.

Of the deficit previously mentioned, we have a large proportion made up of items which we hope will not and should not recur. When we set Budgets we are not setting them for extraordinary items but we are setting them responsibly. We allow a certain amount of money for contingency items. It is certainly not good enough for the Government to come before the House without giving an expenditure budget. It is simply not good enough for the Government to say that we need the money because last year we had an extraordinary deficit. If the Government operates efficiently and manages its resources properly, it will find that the Budget deficit of the previous year will not be repeated.

We have already had the statement by the Premier that the Prime Minister has been very bountiful in his allocation to South Australia this year but, despite this bounty, the Premier has seen fit to savagely increase taxes across the board.

The Government does not want to be responsible: it merely wishes to raise taxes to cater for the largesse of its departments and the inadequacies of its Ministers. I have read the Governor's Speech and nowhere does it say, 'We are going to be a responsible Government'; nowhere does it say, 'We are going to pay attention to the expenditure lines'; and nowhere does it canvass the possibility of cost savings. In fact, every paragraph proposes programmes, many of which could be argued to be of very doubtful benefit to this State. So, I am suggesting to the House tonight that the taxation measures that are now before this State are unreasonable and reveal a wanton disregard for the people of South Australia.

This petroleum tax is one of these measures. It is the most iniquitous of all, because it affects everyone: it affects our ability to trade interstate, and it affects a large part of our way of life. It is the very last source of revenue if one is looking to raise the amount of money available to the State. If one believes that this is the last source of revenue, one wonders what will happen with the forthcoming Budget on other revenue items.

I ask that the Premier give serious consideration to showing this House how he intends to construct his Budget in the forthcoming session so that we can have an indication of which revenue matters really need to be addressed, how much money we really need, and whether the increases that we have seen in recent weeks are justifiable. That is accountability and responsibility. We in the Opposition have great

difficulty in supporting a Bill such as this, knowing that the impact will be totally detrimental to the State. If the Premier had had the honesty to come forward and say, 'These are areas in which we are going to cut expenditure; we have cut everything to the bone and we still need these items of revenue to cover excess in the Budget,' I am sure that there would be a little less dissatisfaction with this measure.

I am informed that we as an Opposition cannot reject a money Bill but can merely express our disappointment with the measures contained therein. With respect to the Premier's second reading explanation, I signal at least two questions to be asked in Committee: the first relates to the Premier's statement that due warning has been given so that the oil companies concerned can go to the Petroleum Products Pricing Authority to seek higher prices in order to cater for this increase in taxation. Later in the explanation, however, he said that the Minister intends to hold the value at the existing levels of 33.4c and 36.5c a litre. Of course, if that does not hold, the real increase in the petrol excise will be substantially more than even the Premier has stated.

The second matter, which has already been mentioned by my colleagues, relates to the Highways Fund and the way in which money is placed in that fund. We have the traditional situation in South Australia whereby money has been directed to that fund.

I believe that that practice should continue, because when we are collecting petrol excise we should be using the money collected from that non-renewable resource to improve the quality of our roads, to improve the efficiency of our vehicles or to find other energy sources.

I do not believe that the Federal Government has taken, or will take up, that challenge: it will continue to use money from excises and direct it to areas other than those to which it should be directed. However, at least in South Australia we have directed it to an area which is of benefit to the people paying the tax. It is an extraordinary tax. Obviously, if we are to direct that money to the general revenue area, it means that the value to the person paying it has been lost.

The member for Eyre (and I am sure that he will speak on this matter later) has already told us about the road situation in the northern parts of the State. The Government has already told us that the northern part of the State offers us the greatest tourist potential. There is a great need to be met here, and we have a potential source of revenue. However, despite that, the Government and the Premier wish to use that money for other purposes, purposes which have already been signalled in the Governor's Speech and which will be debated later. I do not feel inclined to support this Bill but will do so, even though, to my mind, it is a negative and retrograde measure.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON (Coles): This legislation represents a complete betrayal by the Government of undertakings which it gave to the electorate prior to the last election. It also represents a complete betrayal by the Minister of Tourism of undertakings which he gave in this House and which he reaffirmed to the South Australian Tourism Industry Council in respect of State taxation.

The Minister of Tourism undertook to consult with the tourism industry prior to the introduction of any State taxation which would have an impact on the tourism industry. He has betrayed that undertaking and, after the Premier's announcement last Thursday, I do not know how the Minister of Tourism can look the members of the Tourism Industry Council in the face. Certainly, I do not know how the Premier can face an electorate, having told the people of this State that the A.L.P. will not introduce new taxation or increase existing taxation during its first term of office. Therefore, the Government has betrayed promises on two

counts. By introducing this and other taxation measures, it has also imposed imposts on industry in South Australia which will have wide-reaching economic effects and which will certainly delay economic recovery.

I want to address myself particularly to the impact of this increased levy on petrol and diesel fuel in the tourism industry. In the short time that the Opposition has had to examine this legislation, I have tried to consult with various operators in the tourist industry to find out precisely the effect it will have on their operations. I have managed to consult with bus and coach tour operators, hotel and motel operators in the city and accommodation operators in remote areas, operators of caravan parks, and also marine operators who use both diesel fuel and petrol.

In every case the operator has said that this tax will have an adverse effect on their profitability and indeed will affect them in a way that could jeopardise the viability of some of them. First, I shall deal briefly with the effect of this tax on tourism in remote areas. I know that my colleague the member for Eyre will deal with this matter in greater detail. It is well known (and certainly this is well known to the Minister of Tourism) that one of the principal attractions in South Australia for tourists from overseas is the Flinders Ranges and the outback. The other principal attraction for those visitors is the Kangaroo Island region. In those areas diesel fuel is often used by tourist operators for normal heating, lighting and power purposes, which in the metropolitan area would be fulfilled by the use of electricity. Those tourist operators are fearful that powerhouse fuel costs are now becoming so crippling for them that they simply will not be able to maintain profitability.

An operation such as Arkaroola, for example, which is just one of several, but one of the better known ones, uses diesel fuel for both trucks and tour waggons in the Ranges area. That operation will be affected by these taxes on both petrol and diesel fuel because of increased freight costs for everything delivered to the area. It will be affected in regard to lighting, heating, water pumping, cooking and, in terms of its own road-making operations, in the use of its bulldozer, grader and caterpillar front-end loader, all of which use diesel fuel for road-making purposes. Every one of those functions that I have mentioned is absolutely essential for tourism operation in remote areas, and all of those operations will be made more difficult and less profitable through the imposition of this tax.

However, when I asked the Minister of Tourism yesterday why he had not consulted with the industry before the imposition of this tax occurred, in accordance with his promise to the industry that he would do so, the Minister had the gall to say that in giving that undertaking he was referring only to taxes that would have a specific effect on the tourism industry. If it is considered that this tax will not have a specific effect on the tourism industry, what tax will? The operators certainly believe that the Minister has betrayed them and that the tax will have a specific effect on their industry.

I refer now to another of South Australia's most notable and successful tourist operations, namely, Murray River Developments, which operates cruises along the Murray River. That is another operator that will be adversely affected by this tax. Murray River Developments use several thousand dollars worth of diesel fuel a year for their two cruise vessels on the Murray River, the *River Murray Explorer* and the *River Murray Queen*. The operation also uses diesel fuel at its Goolwa ship construction yards, and it uses it for some of the vehicles which are part of its Kangaroo Island fleet. The important thing about Murray River Developments, and indeed about many tourist operators, is that earlier this month they set their fares and charges for the forthcoming 12 months. Those fares and charges, which have now been

incorporated in tour pamphlets, on tickets and in the brochures of airlines, cannot be altered.

There is no way in which companies like River Murray Developments can recoup any of the additional costs that have been imposed by this tax for a full 12 months. In fact, if they were to increase their fares in response to the increased costs imposed by the Government, they would find that all the people who have booked in advance to take cruises or bus trips would go to the Consumer Affairs Department and that department would insist that the operators maintain their advertised fare structure. In short, if the Government does not get you one way it will get you the other.

I suggest that the Premier put himself in the position of operators like Arkaroola and River Murray Developments and recognise that these private operators have to provide a service to a given standard, have costs imposed upon them that they cannot recoup from their clients, and live within their existing budgets. If these private operators can do that, why cannot the Government live within its means? It is requiring businesses to live within their means and taxpayers to live within set wages, yet it is not willing to live within the means with which it has been provided by taxes and insists on raising more money. What is good for the goose is good for the gander and, if tourist operators have to maintain the services that they are already providing within a framework of increased costs without the capacity to raise increased revenue, it is fair enough that the Government should be required to do the same. However, that is not what is occurring.

The Government is going out somewhat in the manner of a highway robber and saying, 'We want more. We are insisting on more and you will have to do the best you can regardless.' If one comes closer to home and into the city of Adelaide, one finds that there are many hotels (there is the Strathmore, just opposite Parliament House) which use diesel fuel for heating purposes. A hotel like the Strathmore, for example, uses approximately 1 000 litres of diesel fuel a month, and the additional impost imposed by this tax will make a considerable annual difference to that hotel's fuel bill. That hotel also advertises its tariffs in advance. It therefore cannot recoup the additional cost that will be imposed by this tax.

The critical thing about this matter is that tourist operators must get certain returns and profits to enable them to continue and maintain their standards of service. On the one hand we have a Government saying that it wants to maintain tourism and that it recognises that tourism development can create jobs and benefit the economy of South Australia, while on the other hand we have a Government which has dealt a body blow to the tourism industry by introducing this tax and other taxes. This sort of thing simply cannot continue if this Government is to maintain its credibility. It is interesting to note that in recent times the Government has indicated that it relies very much on the private entrepreneurs in the tourism industry to co-operate with it in joint promotional campaigns to market the corporate image of South Australia on interstate and overseas markets and, indeed, on local markets.

Mr Ferguson: And doing a good job.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Yes, the Department of Tourism is doing a very good job, and it is doing the job, in the main, which was set in train by the Liberal Government. In fact, the member for Henley Beach in his Address in Reply speech enumerated almost all the initiatives for which the Liberal Government had budgeted and planned, prior to November 1982. It was interesting to listen to that speech and, with the sole exception of the initiative with the video tapes in travel operators' offices, every other initiative was that of a Liberal Government, and the funds

for those initiatives were provided for in the Liberal Budget of August 1982.

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: I have checked the honourable member's speech carefully and gone through all those initiatives and found that they were Liberal initiatives. But, of course, not one word of credit in that regard was given by the honourable member in his speech to his Minister's predecessor. I suspect that there will be a marked reluctance on the part of private tourist operators to contribute funds for corporate campaigns in future, because they will feel that the Government is taking money with both hands and giving nothing in return. Regardless of their wish to promote South Australia and their own facilities, many of them will simply find that their margin of profit does not allow them to make contributions of the kind that they have in the past been willing to make, simply because their budgets will not permit it as a result of these additional imposts.

Earlier, I referred to the effect that this petrol and diesel fuel tax will have on caravan parks. I contacted earlier this evening some parks with about the average number of sites, (around about 100 sites or perhaps something less than that), and in most of those parks their heating oil and diesel fuel bill for the last financial year has been in the region of \$4 000—that is, oil-fired boilers for hot water services in the amenities blocks in the caravan parks. If one assumes that there are approximately 200 caravan parks in South Australia, and that, conservatively speaking, only one-third of them would use diesel fuel, one sees that that is a significant impost on caravan parks and, of course, on the people who use such parks.

At this stage, I have made no reference to the consumer, the tourist, the visitor, and what it will cost those people in terms of putting petrol in their cars to get to caravan parks, remote areas, and the tourist regions of South Australia. I repeat, that the Minister has betrayed the industry, and I believe that he has lost a great deal of the good faith and the trust that he has tried to build up in the industry by failing to consult it in accordance with his undertaking. No-one in the tourist industry would agree with the Minister that this is not a tax which will specifically affect the tourism industry, any more than they will agree that the liquor tax, the financial transactions tax, and the other taxes (which I will not canvass because they are not within the ambit of this Bill) will not affect the tourism industry: they will affect the tourism industry adversely. The taxes will reduce profitability and, therefore, they will reduce employment. It makes the Government's promises about increasing employment look very, very hollow indeed when one examines the overall effect of this tax.

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Over the last four or five hours I have spoken to a number of tourist operators. I doubt that they would be listening with very much sympathy to the attempted interjections of the member for Henley Beach.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I point out to the honourable member for Henley Beach that it is very difficult for the Chair to work out who is actually making the speech. I ask the member for Henley Beach not to interject.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: I am sure that there would be very little sympathy for the views that the member for Henley Beach has been trying to express during my speech. I think it is fair to say that there is a sense of betrayal and a sense of suppressed anger within the South Australian tourism industry. That anger has been rising since last Thursday, when the Premier announced a range of taxes that would affect that industry.

As the Leader said earlier this evening, details of the tax were given to this House only yesterday. It is simply not good enough that there was not only no consultation in accordance with an express undertaking but also that there is deliberate haste in the manner that these Bills are being dealt with. That haste is depriving the Opposition of the opportunity to conduct the scrutiny necessary in the interests of the South Australian electorate, if we are effectively to fulfil our function as an Opposition in this House. I oppose this Bill in its present form, and I protest most vigorously on behalf of the tourism industry at the manner and timing of its introduction and the nature of the effects that it will have on the industry.

Mr LEWIS (Mallee): We want South Australia to win.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Who said that?

Mr LEWIS: I seem to recall that some people who are now sitting on the Government benches in this place were shouting that slogan from the rooftops not more than six months ago. They were shouting it even louder during the election campaign only nine months ago. I wonder who those people think is winning right now. We have before us several measures which are designed to raise revenue. Those measures will really help South Australia win? We have been informed that this revenue is needed in no small measure to meet the loss of revenue suffered by the Government as a result of a disastrous season, the fires and the floods and the way in which those things affected our economy. If that is so, in all the Government's wisdom and insight how did it devise a measure like this?

I wish to look at the incidence of this tax and where it will fall most heavily. It is reasonable to say that the tax will fall quite evenly on every litre of fuel sold. This tax is really an excise, but through a legislative contrivance it beats the rap on that score and it can be imposed on each litre of fuel. The money raised will not be going to the dedicated fund for the construction of roads, which is where similar taxation revenue has been dedicated in the past (and there was some justification for that).

I will carefully examine the effect of this tax, the incidence of its impact and the people that it will really hit. The member for Coles has told us that this tax will hit tourist operators. She said, quite properly and quite reasonably, that if any member of the general public had made a holiday booking or sought to make such a booking and then found that the fare they were to be charged was greater than that advertised, that person (and I would bet a penny to a quid—if I was a betting man—that it would be a Labor Party supporter) would probably rush off to the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs and complain. They would say, 'This company published a document stating that the fare would cost a certain amount and now it wants us to pay more. That is not right and it is not fair. Mr Government, come to my aid and save me from this wicked rip-off merchant.'

Given that what is good for the goose is good for the gander, I wonder whether the Government would be prepared to give the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs the authority and responsibility to investigate whether Governments kept their undertakings, commitments and election promises. Why do they not stick to what they have published? Why do they not have to answer when they are deceitful and when they rip off the public, when they promise one thing but do the opposite and slug the public. I will refer to that later. This taxation will fall most heavily on those people who have to drive farther or who have to use the greatest volume of fuel in producing goods and services for their customers. Quite clearly, there is one group of people in the South Australian community who will be harder hit than anyone else, and they are the people who live in rural communities.

Those people use fuel not only to plant and harvest their crops but also they use greater quantities of fuel to get from their homes to where they obtain services, and back again. They also have to use more fuel to get from their community to Adelaide to do business, and back again. They will be paying a disproportionate amount of tax over and above what the vast majority of Labor supporters in the metropolitan area will be paying. This tax will not really hit supporters of the Labor Party nearly as hard as it will hit the people who support members of my persuasion, those who represent electorates that are similar to my electorate. They are the people who will have to travel longer distances and who will have to plant and harvest the crops, and take those crops and animals to market. They will cop it.

Yet, we are told that this tax is necessary because the State has suffered disasters, not only a drought but also bush fires and floods. Which communities were affected by those disasters? The communities that will be hardest hit by this taxation were affected. How is that for compassionate consideration of the needs of a community! Most of the difficulties that those people face have been admitted by the Premier and were earlier referred to by my Leader, but the Government maintains that it must collect the necessary revenue to finance the deficit that will otherwise arise. So, the Government goes to the very people who can least afford to pay.

Not only is the Government destroying the confidence of the business people in those communities but also it is destroying their confidence and capacity to remain viable. I wonder how many members opposite would like to have to pay tax over and above what they were expecting to pay as part of their overall costs if they were half way through planning their living this year, bearing in mind that this tax will affect incomes. This tax is appalling and it is appalling that the funds will go to general revenue. I am distressed that no indication has been given to this House by any Government member as to why the Government feels that it is necessary to tax the motorist without using the taxes so obtained to provide needed improvements in the road network, which will increase the safety of road users and also decrease the cost of maintenance of vehicles. One only has to look at page 4 of today's *News* to see the headline, 'R.A.A. bitter on petrol taxes switch'. The report states:

The R.A.A. today announced that it was launching one of its most bitter, if not the most bitter, attacks on any Government that it had ever engaged in. It accused the Bannon Government of 'scandalous' behaviour in its plan to divert money raised from petrol taxes into general revenue. The general manager, Mr R.H. Waters, said the Government's intentions were dishonourable, despicable and deceitful.

I agree with him. It further states:

He said the R.A.A. was outraged to learn of the Government's proposal—

and so am I—

In the past, all money had been put into the State Highways Fund for roadworks only. Last week, the Premier, Mr Bannon, announced a 1 cent increase in petrol and diesel to boost State revenue by \$11 000 000 this year.

In State Parliament last night, it was revealed part of the money would be placed in the Government's general revenue account. This, Mr Waters said, was an underhand and deceitful means of financing the Government's Budget shortfall. It was an unprincipled decision that had not been accepted by any previous Government. 'It is a scandalous abuse of principles—

but we are becoming accustomed to that—

that will create a backlash,' Mr Waters said. 'The R.A.A. will be in the forefront of any fight to ensure taxes go directly back into roads'. The Opposition transport spokesman, Mr Brown, said today higher petrol taxes announced by the Government were foolish.

I do not know whether the Government realises that or not. Quite apart from being dishonest, despicable, they seem to be foolish. The report continues:

The extra 1 cent a litre tax on petrol and diesel would hit the heart of South Australia's economy, he said.

He then went on to instance the ways in which that would happen. It has been supported by the cogent arguments and good examples given by the member for Coles. The report further states:

It will increase the cost of transporting our manufactured goods to the Sydney and Melbourne markets.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: I thought that any sensible member of the general public who wanted to ensure that he or she could travel from point A to point B without being dislocated, if they had some misfortune in the journey, would join the R.A.A. to ensure that they could be—

Mr Ferguson: Who elects its leaders?

Mr LEWIS: Is the honourable member saying that the organisation is elitist?

Mr Ferguson: I am asking you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: You did not understand that members of that organisation can all vote and are entitled to vote in the elections?

Mr Mayes: But they do not all vote.

Members interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: Whose fault is that? It is a democracy.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Mayes: Try to go to one of their meetings.

Mr LEWIS: I have, and I had no difficulty. The report continues:

Seventy-five per cent of our metal products go interstate.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Question Time finished at 3.15 this afternoon. Interjections are out of order and interjections from members who are out of their seat are definitely out of order. I draw that point to the attention of the member for Todd.

Mr Ferguson: Scott, did we get it on the record?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: The article continues:

The industry needs support, not setback from the Government. It is foolish to tax the transport industry when the economy is so dependent on it. Almost every product made in South Australia has a significant transport cost involved.

That is true, especially if it is to reach the interstate markets that sustain our employment by producing the majority of demand for our industries. I ask again, in response to that foolish, deceitful slogan peddled around South Australia during the last election, 'We want South Australia to win', who is winning. If the abysmal attendance of Government members opposite makes them squirm in their seat at the thought of being reminded of their undertakings in that respect, I remind them of some of the other things that they stated quite unequivocally during the election campaign. Mr Bannon stated in his policy speech:

Unlike the Liberals, we will not allow State charges like transport fares, electricity and hospital charges to be used as a form of backdoor taxation.

If this is not a transport charge, I do not know what is. He also stated:

The A.L.P. will not re-introduce succession duties and not introduce new taxes, nor increase existing levels of taxes during our term of office.

I do not know how that squares with what is happening right now. He stated:

This Government will not get away with drip-feed taxation or backdoor tariff increases.

He was talking, he said, about the Liberal Government of the day, but that statement applies equally to his own Government this day. He went on and gave other undertakings about such things. Apparently 'the same people who

do not want to pay taxes were quite happy about paying increased charges' was a remark made by his discredited Deputy on 27 April 1981. The Deputy Premier—that man who has no hesitation about fudging anything—stated:

Charges are being put up quite simply to pay the State's bills—our right. The Tonkin Government was using electricity charges as a backdoor form of taxation.

Then, as has been mentioned by my Leader, the member for Torrens asked on 16 March 1983 this question:

Will the Premier give this House an assurance that no State taxes will be increased while the wage pause is operating in South Australia?

In reply, the Premier said, 'Yes'. What does his 'Yes' mean? Does it mean, 'No'? Is that a fudge or is it a smudge? How are we ever to know whether anyone in this Government really means what they say when they say such things as that which, within a short space of time, is easily and happily contradicted without the slightest qualm or quibble, with no conscience whatever.

At the present time, of course, everyone is trying to ensure that there are no wage increases. However, what can we expect from people who have higher charges to pay if we do not expect that they will seek higher wages? I believe quite simply that there will be demands for increases in pay to meet these higher costs that are imposed by the Government on the people of South Australia as it introduces these revenue-raising measures. There will be less left in each pay packet after meeting these increased Government imposts, and we cannot expect wage earners to cop this lot sweet—or can we? Is that stretching the credibility of the trade union movement too far? Maybe they are really trying to justify the grounds on which they can break the wage pause by saying that there have been demonstrable increases in charges which justify such a breakdown. It is imperative, however, that the wage pause continues if we are to have any hope at all of finding jobs for the unemployed, and this measure does nothing to ensure that that course of action can follow. I conclude by saying, as I began: I find it very hard to see how the Labour Party can reconcile itself with its election slogan, 'We want South Australia to win'. Who is winning?

Mr ASHENDEN (Todd): My colleagues on this side of the House have summed up very clearly the feeling of South Australians following the actions of the Bannon Government over the past few weeks. I do not think that South Australia or, for that matter, any State of Australia, has ever had such a dishonest Government elected to the Treasury benches. Today, we saw in the debate on the no-confidence motion the sort of Government that we can expect until—and I hope that it comes soon—the next State election comes forward.

This afternoon we saw the Deputy Premier fluster and bluster his way through the motion of no confidence, trying to convince the House that, when he told untruths on at least three occasions, in fact he did not tell untruths. We have seen him defended by the Premier and, of course, there is only one reason for this and that is that the Premier has told far more untruths, misled this House and misled South Australians even more than the Deputy Premier has.

As previous speakers have said only too clearly, we have a Government which promised the residents of South Australia that, if it were elected, there would be no increases in taxation whatsoever during its period of office. There would be no new taxes and there would be no increases in existing taxes. So-called backdoor taxation would no longer occur. What have we found? Again, members on this side of the House have spelt out only too clearly what has happened. Never before has a State had to suffer so many taxation increases in such a short time to such an extent. I believe that the Government is hoping that the public memory will

be a bit like the Deputy Premier's memory; that is, very very bad. After all, the Deputy Premier told us today that in a couple of his fudges, it was not really that he fudged: it was just that he could not remember vital information in relation to vital phone calls which he had made. Obviously, the Government feels that all South Australians are like the Deputy Premier: they have got very bad memories.

Based on the phone calls I have been receiving in my office, I have no doubt whatsoever that the people of South Australia will remember for a long time what this Government has done to them in the way of increased taxation. I know that, if we took an unpopular step when we were in Government, my phone would be very busy indeed for some time. At the time, I thought that, as I was a member of the Government Party, people were ringing to express to me their anger and concern at what the Government had done. Once it became obvious that we were in Opposition, I expected that that type of phone call would probably fade away. However, over the last week or two I have found that in fact people have rung me (and, incidentally some of them had rung Government members, too) because of the very real concern they felt for their future and the future of South Australia.

I might also say that some of them were very concerned because of the offhanded manner in which Government members took their phone calls. This is obviously a Government that has absolutely no concern whatsoever for the taxpayers of this State. This Government has taken the easy way out. If it were in private enterprise, it would have been out of business long ago because, as far as this Government is concerned, it does not have to do what private enterprise has to do; that is, compete in the open market. No manufacturer could possibly increase charges or the prices of his goods in the way that this Government has done. Any member of private enterprise would have to look at other ways of keeping his costs down. This Government has taken the easy way out. It does not have to worry about the fact that no other producer can compete with it.

Mr Groom: Tell us what would you do.

Mr ASHENDEN: I am very happy to answer that interjection. For one, I would not have employed 2 000 additional public servants which this State cannot afford, as this Government has done. That is the point: this Government is paying off the Public Service Association and the South Australian Institute of Teachers because of the debt it owes those groups, because of the money and the support those groups gave this Government before it was elected last year. Because of that, this Government is now in one hell of a mess and the taxpayers of South Australia are expected to pull this Government out of the mess in which it finds itself. One only has to read the letters to the Editor in the *Advertiser* and the *News* to see just what the taxpayers of South Australia think of this Government.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the Government's popularity is right out the window. If I were the member for Newland, the member for Brighton or the member for Henley Beach, I would not be very confident about coming back into this place, irrespective of how far away the next election is. I say that because of the number of angry constituents who have contacted my office in regard to these tax increases. The point is that the Government is not the least bit worried about their effects. In fact, the Labor Party, both Federally and at State level, has always been proud of the fact that it believes in increased taxation. That has been said on a number of occasions, and we are certainly having that brought home to us now.

Of course, the Labor Party kept that philosophy right out of the public picture before the last election, but now the situation has changed. As I have said, the public will remember this. Certainly, in my experience I have never known

so much anger and ground swell of complete disenchantment with Government as that which has occurred over the past two weeks. The dishonesty of the Government cannot be credited. No-one could ever have thought that any so-called responsible Government would dare to take the steps that the present Government has taken. Having regard to the fact that the Labor Party caucuses before it makes its decisions, all I can say is that that shows just how ineffective and ineffectual the Government back-benchers are. How could they allow members of their Party to bring in measures like this when their future depends on the people in their electorates?

Mr Groom: Forget the rhetoric; tell us your policy.

Mr ASHENDEN: We have found that the Government intends to bring in as one of its measures an increased tax on motor fuels. Representing an outer-suburban electorate, as I do, I know only too well just what this will mean. The Government's policy of providing as little service as possible through the State Transport Authority is forcing more and more people into their cars. It has increased bus fares to the point where only the wealthy can afford them. It now intends to increase the price of petrol to the point where only the wealthy will be able to afford it. How on earth are those people in the outer suburbs going to be able to survive? When and if a State Transport Authority bus comes along it is usually over-crowded and does not even stop to pick people up. Therefore, more and more people are being forced into their cars, and the cost of fuel to those people is a very real thing. Here in Adelaide by a number of cents we have the most expensive petrol of any capital city in Australia. We are supposed to be attracting industry to South Australia, but all the Government is doing is increasing everything it can think of, which the poor old business community will have to pay.

As has been pointed out so clearly by my colleagues on this side of the House, the cost of petrol is such that virtually every service will have to increase its charges. The way in which members opposite have shed their crocodile tears is incredible. In Victoria, as soon as Mr Cain was elected he said that he had no idea that the Treasury was in such a mess. We heard the Prime Minister saying when he was elected that he did not know that the Treasury was in such a mess. Here we had the Premier saying prior to the election that he was fully aware of the Treasury situation. He was queried publicly about this not only by the former Government, but also by reporters, by television and other media representatives in regard to how he could say that he would not have to increase taxes. The now Premier then answered that he had been fully aware of the financial situation in South Australia. However, on the very night that he was elected the first thing he said was, 'Well, now, things are going to be a little bit more difficult than we thought.' We now find that since the Government was elected all it has done has been to increase taxation, to hit the little man and everyone throughout the State. In 1982 the former Government reduced taxation in this State by over 5 per cent, yet the present Government has come in and increased virtually every tax and charge available to it. Not being content with that, it has also decided to bring in a new financial transactions tax.

Mr Groom interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: Again, that tax will have a disastrous effect on small business. The member for Hartley says he is vitally concerned about the small business man. However, the member for Hartley is supporting a Government that intends to increase taxes that will crucify small business in South Australia.

This Government has halved the development of the O-Bahn guided busway transport system that was supposed to have serviced the north-eastern suburbs. If I were the

member for Newland I would not be looking forward with any great confidence to any future election. The only thing this Government has done for him is halve a public transport system that was supposed to serve his district and mine. It has increased taxes and made things as hard as possible for people in South Australia.

The R.A.A., as the member for Mallee has pointed out, is a completely independent organisation, yet it is reported in the *News* tonight as having launched one of the most bitter, if not the most bitter, attack ever made on any Government. It has pointed out very succinctly exactly what these increased taxes will mean to the people of South Australia. We have the most expensive fuel of any capital city in Australia and this Government is increasing the price of that fuel even further. It will then wonder why private enterprise is not coming into or expanding in this State. The employees and employers realise only too well that we have a Government in this State that is determined to socialise the State, and pity help the taxpayers who are going to have to foot the bill!

Mr GUNN (Eyre): As someone who represents a large, isolated electorate basically dependent upon motor transport, I point out that, although the Premier has said he wants South Australia to win and has made extravagant promises about not increasing taxes and charges in this State, he now has the gall to come into this Parliament and introduce legislation to increase tax on fuel with complete disregard for the effect that this will have on my constituents. I will speak only briefly, but I wish to make one or two pertinent points about how this legislation will affect people in my district.

The member for Coles clearly explained the problems that my constituents in the tourist industry, particularly at Arkaroola, are already experiencing because of the high cost of fuel. This legislation will affect my constituents who are opal miners because they will, for the first time, be paying an extra cent per litre for diesel fuel they put through their stationary machinery. It will also affect the fishing industry and primary industry. One of the unfortunate aspects of this matter is that, for the first time, these funds will go into general revenue and not into the highways Fund for the upgrading of roads in this State. Wherever one goes in country areas, one finds that people are sick and tired of the shabby treatment they have received for so long in relation to the condition of country roads. They have had this situation right up to the teeth and yet now they will be forced to pay more tax, money that will not be spent on the roads.

I want the Premier (not the Minister of Local Government, who could not explain anything) to explain to these people what is happening. He has his colleagues running around my district trying to make good fellows of themselves, but I do not think we will see Senator Bolkus (who was so keen to go to Coober Pedy and make certain statements) or any other Labor members in my district for the next few months. The Premier has introduced a set of measures that make one wonder whether he had been reading *Alice in Wonderland* before he produced this document, because clear indications were given by members of the Labor Party in this House during the three years prior to this Government coming to office of their concern about the cost of petrol in this State.

We saw the performances of the Leader and his colleague the member for Stuart, as well as other Labor members in Opposition; then the Premier comes in here and announces, 'Whack petrol and diesel fuel up 1 cent a litre.' Talk about double standards! Some of us had to sit for hours and hours listening to their diatribe and see them crying crocodile tears.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GUNN: Let the honourable member write his smart Alec letters about other subjects. Let him go out and explain to the people the justification for this measure. Let him go out into the country areas and explain that. The tax is bad enough, but it will not even be used for roads. Let him explain that. It would take more than the slippery footwork to which we are accustomed from the honourable member.

I will clearly explain to my constituents in the northern part of the State exactly who is responsible for this increase. We were told a lot about electricity charges and, when one couples this measure with some of those charges, it will have a detrimental effect on my electorate. My constituents only want a fair go, but they have not had a fair go at this stage. They have to pay a surcharge on electricity; some are paying up to \$50 a thousand gallons for their water; they have the worst roads in Australia to drive on, and yet all they have the opportunity to do is pay more and more taxes. Let me make very clear to this Government, and to the House as a whole, that the situation will have to improve, because those people have just about had enough.

Let me give a warning to other members: if they think they are going to get away with travelling around the country making good fellows of themselves and telling people what they want to hear, the people are no longer moved by that sort of nonsense. They have had a confidence trick played on them. If one reads the policy document prepared by the Premier, one cannot help but come to the conclusion that there would be no more increases in taxes and charges and that we were going to have a Government that was committed to looking after these people who do not have what the man in the street expects to have. The Government has launched another attack on people in isolated communities. It obviously does not regard them as particularly important; it does not get a lot of votes there, so slam the taxes on them! I believe that after this latest effort the Government will receive even less support from these people. I oppose the measure.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): The debate on this measure has been wide ranging. There has been a lot of indignation and horror expressed on the opposite side. I regret that there has been very little realistic attempt to address the problem of the State's finances which has been outlined to this place in major statements on at least three occasions since December 1982. I think that is a pity, because we hear from the Opposition constant demands of the Government that it spend in a whole range of areas. I would suggest that many of those demands are quite legitimate demands in terms of increased expenditure on tourism, water resources, schools and all sorts of projects. However, when all these are added together, a very big package of expenditure is involved. Those demands for expenditure must be set off against the State's deficit situation, which is very grave indeed, and I do not think I can over-emphasise that.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am simply setting out the position realistically, and the Opposition ought to be seriously addressing itself to that issue when it talks about these measures. I have not attempted to hide the fact that before the election I made certain statements—unequivocal statements—about taxes. I said that as far back as December 1982 and, all right, it makes fine rhetoric for the Opposition to read it out and continue to castigate me for.

I suppose I would be surprised if they did not do that. However, I would hope that they took the argument a little further and recognise that this is being done, not because I am in the business of breaking promises or because I believe that it will be popular or acceptable to do so. Can that

proposition be put forward seriously? I am doing what I am doing in terms of these revenue measures because I must do so in the interests of South Australia. It is as simple as that. Unless these—

Mr Ashenden: Tell that to the taxpayers.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am telling that to the taxpayers. Unless these hard decisions are made, there is no way in the world that the demands of, for example, the electors of Todd can be met by the Government. Those legitimate demands can only be met in this way. The member for Todd interjected and said that we should sack 2 000 public servants.

Mr Ashenden: Who said that?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I understood that the member for Todd was advocating that as an alternative to these measures.

Mr Ashenden: I did not.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am grateful that I have been corrected.

Mr Ashenden: You shouldn't have taken them on.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I see, we should not have taken them on; so they should be sacked.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I suppose it is unproductive to become involved in this type of argument. I simply revert to the point that the Opposition cannot have it both ways. The Opposition cannot advocate that all sorts of things should be done in this community and with our services and at the same time say that the Government should do what the previous Government did, that is, sit back supinely and watch the revenue collapse. The gravity of our problems are immense and my Government has the courage to address them, unlike the previous Government. These decisions are hard, difficult, unpopular and certainly involve me having frankly to inform the people of South Australia that I cannot keep my promise on taxes. Those things are difficult, but they had to be done and they are being done.

While the Opposition has a right to draw attention to that and make some political capital, it should also recognise that, in the long-term interest of this community as a whole, if it ever expects to return to Government and unless these measures are taken, there will be very little of this State's public sector left and it will be very difficult to provide our people with a reasonable standard of living.

A lot has been said about various elements of this measure, particularly in relation to the expenditure of the money raised. I intend to address those arguments, because I believe that some important points have been made, and I think they should be answered. I was quite disappointed at the R.A.A.'s initial response. That large and important organisation issued an initial press release couched in the most extraordinary language. I have since had a discussion with the General Manager about that announcement.

Mr Ashenden: No doubt to tell them to toe the line.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I think that the R.A.A.'s statement was based in part on a misapprehension, and I certainly do not deny any pressure group or organisation the right to make statements about Government policy. The Government would have appreciated a little more consultation and discussion before a statement in those terms was unleashed on an unsuspecting public. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Minister of Housing): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): It seems that since this Government has come to office taxes have been increased in significant areas, and I would like to refer to those taxes generally. It has been pointed out on several occasions that the A.L.P. slogan for the last election was 'We want South Australia to win,' but it is fairly clear now that South Australia is losing by having a Labor Government in power. The Premier, in his policy speech that was delivered on 25 October 1982, stated:

Unlike the Liberals we will not allow State charges—like transport fares, electricity and hospital charges—to be used as a form of backdoor taxation. The A.L.P. will not reintroduce succession duties and will not introduce new taxes nor increase existing taxes during our term of office.

That was a hypocritical statement, which has led to many untruths since then. Transport fares, electricity charges, and hospital charges have been increased. In fact, since the Bannan Labor Government came to power, twenty-four State taxes and charges have been increased to date. So much for the statement that was made earlier. It is for this reason that the Government surely should be able to see that the Opposition cannot sit back and accept these taxes when it was clearly stated that they would not occur.

It is made even harder when one realises that the very important projects of Honeymoon and Beverley, for all intents and purposes, have been closed. They were projects that could have yielded the State many millions of dollars in revenue in the future. But that is not to be the case, so the taxpayer has to come to the party with more taxes. Likewise, the Government has seen fit not to contain Government charges or Government spending: it has increased charges and spending. We have heard that 2 000 extra jobs have been created in the Public Service since this Government came to power. The Opposition is certainly not talking about sacking anyone: it is simply talking about restraining public sector growth, because the only people who pay for increased public sector growth are the taxpayers.

We see now that many of the taxes are having a very significant and detrimental effect on the rural sector of South Australia. In the first place, they are affecting the unemployed. There are many Commonwealth Employment Service offices within close reach in the cities, whereas in country areas Commonwealth Employment Service offices are tens of miles apart, and people must travel many kilometres to reach them. Unemployed people have contacted my office to say that it is a real burden on them to have to travel in their motor vehicle (if they are lucky enough to have one) to see whether there is available a job that might suit them.

At present there is a proposal to increase petrol tax by 1c a litre, so these unemployed people will be hit right in the pocket. I wonder what they think about the Government's saying that it will help the unemployed. It has been said that, if the economy is to improve not only in South Australia but throughout Australia, it is imperative that people are encouraged to spend more.

How can people spend more when the various taxes and charges have risen? People are battling to meet just basic costs. Obviously, they have to try to put some money aside for the next charge or tax increase. All incentive to increase spending is being taken away. It is a very worrying situation.

Again, with the rural sector, particularly in Goyder, we see motor transport—both through motor vehicles, semi-trailers and trucks—forming the main basis to bring goods

in and out of the area. Unfortunately, the increase in fuel tax will mean that all costs in country areas will rise—I mean 'all costs'. In the building industry, the multitude of items needed to construct any building will have to be transported in. It will cost more and, therefore, will result in an increase in costs. The white goods industry is an area which, one would think, the Government would want to promote in any way possible. The transport costs on white goods is a significant factor, let alone getting the steel to the manufacture in the first place, and all these costs will increase.

The basic commodities, such as fruit and vegetables, will increase in price. Most major towns in the electorate of Goyder send a vehicle down several times a week to pick up fruit and vegetables from the market. The people in my electorate are going to be paying more for fruit and vegetables because of the increase in petrol tax. Primary producers themselves have to procure their superphosphate to sow the crops. Already, this is excessively expensive but now costs will increase further. The cost of weedicides to control weeds will also increase because of the petrol tax. It is not only a matter of getting material to rural properties but also of taking away produce, especially grain.

For once we found that the rural economy looked as though it was going to be on a good wicket. However, in the *Stock Journal* of 21 July is the headline, 'Crop boom leads likely lift in rural income'. The report states that there is going to be a large increase in the crop output for this year due to a better season. The next week it was followed by the headline, 'Wheat/barley forecast lifted again' and the report states:

South Australia's wheat and barley production forecasts have been lifted significantly by the Department of Agriculture following the recent widespread rains.

Members should not forget that the same journal on the front page stated that the drought will cost the economy \$460 000 000. The article goes on to explain that the drought has cost South Australia's economy about \$460 000 000 in lost income, according to the South Australian Department of Agriculture, for the season 1982-83. So, just at a time when the farmers looked like coming out of it, looked like getting on top of things and looked like getting South Australia great again, we find that these taxes are foisted upon them. I just wonder what their attitude will be to the current Government. Personally, I believe that they cannot wait until the Government is replaced, and it is fairly obvious now that it will be replaced. All farm machinery and vehicles are now going to cost farmers more to run, be it a truck, stationary motors, grain elevators or tractors: all this is at a time when we want our economy to start lifting again. It is a very disappointing situation for the rural economy of this State.

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

Ms LENEHAN (Mawson): I address my remarks tonight to my electorate and the effects that it is suffering through the economic recession. In particular, I refer to one aspect of the recession in which we have seen a response by the Fraser Government because we are now feeling the effects of that; namely, the effects of the wage pause. The wage pause has been one of the most cruel hoaxes that has been perpetrated on wage and salary earners of this country and, indeed, on my electorate. From what we have seen in respect to the wage pause, the lower wage and salary earners have been expected to maintain some form of living standard while, at the same time, prices for basic essentials such as food and household items have continued to spiral.

An honourable member: Don't you agree with your Bob Hawke?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable lady's grievance should be heard in silence.

Ms LENEHAN: The wage pause has effectively asked one particular section of our community to bear the responsibility for overcoming the problems of unemployment and inflation. I would see this as quite immoral from two perspectives: first, I do not think that one section of our society should be expected to bear that responsibility and, secondly, because it is that section of our community which is least able to bear that responsibility.

I would like now to support wholeheartedly the intervention which the South Australian Government has made to the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in respect to the cessation of the wage pause and the movement back towards a centralised wage fixing system. I would like to quote from the submission which the Government presented, as follows:

With inflation and unemployment still at unacceptably high levels the South Australian Government recognises that the immediate future of national wage fixation is probably the single most important issue to be addressed in the context of an overall strategy for national economic recovery.

That probably sums up my view in respect of the situation we have had for the past six months. The submission goes on to state:

The South Australian Government believes that, for any system of wage fixation to be durable and of real assistance in the process of economic recovery, it is essential that there be uniformity of treatment as between various income groups.

That is the point to which I alluded in the beginning of my address tonight. The submission continues:

Basic industrial fair play is the indispensable hallmark of a stable and durable system of wage fixation. A decentralised approach to wage fixation cannot achieve fairness and consistency under present economic circumstances. In the South Australian Government's submission these objectives can only be achieved by the adoption of a centralised system of wage fixation . . . Accordingly, the South Australian Government wishes to make its position clear on this question. The wage fixation system which South Australia advocates is one which provides for the regular adjustment of wage rates in line with movements in the consumer price index with increases beyond that being strictly limited to special and extraordinary circumstances.

Further in the submission we can look at the amount that we should be looking for in terms of a wage increase. The submission suggests:

The South Australian Government agrees with the Commonwealth . . . that present circumstances require that wage increases be limited to the order of 3 per cent to 4 per cent for the remainder of this year. If the arguments in favour of this limitation are adopted by the Commission, and if an increase for the March and June quarters of this year is to be given, then, provided the combined C.P.I. figure for these quarters is of the order of 3 per cent to 4 per cent, the South Australian Government is of the view that initially, at least, six-monthly adjustments should form the basis of the system.

However, one of the main contributing factors to the stability of any centralised wage system is the Commission being seen by all parties and the public at large to be in control of the wage-fixing process. In its submission, the South Australian Government has said that this element is best achieved through a system of quarterly indexation. In short, if the commission is to be seen to be in firm control of the wage-fixing process and if sectional pressures are thus minimised, quarterly indexation would better enable the commission to adopt the high degree of prominence that will necessarily be required of it. In concluding my remarks on this aspect, I would like to congratulate the Deputy Premier on the preparation of this submission because I think it is a very comprehensive and detailed submission, which I certainly wholeheartedly support.

The second aspect to which I would like to address myself tonight is the economic deprivation that many of my constituents are suffering. The people to whom I wish to refer

are those who are on fixed pensions and benefits. I certainly hope that we will see some relief for those people in the Federal Budget which is shortly to be announced. One can only wonder how people who are on fixed pensions and benefits and, indeed, how single-income earners who are earning perhaps \$250 per week and less, can possibly feed, clothe, educate and house a family. I am quite sure that members in this House would find it very difficult to do so. However, many of my constituents are expected to do all that on very low incomes. In conclusion, I would like to say that I sincerely hope that the Federal Government sees its way clear to increase pensions and benefits in the coming Budget.

Mr EVANS (Fisher): I am amazed at the member for Mawson who has just spoken. In particular, I am also amazed that the member for Brighton did not take the opportunity to express some concerns in either this debate or the one that preceded about the heavy penalties being placed on constituents by the most recent taxes that have been imposed by the Government.

When one increases public transport charges by up to 50 per cent, and when one increases charges for fuel quite substantially, the people who are most disadvantaged are those who are on the outer extremities of the city. It is those who, quite often, do not have the resources to have two motor cars because they are in new residential areas, and they are attempting to pay off sometimes not only first and second mortgages but third mortgages.

The cost of using public transport is automatically greater because they are further from the city. Therefore, the charges are higher, and that is the way in which the S.T.A. operated under the previous and present Governments. Then, if the people find that public transport does not operate frequently enough (which is quite often the case in these outer suburbs) for them to commute to their work place at a convenient time or, in some cases, if the people are not able to get to their work place by public transport, they have no alternative but to have a motor car. When they have a motor car, the Government says, 'We are looking after those in the lower income groups, the young marrieds and those trying to raise a young family. We came into Government talking about that.' However, automatically we hit them with some of the highest taxes that prevail in Australia in those areas.

I will not say that they should be ashamed of themselves. I will leave that to the people in my electorate, to those who live at Aberfoyle Park, Stirling, Bridgewater and in those areas, and to the people in the area of the member for Brighton at Flagstaff Hill, to those at Happy Valley in the area of the member for Mawson, or those in the area of the Minister for Environment and Planning down at Christies Beach, and so on. Those people will make their own judgment about whether members of the Labor Party should be ashamed of themselves.

The Premier has said that he apologises for having to break a promise: that is a simple way out of a difficult situation, namely, to make a plea to the people by saying, 'I am not that bad; I am sorry I have to tax you.' In earlier debates I have heard the Premier say that his Government did not realise that there was going to be a \$60 000 000 deficit with the S.T.A. Everyone knew that the S.T.A. was running into a large debt. It was accepted by previous Governments, both Labor and Liberal, that that was due to cost of providing a service to the community and that people who were disadvantaged most by fare increases were those who travelled the greatest distance and who had to pay the highest fare rate. They are the ones who are most disadvantaged: we know that. When the Labor Party was in Opposition it knew when it made the promise about not increasing taxes and charges that that situation that existed

in regard to the S.T.A. Surely no member opposite would deny that. However, automatically they increased fares by up to 50 per cent.

The petrol tax is a very expensive tax on this State. It is no good talking about South Australia's having a lot of industry or commercial enterprises coming here if we make South Australia the state with the highest tax rates in Australia, if we make ourselves one of the most expensive places to live in Australia. We all understand that Australia has no more than 15 000 000 people and of that population 12 000 000 people live on the eastern seaboard of the continent. That is our nearest consumer market. If we are a State with the highest cost of production and cost of living or even if it is as high as those in the major States of Australia, we are in trouble.

Some members opposite had no time for Playford and his approach in keeping South Australia a low cost State. But, it was for that very reason that South Australia got the motor vehicle industry and the soft good industries here, the development of Elizabeth, and many other industries that came to South Australia. Immediately upon the arrival of the era of the 1970s with Mr Dunstan, the Government wanted to increase the costs of production and to make our costs and our basis of living the same as the other States, which was when we got into trouble.

We began to lose jobs by the tens of thousands. That trend has not stopped and will not stop while we continue to make South Australia an expensive place to live. We must realise that if the charges that we place on financial institutions, on those who use vehicles for the transport of goods and on those who try to manufacture in this State or exist in business here are such that there is one job lost, that is one more person that those who are employed must keep by production or creation of wealth.

There is a limit to the number of jobs that can be created by those who are working. We know that every one person who becomes dependent on taxes to live in our community is yet another person that those who are producing must keep. I have not heard of anyone saying that they want to pay more tax to keep more people unemployed, although that is what we are doing in this State. It is no good our running away from that because it is fact. I know that when the Labor Party was in Opposition it wanted to win Government; it thought that it had great managerial expertise.

This Government thought that it would be able to get into office and, while saving Government money, employ more people in the Public Service and the teaching profession yet, at the same time, increase salaries to some of those sections to meet its election promises. Government members,

because of their limited capacity to understand how to manage finances, really believed in their own minds that they might be able to do those things. If we assess the financial expertise and backgrounds of members opposite gained in running their own businesses, we find that that experience is very limited. Therefore, it is no shock to those who have assessed the situation that they have failed.

Surely nobody with any business expertise would believe that at a time when the world economy and the Australian economy are in trouble any group of people can promise taxpayers that there will be no increases in taxes but many more jobs and expenditure in the public sector, because that cannot occur. We are now paying the penalty for those promises. My colleague made the point about what is happening with libraries. This Government is now charging libraries, which are community bodies, an 80 cent service fee for every book they buy for community use. When the Fraser Government placed a sales tax on books the Labor Party's reaction was to lead a campaign of petitions and objections to taxing people's opportunities to study, to be educated or trained and to be able to read. However, look what is happening now that the Labor Party is in Government—it is applying a tax in virtually the same form as that about which it complained. We all know that that is a farce and that this Government is hypocritical when it applies such taxes.

This Government has increased licence fees by 33½ per cent, yet to say that is not accurate, because if one takes the inflationary trend of 11 per cent into account that increase will, in fact, result in the Government receiving 44 per cent more through licence fees next year than it received this year. That extra money will come from the liquor industry, an industry that is already suffering and one that is involved in the tourist field where we are trying to keep costs down to get tourists here. This is going to be a high tax Government, one that hopes it can survive. I trust that all South Australian people understand what a sham this Government was when, in Opposition, it made promises during the election campaign, and it is a shame that the members for Mawson and Brighton are not speaking on behalf of their constituents about this shocking increase in taxes.

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

Motion carried.

At 10.28 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 11 August at 2 p.m.