

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 13 March 1985

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

PETITIONS: HOTEL TRADING

Petitions signed by 212 residents of South Australia praying that the House reconsider legislation allowing hotels to trade on Sundays were presented by the Hons J.W. Slater and Michael Wilson, and Mr Peterson.

Petitions received.

PETITION: ETSA

A petition signed by 40 residents of South Australia praying that the House call upon the Governor to establish an inquiry into the financial management of the Electricity Trust of South Australia was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

PETITION: WEST BEACH GOLF COURSE

A petition signed by 95 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to oppose the closure of the existing Marineland Par 3 golf course, West Beach, until a new course is completed was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

QUESTION

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that the following written answer to a question without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

REGENCY PARK COMPUTER

In reply to the **Hon D.C. BROWN** (13 February).

The **Hon. LYNN ARNOLD**: The allocation of Commonwealth-provided funds for computer development is decided by a widely representative State committee. These funds are considered within the guidelines for all schools, including all special schools. Regency Park Centre School's submission can be looked at in that context. The committee allocated \$13 000 to the State's Special Education Resource Unit for the development of assistance to children with disabilities who attend a wide range of special schools, including Regency Park Centre. The committee that prepared that successful submission has on it a representative from Regency Park Centre School. This committee is considering the development and use of technology for a range of students with special needs. In these circumstances, I wrote to the Centre in November 1984 inviting it to enter into discussions with Mr Alan Calnan, Special Education Resource Unit, and Dr Keith Were from the Programmes Directorate, with a view to preparing a revised single school submission for the State Management Committee of the Commonwealth Computer Education Programme.

It would be intended that such a submission would be co-ordinated with the system-wide project being developed to assist students with special needs. This advice was given in the belief that such discussions were more appropriate at this stage if a successful bid was to be made. In addition

the State Government introduced in the 1984-85 Budget special funding of \$2 000 for each special school for the purchase of high technology equipment. While this initiative has not met all demands, it is certainly an improvement on the efforts of the previous Government.

In general the State has provided, and maintains, Angle Park Computing Centre, which is available for the advice of all schools. It has supported the appointment of Advisers in Computing to Areas. Similarly the State supports professional development in computing for all schools.

I also advised the school on 14 December 1984 that 'while it did not receive a grant on this occasion it can be considered again in 1985'. That is happening at present with both the revision of the submission to the Commonwealth Computer Education Programme (mentioned above) as well as in the preparation of the 1985-86 budget as a bid on State funds. While not at this stage being able to advise that the full submission will be funded, I can assure the honourable member that a significant allocation towards the total cost will be made.

ELECTRICITY INTERCONNECTION

The **Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer)**: On 28 February I tabled an agreement relating to the electricity interconnection between power authorities in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. I now table a signed copy of the Government Memorandum of Understanding that I promised I would table.

NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION: STATE AQUATIC CENTRE

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

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion of no confidence without notice.

Motion carried.

The **Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Minister for Environment and Planning)**: I move:

That the time allotted for this debate be until 4 p.m.

Motion carried.

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

That, because the Government has persistently and deliberately concealed from this Parliament and the public serious problems associated with the cost and construction of the State Aquatic Centre, this House censures the Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Minister of Public Works, as the Ministers directly responsible for this project, and calls upon them to resign, and that this House also calls upon the Auditor-General to exercise his powers, under section 12 (1) of the Audit Act, to investigate all of the circumstances surrounding the escalation in the cost of and delay in the completion of this project, and to make a report on it to the Treasurer.

Exactly 24 hours ago the Minister of Recreation and Sport confirmed by his own statement to this House that he is guilty of misleading Parliament. His statement also implicated the Minister of Public Works, who must take the major responsibility for a massive bungle in the construction of this project. These Ministers have been completely negligent over this important community project.

The Opposition has been denied truthful answers to legitimate questions about a project which we now discover has been escalating in cost at the rate of \$50 000 a week since it was announced in July 1983—and that cover-up is continuing. The Opposition has been reliably informed that documents relating to the cost of this project have been removed from departmental files. That is why it is important for the Auditor-General to investigate this matter now,

before there is further action to hide the reasons for the rising cost from the people who will have to pay it—the taxpayers.

The Auditor-General must respond to a call from Parliament to investigate this matter if that call comes from all sides of the House. That will be the only way to ensure this massive cost escalation is fully and truthfully explained and not allowed to happen again, because this House can no longer trust the words of the Ministers directly responsible.

Let us consider their record in this matter. It is a project for which five different completion costs and six different completion dates have been given in less than two years; the completion cost now may be 90 per cent or more of the original estimated cost; the completion date is now almost a year behind schedule; the facility is not the 'world-standard' swimming centre promised by the Minister of Recreation and Sport; and the on-going costs the Government will have to meet over a 10 year period to run the centre were not quantified before the project was announced, and remain uncertain.

Despite all the questions asked in this House over the past year expressing concern about the mounting problems associated with this project, it was only last Thursday, according to his statement yesterday, that the Minister of Recreation and Sport sought information from the Minister of Public Works about the true reasons for the bungling of this project, the escalation, and the extension of the completion date. It was only yesterday this Parliament was given the true reasons for the massive cost escalation.

That is an extraordinary state of affairs. This Parliament has a right to be told about Government incompetence and mismanagement, and a responsibility to ensure something is done about it. By denying our right to the information, this Government has attempted to stop this Parliament from exercising that fundamental responsibility to hold the Government accountable. The Minister of Recreation and Sport, in particular, has been completely negligent in his responsibility to tell the truth to this Parliament. He may have been let down by the Minister of Public Works, but that cannot excuse his own incompetence and his misleading of this Parliament in an attempt to cover it up.

I have no doubt that, because the Government ran away from this matter yesterday, it has used the intervening period to cobble together alibis for the Ministers. Documents may be produced, selectively; more excuses will be offered; and diversions will be attempted. However, nothing can get around some of the public and Parliamentary statements which have been made about this matter, and the extent to which they fail to line up with the facts as we now know them.

Before establishing the guilt and incompetence of these Ministers, and justifying this motion, let me make clear that my Party recognises the need South Australia has for an aquatic centre. My Party, while in Government, obtained the Commonwealth funds which are now helping to build this centre. So, this motion is not about the desirability of having an aquatic centre: both the major parties have taken action to develop one. This is a matter of public record. Nor is this motion directed at contractors working on the project, namely A.W. Baulderstone.

While the Government has attempted to deflect criticism in that direction, the Opposition has never publicly named any company associated with this project. Whenever company names have been referred to, that has been the Government's doing. Nor, from the information revealed yesterday, is any criticism justified of contractors. The blame lies entirely at the feet of the Government. So I put the Government on notice, in its reply, not to use those diversions. This debate is about only the performance of the two

Ministers directly responsible to this Parliament, and through this Parliament, to the public, for the project.

Let me first recall some of the history of this project. In February 1981, the former State Liberal Government obtained from the Fraser Government a commitment to fund an aquatic centre in Adelaide on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The project was to be the first major facility to be funded in Australia under a programme designed to provide international standard sports facilities in all States. The former Government initiated a feasibility study to determine the most suitable site. That study paid particular attention to all aspects of converting the Adelaide Swimming Centre in the north parklands to an indoor facility.

While some advantages were established for this proposal, the disadvantages considerably outweighed those advantages. The disadvantages included the general arrangement of the pools, which was found to be poor for an enclosed complex and would involve substantial costs to upgrade, in addition to the cost of the enclosure. The former Government was significantly guided by those findings in determining that the most appropriate site for the centre would be the West End Brewery site in Hindley Street.

It is important to realise that the design approved by the former Government for this site would have been up to recognised international standards. This was admitted by the Minister in his statement to the House yesterday. There would have been an additional community pool as well as the Olympic size main pool and diving pool, and other facilities including a gymnasium, weight training, health and fitness centre, catering, and administration facilities and the like. In addition, of course, the development of this proposal would have provided two centres for specific user groups and general community use, Hindley Street and the north parklands. On the basis of all we now know about the cost of the conversion of the north parklands centre, it appears that the Government and the community may well have received better value for money, both now and in the longer term, from the development of the Hindley Street proposal.

The Minister also referred yesterday to the cost of the Hindley Street proposal and action taken by the former Government to seek additional funds. Quite clearly, the former Government took a responsible approach to that matter. When the possibility of cost escalation arose, immediate action was taken to limit any impact on South Australian taxpayers by application to the Commonwealth for further funding.

A number of other points need to be made about the Minister's references yesterday to the cost of the Hindley Street proposal. He talked about the timing of the purchase of the land, but of course what he did not go on to say was that the land was also purchased as the location for the city terminal for O-Bahn, so the cost of the purchase cannot be debited completely to the Aquatic Centre, and well the Minister knows that fact.

The House also needs to recall that the former Government did not push the Aquatic Centre during the election campaign in 1982. We had a model of the Centre, but we did not unveil it while there was uncertainty about the cost. Well the Minister knows that fact, too. The Minister has tried to make much of that cost. I ask him to confirm to day in the House that the tender price received from Hindley Street development in January 1983 was not as he suggested yesterday but was \$9.2 million.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That's wrong.

Mr OLSEN: It is not wrong: it is quite right. The figure received in January 1983 for the redevelopment of the Hindley Street site was \$9.2 million, and well the Minister knows that. It was a 22.7 per cent escalation, not the 90 per cent escalation that has occurred in relation to the north parklands centre. The Labor Party was always jaundiced in

its approach to the Hindley Street proposal. In a statement in the *Advertiser* on 10 March 1982 the Premier, as Leader of the Opposition, said:

There was a strong argument for using the money instead for covering and otherwise improving the existing north parklands pool.

The member for Torrens, as the former Minister of Recreation and Sport, emphasised the shortcomings of that proposal. On 25 March 1982 my colleague warned that the cost of converting and upgrading the Adelaide swimming centre to suitable standards was between \$6.8 million and \$7.5 million, because it would require major renovations to bring it up to world standards. It is one mark of this Government's irresponsibility that it completely ignored my colleague's warnings about that cost of converting the Adelaide swimming centre. It is interesting that those warnings have now proven to be accurate—spot on—and we see that from the Minister's statement yesterday about the escalated cost of the North Adelaide swimming centre.

The present Minister of Recreation and Sport was so keen to torpedo the Hindley Street alternative that just before the last election he released copies of a feasibility study into that alternative relating to its estimated operating costs. That study was based on assumptions which the former Government did not accept. The former Government did not agree that the Hindley Street proposal would have necessarily resulted in a significant ongoing operating deficit, and it made that clear publicly in responding to this study. Considerable private sector involvement in its operation was contemplated, and that, with appropriate marketing, could have defrayed virtually all the operating deficit at the Hindley Street site, as well the Minister knows.

The present Minister of Recreation and Sport, of course, had other ideas about the credibility of feasibility studies. Referring in a statement in the *Advertiser* on 12 February 1983 to the outcome of the former Government's study which found the Adelaide swimming centre unsuitable for conversion, he said:

You can always get a specific result from a feasibility study, depending on what result you want.

They are the words of the Minister of Recreation and Sport in relation to feasibility studies. That sort of remark is typical of the Minister's complete inability to treat issues such as this in a serious and responsible way. He simply has not had the experience in administration to make these important decisions. Rejecting a feasibility study out of hand with that sort of remark has now had serious financial consequences for South Australian taxpayers. For, of course, on 19 July 1983 the Minister announced with considerable fanfare that the Aquatic Centre would now go ahead at the Adelaide swimming centre.

The House should be aware of some of the commitments made by the Minister in that statement. He said the Centre would cost \$4.2 million. He promised it would be 'a world-standard swimming centre' which 'will put Adelaide well and truly on the international swimming map'. Well, he is putting us well and truly on the map, but for all the wrong reasons. The Minister also said in that initial announcement that the project would begin on 1 April 1984 and be completed by 5 October 1984. That completion period of seven months has now become at least 17 months.

I now propose to deal in turn with each of these issues: the cost of the Centre, its completion date and the standard of the Centre. First, I refer to the cost. The Opposition began to become concerned about this aspect early in 1984. On 29 March 1984, the Minister told the House that the cost had escalated considerably, although he did not quantify the escalation, or give reasons. In the *Sunday Mail* on 1 April, a report speculated that the cost had doubled. On 3 May last year, the Minister announced that the new cost

was \$7.2 million, a 70 per cent escalation within nine months of the project being announced. Again, no reasons were given for the escalation. It is important to appreciate, however, that this escalation occurred before any work began on the Centre.

Our concerns about the cost were heightened by the report of the Auditor-General for 1983-84 which revealed that the Government had made no attempt to quantify the operating cost of the Centre—a key point in the financing of this project because, under the agreement this Government has signed with the City Council, taxpayers will have to meet any increased operating deficit over existing deficit of the Centre for 10 years.

While the present Minister criticised the former Government for projected operating deficits of the Hindley Street proposal, it was an indication of the former Government's concern for strict financial management that action was taken to quantify those costs. This Government has simply closed its eyes to the question—a question which will dig deeper into taxpayers' pockets as the cost of this Centre escalates.

During the Estimates Committee last financial year, and subsequently, the Opposition has attempted to establish the reasons for the massive escalation in the cost of construction of the Centre. On three separate occasions—on 3 October 1984, 5 December 1984, and most recently on 27 February this year—the Minister referred specifically to delays caused by the weather as a major reason for the cost escalation. That is the Minister's advice to the Parliament. That statement was completely untrue—a fact finally admitted to by the Minister yesterday.

Finally, in the Ministerial statement he admitted how he had misled this Parliament. The reasons he gave yesterday for the escalation in the cost of the project to \$7.2 million before the tender was let and before the work started made no reference whatsoever to the weather. They related instead exclusively to design and cost matters within the responsibility of the Minister of Public Works. I will have more to say about the Minister of Public Works in a moment. However, in relation to claims that the weather has caused delays which have added to costs, there is some interesting information in the January issue of the magazine *Steel Profile*, published by BHP. It includes an article giving details of the steel input for the project. That article makes the following statement:

Welding was critical and subject to the vagaries of weather. Perfect conditions were essential. Fortunately, Adelaide enjoyed a mild winter without too many sudden downpours, and work progressed on schedule.

Clearly, that puts the lie to the Minister's statements in this Parliament: it really establishes that the Minister—

Mr Ashenden interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Todd to refrain from interjecting. He has done so considerably.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule whether the word 'lie' is Parliamentary.

The SPEAKER: It is unparliamentary.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Therefore, I ask that the honourable member withdraw that word.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! As I understand it, the phrase was 'giving the lie to the proposition', which is to be distinguished from an allegation of telling a lie. The honourable Leader.

Mr OLSEN: Someone has not been telling the truth and the evidence all points to the Government. This question deserves and demands more answers than this House has been given so far. Quite clearly, there has been a deliberate attempt to cover up reasons for the massive escalation in

cost. I believe those reasons lie mainly within the responsibility of the Minister of Public Works. As I have said, the Opposition has been informed that documents relating to this matter have been removed from departmental files. In other words, the cover up is continuing. It is well for the Minister to look rather concerned about that.

I call upon the Premier to arrange for the tabling, at the earliest possible opportunity, of all Government documents relating to the cost of this project and the reasons for the escalation. This House must be given all the answers—all the truthful answers: the attempts to fudge and to falsify must stop now.

An honourable member: All documents.

Mr OLSEN: All documents. The Premier, as Treasurer, must become involved to ensure that all the relevant financial information is given to the House. There must be no repeat of the extraordinary attempt by the Premier in this House on 27 February to evade responsibility for answering questions about the cost of this project.

Any responsible Treasurer would want to know why a large project has got so far off the rails—why a project originally costed at \$4.2 million may end up costing more than twice as much. Let the House not forget that yesterday's statement by the Minister of Recreation and Sport was completely equivocal about the final cost of the project. Even the Ministerial statement yesterday was not prepared to identify the final cost of the project. We still have an open end, an open cheque book in the Minister's response to this House.

I turn now to the question of the completion date for the project. Originally, it was October 1984, to allow it to open for last summer. That was the Minister's commitment up to the end of 1983. But in May 1984, in the statement announcing the cost escalation, the Minister revised the completion date to Christmas last year. Then in a statement on 24 August the Premier put the date back a little further, to 'early in 1985'. There was a further advance on that the following month. On 29 October, the Minister of Recreation and Sport said 'about March'. He said the same in this House on 5 December last year, but 15 days later, in a statement reported in the *Advertiser*, the date went back further, to 'April or May'.

During the last sitting week, the Minister stuck to the May date. In the *News* on 28 February, he was quoted as saying he expected the pool would be open by the end of May. However, later that very same day, in this House, the story began to change yet again. The Minister now states:

I understand that there is a line of problems that may cause delay.

He was not saying May now, and I can tell the House why. Within five days of that answer, the Director of the Minister's Department was advising the swimming association by letter that the Centre was unlikely to be finished before September 1985.

If the Minister's departmental head was able to tell the swimming association that, this House should have been able to receive the same information, but, instead, all we got were further attempts by the Minister to mislead and misrepresent. He did not want to have to tell this Parliament that the delay was now almost a year—that as a result, the national winter swimming championships scheduled for late August would be lost to New South Wales. It was up to the swimming association to make that unfortunate announcement last week.

The Minister of Recreation and Sport's duplicity in this matter is compounded by the question of the standard of the Aquatic Centre. I have recalled his words about it being a 'world standard' centre, putting Adelaide well and truly on the international map. Those words have been repeated by the Minister in many statements, and I can give the

House the sources. Clearly, the Minister has misrepresented the facts on this issue as well.

Evidence on the standard of the Centre was given to the Public Works Committee when it investigated this proposal late in 1983. That investigation led the Committee to conclude that the Centre could be upgraded to one of full world standard—that is to FINA criteria—at an additional cost of about \$2.5 million. However, the Government accepted the Committee's recommendation that this additional cost could not be justified, either at the present time or in the foreseeable future.

Of course, the Minister did not make any announcement about that. He did not say that the world standard centre he had promised would now be something else. And now, a further report prepared by a committee appointed by the Minister has established that the Aquatic Centre we are now getting will not be capable of being upgraded to FINA standards—that if we want a centre of that standard to stage the Commonwealth Games we will have to build another Aquatic Centre to cost a further \$14 million.

It is no use now the Minister's trying to say that the Centre being built was never intended to be of that standard. His whole justification for this project—for the change to the original plans of the former Liberal Government—was based on world standards. I have quoted his very words. This was back to the Dunstan days with a vengeance—when everything promised by the Labor Government was world class.

The Minister may be a victim of his own enthusiasm for this project, but that is no excuse for the hoax that he has perpetrated about the standard of this Centre. What is more, when my colleague the member for Torrens asked the Minister on 28 February whether the Centre would be up to FINA standards, he said that he did not know. Yet in his statement yesterday the Minister said that he had made that clear to Cabinet in his initial submission on this project that it would not meet those standards. Cabinet was told initially that it would not be up to standard, yet this Minister was prepared to mislead the public of South Australia and this Parliament by saying that those standards would be established, when clearly they were not going to be established. That further fundamental inconsistency in this Minister's statements is yet more confirmation, if that is needed, that he is simply not up to the job. The matters that I have put before the House today have involved in the main the Minister of Recreation and Sport. He has been the front-runner. He has sought the headlines. In doing so, he has made some blatantly and deliberately misleading statements about the cost, completion date and standard of this project which deserve the censure of this House.

I also believe, however, that the Minister of Public Works must accept his share of the responsibility, for it has been his Department which has been the project manager. The statement made yesterday by the Minister of Recreation and Sport makes quite clear that all the major factors relating to the cost escalation and the delays come within the responsibility of the Minister of Public Works. In this respect, the former Government adopted a procedure under which the Public Buildings Department made monthly reports to client departments on the progress of major construction projects so that any problems and cost overruns could be quickly recognised, and corrective action taken.

The Public Buildings Department increasingly took on a watchdog role, utilising the considerable experience of its staff to ensure that the specifications of client departments were met, within the bounds of economic responsibility. However, this system now has obviously broken down under this Government to the extent that this project has been hopelessly mismanaged by these two Ministers. The original costs got out of control and the Minister of Recreation and

Sport took no action to contain them—deciding instead to mislead this Parliament and the public about the reasons for the escalation.

The issues that I have put before the House this afternoon raise a whole series of questions. For example, why did the Minister of Recreation and Sport, on at least three separate occasions in this House, blame the weather for the escalated cost of this project, then yesterday admit that the weather had virtually nothing to do with it? Why did the Minister of Recreation and Sport promise publicly and repeatedly that this Centre was of world standard, yet tell his Cabinet that it was something less?

Why did the Minister tell this House on 27 February that the Centre would open in May when his Department told the swimming association that the opening had been delayed until September, forcing the cancellation of State and national championships? Following criticism in the Auditor-General's Report for 1984 that the Government had made no attempt to quantify the operating costs that it will have to meet over a 10 year period for this project, what action has been taken to quantify those costs, what are those costs and have they escalated following the massive rise in the construction cost of the project? What arrangement does the Minister of Public Works have for keeping client departments informed of the progress of projects and their cost and has he discontinued the procedures used by the former Government for providing monthly reports to client departments?

On how many occasions have the Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Minister of Public Works, or their officers, discussed the problems associated with this project, on what dates did those discussions take place, and what was the outcome? Will the Premier have tabled in this House all the Government documents relating to the cost of this project and the reasons for the escalation in cost? Will the Premier have legislation introduced to allow the Public Works Committee to investigate projects after they have been completed?

I raise these questions because they are important and relevant to the central issue of this Government's competence to deal honestly and responsibly with taxpayers' money. I suspect that none will be answered when the Government replies, despite the advice being handed over to the Minister at the moment. The Government will try to attack the Opposition with more misrepresentations and red herrings. I can talk a little longer if the Premier needs more time to brief his Minister on how he should reply to the questions that are being asked in the Parliament today.

This Government has refused to be accountable and responsible to this Parliament for, if the Government had been interested in accountability and responsibility, it would have been prepared to allow the Parliament to debate and decide this matter yesterday. The evidence that has become available as a result of Opposition questions about this project has exposed a Government incapable of managing a project which, in relative terms, is a minor one in the Government's overall building programme.

What confidence does that give the taxpayers of this State that this Government is capable of honestly and responsibly handling their money in any area? The simple answer is that they can have none. The massive escalation in taxes and charges during the past two years (of almost 40 per cent) has not given this State better Government or a brighter future. Rather, we have a Government now drowning in its own incompetence. We have Ministers like these the subject of this censure motion (washed up in the Labor Party's Caucus arrangements which seem to reward the incompetent and retard the innovative), but they are all at sea when it comes to meeting their responsibilities to this Parliament and to the people of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: It is all very well for the member for Hartley, Mr Speaker. For their persistent failings and their deliberate attempts to cover them up, Ministers deserve the censure of this House, and Parliament must seek to have this whole matter investigated and reported upon by the Auditor-General.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER (Minister of Recreation and Sport): What hypocrisy!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call on the Leader to come to order. He well knows that he should not interject, and I ask him to refrain from doing so.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: What blatant hypocrisy! We have listened for the past half-hour to the Leader of the Opposition denigrating everything and everyone associated with the North Adelaide swimming centre project: not necessarily a denigration of me as Minister of Recreation and Sport, but indeed a denigration of the project. What the Leader said regarding the other parties associated with the progress of that project was a denigration of and a reflection on the contractors, on the public servants and everyone else associated with the project, including the architects, consultants, and so on.

The Opposition is trying to run away from that denigration. As far as I am concerned (and I say this without equivocation), there has been no cover-up: there is no need for alibis, excuses, or diversions, because the Leader's statement was hypocrisy. I do not intend to repeat the statement that I made yesterday to the House. That statement contained the facts of the matter, and the Opposition can read into it whatever it likes. That is its prerogative. However, those are the facts of the matter, and all those facts would have been known for a period of time.

Certainly, the project has been a difficult one. The Opposition has selectively quoted from the document or publication *Profile*, of which I have a copy and which puts the aquatic centre among the four leading projects in Australia for last year, including the lights at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and other such projects of some magnitude. The Leader selectively quoted for his own purposes a specific aspect of this technical and trade publication, which pays a tribute to the Aquatic Centre. I shall not quote as selectively as the Leader of the Opposition chose to do. It States:

In due course, Boral Cyclone Ltd won the steel fabrication contract, and the building contract was awarded to A.W. Baulderstone Pty Ltd. The sheer size of the eight 20-tonne beams was a major consideration throughout the job.

They formed a large part of the 567 tonnes of steel in the main frame, and at 46 m were the longest spanning roof beams to go into a South Australian building project. The beams and columns had to be delivered and offloaded into their approximate positions within the structure. This meant working back from the furthest point to access, leaving room for mobile cranes to move and work.

This complex storage job meant that Baulderstone's project manager, Vic Vieceli, had to work with the utmost precision... His logistical challenges were extraordinary...

The beams were fabricated from 12 mm and 45 mm steel plates. Their sheer size prevented them being sand blasted and primed before fabrication, as Boral Cyclone was unable to get permission to transport the beams to Wingfield. Consequently, the heavy plate sections had to be sand blasted and primed before fabrication.

I think that that gives an indication of the size, magnitude, and complexity of this project. Indeed, it shows the difficulties that the contractors had during the initial stage. The Leader of the Opposition has indicated that the delays were not caused by inclement weather. However, during June and July of 1984, when the steel fabrication—the very things that I mentioned a moment ago—and the concrete pour were taking place, we did have inclement weather, which had an impact on the progress of the project at that time. That was only one of the reasons.

I might mention that one of the reasons for the delays was the very adverse media reaction precipitated by the sort of nonsense that the Opposition has been indulging in. Indeed, at that time one of the subcontractors did not proceed, as he was not sure, following the adverse media publicity precipitated by the Opposition, whether the project was going to proceed. Indeed, that subcontractor did not go on and employ additional staff.

The Opposition has tried as much as possible to denigrate and, indeed, sabotage the project for political expediency. As I have said, there is no need for the Government or me to cover up. I have answered all the questions that have been put to me in this House as truthfully as possible having regard to all the available information. In relation to project cost escalation, yesterday I mentioned as an example the Hindley Street site. On 25 June 1982 I asked the then Minister of Recreation and Sport, the member for Torrens, the following questions:

Has the cost of the proposed Aquatic Centre escalated to over \$9 million? Has the Government purchased the site and, if not, who owns the Hindley Street, Adelaide, site? Who will be the project managers for planning, building and development of the Aquatic Centre? Has the development application ever been placed before the Adelaide City Council and the Planning Commission and, if so, who lodged the application?

The reply to those questions came back on 25 June 1982. The answer to the first question was as follows:

The latest cost estimate shows a figure of \$8 million for construction, plus fees for land acquisition, which gives a total of \$9 million.

The answer to the question 'Has the Government purchased the site?' was:

No, but negotiations are proceeding with the South Australian Brewing Company for purchase of the land.

The reply to the third question 'Who are the project managers?' was:

Fargher Maunsell Proprietary Limited.

The reply to the question 'Has a development application been made?' was 'Yes'. It has come to my notice that at about the time I asked those questions there was a report to the then Minister of Recreation and Sport (the member for Torrens) from the project directors, Mr Oxlad and Mr Thompson, indicating that, although there was no problem in obtaining the necessary funds for the project, 'it is necessary for the Government to guarantee a minimum annual return to the lessees at an interest rate over 25 years'. Although that latter comment does not really apply, this was a report to the Minister recommending that the Commonwealth Government increase its \$3.75 million grant by \$2.35 million, that is, to \$6.1 million. At the time of answering my question to the Minister, the actual cost of the project, according to this document, was estimated to be \$12 million. So who was trying to cover up?

The then Minister covered up all right—it was a deception. In fact, the Minister answered my question knowing full well that a departmental document indicated that the cost would be \$12 million. That was a deception. At that time the Government also wrote to the then Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, and that letter proves that the Tonkin Government was deceiving me, the questioner. The letter, written in October a few months later dealing with an aquatic centre project in South Australia and signed by the then Premier, David Tonkin, states:

I refer to recent correspondence between my Minister of Recreation and Sport, Michael Wilson, and your Minister of Home Affairs and Environment in which an increase was sought in the Commonwealth Government's grant to South Australia under the International Standard Sports Facilities (ISSF) programme for the State Aquatic Centre project.

As you may be aware, the design and tender documentation for the State Aquatic Centre will be completed in early November and, in order to meet the time and budget constraints placed upon the project, it is critical that detailed funding arrangements

are finalised as soon as possible prior to the State Government giving its approval to proceed with construction. The latest cost estimate for the project in April 1982 prices is \$10.23 million ... However, due to the effects of increases in labour and material costs during the construction period, the total cost is expected to escalate to \$12.17 million

I believe that that proves very conclusively just how hypocritical the Leader of the Opposition has been.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: And selective.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: And he has been selective in choosing his words this afternoon. I have nothing to hide in relation to this project. I am rather proud of the fact that sport in this State, and indeed the swimming fraternity of South Australia, will at last have facilities, as I said previously. The previous Government spent about \$800 000 on feasibility subsidy fees but it got nothing for that money—absolutely nothing.

As I have just shown, the project cost could have escalated to twice the original figure. I am rather proud to be associated with such a project. Certainly, we have had some difficulties from the building point of view, but there are not too many projects—Government or otherwise—of that complexity or magnitude. If the member for Chaffey wishes, I can give him some examples that relate to his term of office. The honourable member will well know of the difficulties that occurred during his term of office as Minister of Water Resources associated with the Little Para filtration plant, including the reasons for those difficulties and the delays that existed. No-one got up in this House and blamed him specifically for any difficulties associated with building projects.

We must keep an eye on the public purse to ensure that extravagance and waste are contained so far as Government buildings and projects are concerned, but all the facts were put before the Public Works Standing Committee, which endorsed the project. I will not blame anyone, such as the contractors or subcontractors, and on Thursday last I had frank and fruitful discussions with the project managers, the PBD, and the contractors. I appreciate the problems that they have experienced. Some of them have not been insurmountable, but they have caused difficulties nevertheless.

Members can laugh as much as they like but some factors are beyond their control. Inclement weather is only one impediment experienced on that project. I have made very clear that the present difficulties relate to the roof sealing material. We have nothing to hide about that: it is perfectly legitimate. After the material was partly in place it was found that there could be condensation problems, so work did not proceed. Had it proceeded, of course, we would all have been very critical of the finished product.

Another aspect to be considered is the fact that the Adelaide City Council is the actual owner of the pool. Of course, we have an arrangement with the council, whereby it is to maintain the pool in good condition. Work has been proceeding, but we found that some of the facilities that had been there for 15 years or more had deteriorated. A moment ago I was accused by the Leader of the Opposition of not being able to give a concise and definite answer as to the final cost: that is simply because the project managers have not been able to provide that information.

As I said, the Adelaide City Council is required to maintain the pool in a certain condition, but we are not sure what work still needs to be done on the pipes and on the pool and diving tower. Once that work is assessed and completed it is the Adelaide City Council's responsibility to repay at least part of or the whole of the cost of that part of the project, because of the arrangement whereby the pool will be kept in good condition. We cannot supply that figure. It is regrettable that the South Australian Swimming Association will not be able to conduct the winter championships.

We had hoped that it could do so, but nevertheless that was not to be, and we have advised the Association accordingly.

Some insidious reason was given by the Leader of the Opposition as to why we did not tell him before this. We were not sure when the project was going to be completed. The championships were going to be conducted some time in August. Rightly so, the South Australian Swimming Association wanted the opportunity to acclimatise itself and have meetings prior to the championships so that it could be sure that it was able to conduct them in a new facility and that the standard of competition was as we expected it to be.

There have been consistent rumours and allegations about cost escalation. We have heard from both the members for Bragg and Torrens that a figure of over \$10 million will be the final cost of this project. That is a rumour—an allegation—which cannot be substantiated. I gave the anticipated figure yesterday, namely, about \$7.5 to \$7.6 million. That includes, of course, the restoration and other work that needs to be done on the pool.

Opposition members have not really assisted the South Australian swimming fraternity, and they have not assisted South Australia by denigrating this project. Indeed, they are not denigrating me as the Minister of Recreation and Sport but are denigrating those associated with the whole project. I make clear that these rumours have had an impact on the building of the facility. The Leader of the Opposition can smile. He ought to hang his head in shame rather than laugh at the situation because it is fairly obvious that the whole purpose of this exercise is feigned indignation—it is not genuine. The Opposition is using this issue—and it is desperate for issues—for political expediency only. In so doing it is denigrating not only the swimming centre but also South Australia itself. As I said previously, I am proud to be associated with the fact that in South Australia we are at last providing standard facilities. We can use the words 'international', 'world standard' or whatever we like; that can be determined from whichever way one looks at it.

The Hindley Street project could not accommodate the Commonwealth Games, simply because it had a provision for only 1 000 seats and 500 temporary seats. As a consequence, that is one of the criteria of FINA standards for holding Commonwealth or Olympic Games or world championship events. Do not get carried away with the fact that the standards as expressed by the member for Torrens were of world class for Hindley Street. The Commonwealth Games feasibility study was not thought of when the project was first mooted: the project was halfway completed before we made a decision in that matter. It is the first time ever that we have seriously considered making application for the Commonwealth Games. We ought not to be criticised for that. I know that the member for Hanson has raised this question in the House over a number of years. However, the feasibility study has not been completed. I do not know how the member for Torrens, who raised the matter in this House, came to be in possession of the document.

I challenge the member for Torrens to tell me how he came to be in possession of a document marked 'Confidential', a draft report only, which had not been to me, as Minister. I had not seen it. The first time I saw any part of that document was when a member of the press had it in his possession. I challenge the member for Torrens to tell me how he came to be in possession of that document. If it was not a stolen document, how in heaven did he get hold of a document that was marked 'Confidential', which had not been assessed by me, as Minister, or by the Government? I will be looking forward to his explanation for using that document in a public place, the Parliament, and also of how the press got a copy of the document. I did not see it, but I believe the member for Torrens actually quoted

on television from that document. He did have it in his possession and it is stolen, leaked, whatever.

An honourable member: Watergate!

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: I do not think it is as serious as Watergate, but I think it indicates the attitude that the Opposition adopts, regardless. It is unethical. The member for Bragg, who grins in his place, is a member of what I describe over there as the 'pharmaceutical mafia'. The Leader of the Opposition had better be careful of that group. If he gets the wrong prescription he could finish up with a stabbing pain in the back. I think the 'pharmaceutical mafia' are highly dangerous people. I challenge the member for Torrens to tell the House how he came to be in possession of a stolen document from the Department of Recreation and Sport, how he came to know of the details of that report, and why he gave it to the press.

I do not think I need cover all the details contained in my Ministerial statement yesterday. That covered all the points that needed to be explained to this Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition, as I said, has been trying to make political points out of a project which will be of benefit to South Australia, and to the sporting fraternity in particular. It is a public pool and it will be the first time in this State that we will have an Aquatic Centre that can be used for national and international competition. If honourable members check the FINA standards and make inquiries at the swimming association, they will see that championships have already been held at that complex, although they have not been of Olympic or Commonwealth Games standard; those games are a long way away anyway. The Public Works Standing Committee was aware that it is a public pool and reference was made to that in its report to Parliament. In making its decision to cover the Aquatic Centre, Cabinet also knew that. There has been no cover-up in regard to the standards we need for the community of South Australia and a public pool, which belongs really to the Adelaide City Council and to the public of South Australia.

I do not think the Leader of the Opposition should denigrate a project that is in the interests of South Australia. I am proud to be associated with it. The Aquatic Centre will be there for a long time, giving pleasure and providing entertainment to hundreds of thousands of South Australians in the future.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON (Torrens): If ever the general public needed to be convinced of the bankrupt nature of this Government, they would only have to be in this House today, because this would have to be the most disgraceful and abysmal performance that I have seen in my time in this House in relation to a censure motion. It is absolutely unbelievable, absolutely pitiful. It was so bad that the Premier left the Chamber while his Minister, who is being censured, was speaking, and he was out of the Chamber for most of that speech. It is absolutely incredible that a Premier should do that to his own Ministers and, in fact, throw his Ministers to the wolves.

In any precedent that I have ever known in this place the Premier was always first to rise to defend his Ministers. This is an absolutely disgraceful performance by the Premier. He tried to wash his hands of this matter last week (or the week before) when he was asked if he would investigate the escalation in costs of this Aquatic Centre. He did not even accept the question, although it was a legitimate question to the Treasurer of this State. That is the man who leads this State; that is the man who leads this bankrupt Government. It is a day of shame for this Parliament to see what we have witnessed today.

Let me turn now to the performance of the Minister of Recreation and Sport, the Minister who, as usual, had to play the buffoon; he cannot avoid it. He started off trying

to be rational and reasonable and talk down the debate. They had worked it out: 'We are in trouble over this, we had better try to talk it down, make it low key.' Again, he had to play the buffoon, because that is what the Minister is and what he continually does in this place.

The Minister of Recreation and Sport accused this Opposition of denigrating the contractors in this issue and then went on to denigrate them himself. In fact, he blamed everyone for the failure of this project, for the troubles it is having. He blamed the Adelaide City Council. He felt sorry for the contractors and the problems they had, but it was not his fault; it was the contractors' fault. That is the Minister who carries this issue for the public of this State. All the time, his colleague the Minister of Public Works, the man who is responsible for the construction of this facility, was sitting next to him. The Public Buildings Department is the project manager, and other people are not responsible. The Minister of Public Works is responsible for the construction and the faults that have occurred with this project.

The Minister of Recreation and Sport spent the first five minutes of his speech reading a tract from a BHP magazine. That is the capability of this Minister! He then blamed the media. He blamed the Opposition and the media for slowing down the project. We know the problems that the Minister has been having with the media over the last few days, as listeners to 5DN would have found out yesterday, when the Minister criticised them under Parliamentary privilege in this place, and yet he accuses the Opposition of denigrating the contractors. He denigrates everyone, everyone but himself: everyone is responsible except the Minister and his colleague the Minister of Public Works.

He then spent a considerable amount of time quoting from documents of the former Government. He mentioned many Government documents. He quoted letters from the former Premier to the Prime Minister, but what we want to know is where are this Government's documents. The Minister spent all his time quoting from Opposition documents, but where are his documents? We want those documents tabled in this House. We want all the cost projections and the monthly reports from the Public Buildings Department. Enough of quoting from the former Government's files. The Minister should bring out his own, and let us have a look at them.

Let me deal briefly with the Hindley Street aquatic centre. The Minister said that \$800 000 had been spent for nothing, but it was spent for nothing because the present Government cancelled the project. The Minister was the one who cancelled it.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: What happened before the election?

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Regarding what happened before the election, let me emphasise one or two points. Concerning that aquatic centre and its management, letters to the Prime Minister proved the difference between the former Government and this Government in respect of financial responsibility. We wrote to the Prime Minister. We wanted extra money for this State before we decided to go ahead with the project. Any responsible manager would have done that, because one does not proceed with a project unless one has the money to pay for it. That is why the letters went to the Prime Minister, and we do not mind how many of those letters are read to the House. It is an indication of the financial responsibility of the former Government and what will be the next Government under the leadership of the present Leader of the Opposition.

Let me lay that furore to rest once and for all. The former Government did not announce the aquatic centre before the last election. We did not show the model publicly, because at that stage we did not have all the financial information in our hands, and we were not going to mislead

the public. What an impossible Minister we face at present! The Leader has given the House a sorry saga of bumbling and incompetence on the part of the two Ministers concerned. He has given us a litany of disaster. It is a disastrous project management for which the Minister of Public Works must accept responsibility.

The Leader gave the House a litany of ham-fisted management and public mishandling of the issue by the Minister of Recreation and Sport, as well as the incredible irresponsibility of the Premier, who has tried to wash his hands of the matter and pass it over to his incompetent colleagues. It cannot be emphasised enough that the project management of this facility is in the hands of the Public Buildings Department. It does not matter what the Minister of Recreation and Sport says about trying to put the responsibility on other people: the two people in this House who are directly responsible are the Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Minister of Public Works, and the person who is finally responsible is the Premier. The sooner the public are aware of that the better.

Dealing in detail with the way in which the Minister has misled the public of South Australia, I refer to reports in the *News* of 14 July 1983 and 3 May 1984, the *Northern Standard* of 20 July 1983 and 9 May 1984, and in the *Advertiser* of 30 September 1983. The Minister continually referred to the international world class facilities. Indeed, the BHP publication *Profile*, from which he quoted so extensively, talks about international world standard facilities. Yet, on 12 February 1983 in the *News*, when he announced the cancellation of the Liberal Government's proposal for the Hindley Street aquatic centre, he said, 'There is a problem with North Adelaide because of the way it was built in the first place.'

In the same article, he was warned by the then State Director of the South Australian Swimming Association, as follows: 'To renovate North Adelaide, I fear, won't still achieve the standard we have in other States.' The Minister then had the report of the Public Works Standing Committee. However, before quoting from that report, I shall quote from the State Aquatic Complex Feasibility Study prepared for the former Government in October 1981. The Minister had this report, dealing with the North Adelaide Centre, while he was in Opposition. Indeed, I gave him a copy while I was Minister and he had it in his Department. On page 21, regarding the North Adelaide centre, that report states:

It has been estimated that the cost saving over a new facility on an open site which has no particular building constraints would be approximately \$1.4 million to \$1.6 million.

The Public Works Standing Committee put that figure at \$2.5 million. The feasibility study continues:

However, the quality of the resulting complex would be far inferior to a new complex.

That is, the North Adelaide complex. Then, we have the detailed reasons why the North Adelaide swimming centre was of no use as a facility providing international standards. In this respect, at page 15 of the report, the feasibility study states:

(1) The general arrangement of the pools is poor for an enclosed complex and would involve substantial costs to upgrade the existing facilities in addition to the cost of the enclosure.

(2) The existing main pool is not deep enough for water polo.

(3) The location of the present diving pool severely restricts seating on the eastern side of the main pool.

(4) The existing change rooms and administration centre are some distance from the pools and would require heating and construction of connecting corridors.

(5) Existing grandstands are of obsolete design and do not have sufficient capacity. . .

(6) Very few ancillary facilities are provided and there would be a need to provide facilities such as meeting and lecture rooms, dry training facilities. . .

(7) As an alternative to roofing the existing arrangement of facilities a new diving/water polo pool could be constructed to the north or south of the main pool. If constructed to the north the existing men's change rooms, plant room and office would have to be reconstructed. . .

(8) The free standing lights would have to be demolished.

(9) The existing plant room is cramped and lacks automatic controls.

(10) Only limited facilities exist for handicapped swimmers at the moment.—

and that is very important—

(11) The tiling finish on both the diving and main pools is in poor condition and neither have water decks. . .

Of course, the Minister mentioned the tiling in his statement yesterday. Although it was in the 1981 report, he has just found out about it! The feasibility study continues:

(12) If made the site of the State Aquatic Complex, the present community function of these facilities is likely to suffer from the competition bias of the new complex.

(14) While the capital costs of redeveloping this centre may be less than building a new complex, the development of a new complex would provide two centres for user groups and community use.

That is all in the 1981 report, which the Minister had while in Opposition and later as Minister. Yet, he took no notice whatever of it. The Public Works Standing Committee Report, published in March 1984, contains words such as: 'not of FINA standards', 'not suited for water polo', 'generally unsuited', and 'not a true international pool'. It also commented that, if the Government was prepared to spend another \$2.5 million, it would be a world class pool. The Minister was aware of the report yet, in his answers to questions asked by the Opposition, he showed an abysmal lack of knowledge to do with the functioning and building construction of the facility.

Regarding the Minister's recent comments, in Parliament on 27 February he said that the Centre would open in May, and he carried on about the fact that he would not send invitations to Opposition members, again playing the buffoon. Yet within 15 minutes of making that statement, he admitted to two television reporters outside the Chamber that the Centre might not open on time, not in May, and that events might have to be rescheduled in June.

The Minister was prepared to tell television reporters outside the Chamber, but he was not prepared to tell the House. On 28 February he was asked to tell the Parliament whether or not the pool was of FINA standards. In reply he stated that he did not know but that he would obtain that information. That was on 28 February: we then find, as was exposed by the Leader, that it was not until 4 March that the Minister got together with his public works colleagues to try to find out what was really going on. A competent Minister would have known that it was up to FINA standards. As I have said before, the Public Works Committee Report contained that information, and the feasibility report to which I have referred also contained it. On 12 February, the Minister was told by the State Director of the Swimming Association that the centre would not reach the standards of the other States. Once again, he was prepared to tell the television reporters before he told the Parliament.

Shortly after stating that he would find out if the pool would be to FINA standards, the Minister admitted during a television interview that the pool was not of international standard when it was initially built. He admitted on a live radio interview with Ken Cunningham that it was not to FINA standards. He asked the question, 'Which other pools are to FINA standards?' 'Why should it be,' he said, 'we are never likely to hold the Olympics here.' The Minister then stated that he did not know about the feasibility study into the Commonwealth Games, and indicated that the pool would be suitable only as a training venue.

A few moments ago the Minister wanted to know from where I had obtained a copy of the Commonwealth Games Report. There is no way that I will tell the Minister from where I got a copy of that—nor do I have to, and nor must anyone else in this place do so. But, I am saying that it is absolutely disgraceful that the Minister did not have it on his desk and that he had not read it.

An honourable member: You had it.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The report had been completed some time before, and the Minister knows that. The Minister's not having read it is just another indication of his incompetence, and the Minister should not try to blame his public servants for this. On 28 February the Minister told the *News* that the project would be completed in May and that everything, including the costs, was on schedule. However, on 6 March the Minister was asked whether the swimming centre was going according to schedule and whether or not it would be of international standards. This was asked by the Lord Mayor publicly. Why did she have to resort to a public forum to ask these questions? The Adelaide City Council owns the centre. The reason is that the Lord Mayor was treated with the same contempt and deceit with which members have been treated by the Ministers involved.

On 7 March the truth started to emerge: the pool would not be open until at least August, and swimming championships would have to be cancelled. This was after the Minister had sent a letter to the Swimming Association late in February assuring it that everything was all right and that it could hold the championships. Of course, that was not the end of it: on 8 March we were told that the Centre might not open until October—and so it goes on. The Minister and his compatriot, the Minister of Public Works, have stumbled and bumbled through a minefield of their own making, while at the same time deceiving this Parliament and the public of South Australia.

Finally, I want to list the main points in relation to this construction—a litany:

1. The Government and the Ministers concerned ignored the previous reports of the suitability and viability of the venue as an international standard venue.

2. There was bungling in the ordering of the steel required.

3. The roof did not fit.

4. The Lord Mayor and the Adelaide City Council have not been kept informed of developments and delays, until the Lord Mayor had to go public and ask the question.

5. The centre is running 12 months beyond schedule.

6. The cost has escalated from \$4.8 million to \$7.6 million, and will escalate even further, by the Minister's own admission.

7. The diving tower does not meet requirements and will have to be fixed—once again, by the Minister's own admission yesterday, despite the fact that he could not answer our questions about this matter before.

8. The Auditor-General has severely criticised the Minister and the Government for not having done its homework on the potential running costs of the centre.

9. The pool is not of a constant depth, nor is it suitable for water polo.

10. The letter has revealed that departmental files have been pooled, and we may never get the full story from the Government.

Finally, the most incredible indictment of all is that it leaks.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): We have had a particularly interesting afternoon. I was very interested to see the former Minister of Recreation and Sport, the progenitor of the famous Hindley Street aquatic centre, rise to his feet, and I am glad that he did, because that certainly introduced a very interesting element into the

debate. I shall deal with one or two things that he said. I thought it was most interesting that he said that the Minister had been thrown to the wolves. I suggest that the Opposition and its contributions here are as wolflike as a pet chihuahua dog, and this whole no-confidence motion has all the elements of that sort of trivia. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition had the audacity in this motion to try to attack my Ministers and the Caucus procedures and processes which have them occupying very competently their positions in this Government. That was very interesting coming from the Leader of the Opposition. I notice that the member for Todd is having a little bit of a chuckle and the member for Bragg is trying to conceal the smile on his face. It is very interesting that the Caucus processes and procedures of members opposite, where the Leader of the Opposition has total control, has not enabled him to get rid of some of the problems that are very apparent right along the front bench of the Opposition.

It was audacious of the Leader of the Opposition to criticise our side in view of the immobilised mediocrity of members opposite. I would like to hear the member for Alexandra and a few others on that topic. In fact, in this area of recreation and sport there is not even a shadow Minister. There was one, but that individual no longer occupies the position. Who or what is the spokesman in this area, no-one quite knows. We have seen the office boy despatched, trotting around to various areas: I certainly do not hold anything against the member for Bragg in that capacity, but one would have thought that at least the Leader of the Opposition could have given the member for Bragg the status of a shadow Cabinet member before he was despatched on his errands. So, a motion of no-confidence in the Ministers referred to has been moved, while the Opposition cannot even crank up a shadow Minister to try to match the performance of the Minister of Recreation and Sport. The Opposition cannot even produce that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: In fact I suggest that, if members opposite listen carefully to the reports from the emissary on the back bench who tries to cover this area, they would hear that the Minister of Recreation and Sport in this Government is thought of extremely highly in relation to a whole range of areas in which he deals. There have been some spectacular successes in the racing industry, for instance. That industry was neglected and almost destroyed under the previous Government. I suggest that members opposite go and talk to some of the people involved. I could go on; I could refer to expenditure on sport and recreation—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: When I begin to mention specifics—some of the achievements of my colleagues—members opposite try to blanket out my comments by interjections, and that is exactly the way in which the whole discussion has been going. I suggest that it would be interesting to see the real shadow Minister stand up and to see what is going on. The highest point in this debate was when the Minister of Recreation and Sport said that the rumours and the dissent that have been peddled by the Opposition were in some ways jeopardising the project. I suggest that that is a serious statement and that there is some evidence of that in terms of the contractors involved and their confidence in the project. I make that clear. But how was that treated? There were a few chuckles and great pleasure from the Leader of the Opposition. Of course, that would please the Leader: that is what this facade is all about—to try to undermine any confidence in the project. That was the highlight of the debate. It was very revealing indeed. When

that point was made by my colleague we saw how it was greeted. The Minister hit it right on the nail.

The only person getting any satisfaction from the debate today is the member for Torrens, who is covering a lot of portfolios—he is getting a great boost today, and is certainly needed on the Opposition front bench. I am not sure in which shadow category the honourable member entered this debate, but it was obviously nothing to do with education—unless he gets into it through swimming lessons. The member for Torrens talked about a bankrupt Government. Good Lord! He was a member of a Government that literally bankrupted the State. I know that the honourable member used the term rhetorically, but he was a member of a Government that presided over bankruptcy, and he has the audacity to refer to a bankrupt Government.

I was glad that the honourable member intervened in this debate and that the Hindley Street proposal has had some airing. If we are really serious about the whole question of an aquatic centre, what has gone on and the problems involved, that is the starting point, as my colleague has made abundantly clear. There was total incompetence and disarray. Two or three years of planning was lost because of an appallingly bad decision, cost overruns and every other element: that is why the previous Government had to be chucked out at the last election. That is why the Opposition will not govern this State.

The original Cabinet decision that was made in November 1981 on this project referred to costs not exceeding \$8 million, and the Commonwealth was to provide \$3.75 million. That decision was made in the face of a consultant's advice that even then the estimated cost was about \$8.9 million. Yet what figure did the Government use at that time? It used the figure of \$7.5 million: that is what members opposite talked about. Cabinet decided to commit that amount of money and not to go over that sum in trying to build the project.

Incidentally, the member for Torrens said that no announcement was made about this project. He said 'We kept the model hidden. We didn't try to make a great deal of it.' But what was the press release of 9 March 1982—from the very member who now says that there was no announcement? That press release stated:

Adelaide's new \$7.5 million Aquatic Centre will be built in Hindley Street on the West End Brewery site. Announcing this today, the Minister of Recreation and Sport, Mr Wilson, said the complex would be part of a major development in the north-western corner of the city. The Commonwealth/State funded scheme ...

On he went with a two page announcement. Is this some kind of conjuring up from nothing? No, it is an announcement.

The Hon. Michael Wilson interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Yes, in March that was the big announcement, and there was a lot of talk about it. Finally, in desperation, as the costs blew out and as the inadequacies of the project were exposed, the Budget Review Committee chaired by a member who has been conspicuously silent today (he loves these no-confidence debates, but he has not yet stood up—I look forward to his contribution) said that it was not on, that the project had to be deferred. Yet there was an announcement, and a few days before the election it was decided to buy the land, to commit a future Government. The previous Government, which was staring defeat in the face, made that decision. There are a number of other examples of that kind of unconstitutional action, such as the last minute proclamation of the Planning Act and a few other things that we had to try to unscramble.

This was another example: a few days before the election the land was bought. Certainly, the model was not displayed. At least members opposite had some shame. They have

said 'We were as pure as snow. We didn't boost the project,' but that is nonsense, and the member for Torrens knows it. I am afraid that his rhetoric carries him away to excesses that he should regret, because it undermines the credibility that he once had. That project was the start of this whole business. It was a disaster on which we had to make decisions, and my Ministers acted promptly in that regard.

If we are talking about no confidence, there is no question where the no confidence should lie. The Minister of Recreation and Sport, in referring to the project, pointed out the concerns relating to the costs involved. The Budget Review Committee, as I stated previously (a committee chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition), was concerned, as was Treasury, about the viability of the project. In fact, not only was Treasury concerned but also it totally rejected the viability of the project—the costs and the predictions on costs, which had been kept low, for cosmetic purposes, by \$1 million, from what the consultants had advised. The press statement referred to a cost of \$7.5 million, but the original estimate provided by consultants was \$8.9 million. Also, it was proposed that soccer pools would finance the project. These were concerns.

It is interesting to note what the former Minister of Recreation and Sport thought about the funding sources. Funds were to be provided from soccer pools money, but there was clear advice from Treasury that soccer pools funds could not accommodate the costs. The Government would not only have to take all the funds from that area (and the return was vastly over estimated) but also it would have to find money from somewhere else. What does that say about all the sporting organisations in this State that were looking for money from soccer pools funds? Every cent of soccer pools funds for the next few years would have had to be committed to this one project. That was the proposal, and the honourable member knows it. Every cent of that money would have been committed.

We must contrast that with the proposal whereby my colleague has ensured that the capital funds available from soccer pools and other sources—funds that have been vastly increased under this Government—have been distributed in a fair way among a whole range of sports, both major and minor sports, for facilities and stadiums on the basis that there should be a fair distribution. That is the former Minister's policy, but the honourable member had the gall to speak in this debate and to say that every cent of the money raised for sport would have gone into one project. It would have benefited one sport and one section of the community. That is the sort of financial responsibility displayed by members opposite. Treasury pleaded for more detail work to be done, and in fact the final estimated cost was not \$7.5 million but \$10 million or \$11 million. They are the figures contained in the documents: they are the figures with which we were confronted when we were asked to try to review the project. But even worse—those figures represented only the construction and design costs. Land costs were not included.

At least in regard to the North Adelaide swimming centre we obtained the land and an established centre, but the cost of land was not included in the Aquatic Centre estimates. Therefore, on top of the \$10 million or \$11 million, we would have to add \$1.2 million for purchase of the land. That land was bought, as I said, a few days before the election. So there was an additional cost, but that was conveniently omitted from the then Minister's announcement, which the honourable member now claims should be forgotten by everyone because it did not really happen.

What did the Budget Review Committee really say? It recommended to the Tonkin Government that all work on the Aquatic Centre—this misconceived project—should be halted for at least one year; it should be stopped, and no

further work done for at least one year. Who knows what would have happened after that one year had passed? There was no question of what would have happened had the Tonkin Government stayed in office: there would have been absolutely no funds for anything and there would have been no aquatic centre whatever. To this very day, swimmers would have been wondering what they could do about facilities.

That decision was adopted by a Cabinet of which members on the front bench were members. The Leader of the Opposition took part in that decision, the Deputy who is sitting next to him was Chairman of the committee that made the recommendation; and the then Minister of Recreation and Sport, who is now sitting in his place, has entered this debate of no confidence. And they wonder why the Government treats this motion with contempt. We all know where the no confidence should lie: it should lie with members opposite, who got this whole thing off to a total fiasco. There was a bad start, and that made it very difficult indeed for the incoming Government and the Minister to grapple with the proposal for the building of an aquatic centre.

From that time—from that inherited blunder—we have had to really try to do something to rescue the situation. We would have been totally irresponsible to embark on a programme whose costs were ballooning, where there was no identified source of support for it, where it was not going to be able to meet the needs of people and which the previous Government had said it would defer for at least one year. Incidentally, I did not notice a press release from the then Premier or then Minister of Recreation and Sport about that deferral. There was a pretty deafening silence about that decision that was taken. Perhaps that would be announced after the election: perhaps that is when the swimming fraternity and anyone else would be told, 'You can forget about anything happening there or anywhere else.' We had a responsibility which we picked up vigorously.

The assessments were done. The Minister has explained fully the basis on which the original cost estimates were made. There has been no attempt at any stage to hide anything involved in this project. Why should it be in our interests to do so? We, the Government, are as keen as anyone—the Minister is as keen as anyone—to see the centre open and running. We want to hold championships there; we want the people of South Australia to enjoy it. So does the City Council. We have nothing to hide and nothing to do with supporting delays. On the contrary, we have endeavoured to ensure that those delays are kept to a minimum.

The problem has been, as with so many other projects in the private as well as the public sector where one has problems of material supply and in other areas that have been detailed quite precisely by the Minister, that one cannot meet the deadlines. Of course it is a matter of concern, and who is suggesting that the Government is not concerned about it? Of course, it is a matter of regret that those delays are occurring. We have been putting all the pressure we can on them.

The dishonesty of the Opposition has been, first, to try to obscure the fact of the total fiasco it was foisting on the State and, secondly, to suggest that what we have seen is some kind of Ministerial cover-up which has been compounded by Government employees and Government project people somehow making the whole project non-viable. That is absolutely nonsensical, and the Opposition knows it. The people that the Opposition is condemning in its attacks include major private sector builders, consultants and others.

We were all told by the Leader of the Opposition, 'We know you'll raise that; don't raise that in the debate. No, that's not a valid argument. I don't want to hear you say it.' Well, I will say it. The fact is that it is not, as the

Opposition has attempted to paint it, some kind of in-house job, something we have done purely using internal Government resources cobbled together in some way to try to make the best of it. It has been done by reference to professionals in the field—outside consultants—right from the beginning, from the original cost estimates that were gained right through to the construction stage.

Some of them have performed well and some have performed not so well. But, equally, it is true that there have been circumstances beyond the control of all of them—Government and the private sector—which have resulted in those delays. That is just a simple fact of life. In terms of this project we are not, as the Opposition suggests, trying to do some sort of internal job. We have taken advice and used the private sector in key parts of this construction project.

Is that not what the Opposition urges on us? Is this not its grand scheme for the whole revamping of Government works? But, no, apparently in this case the Opposition tries to play that down and obscure it because it does not suit its argument. Members opposite do not want to try to find anyone in the private sector: they want to ensure that all the blame and responsibilities rest with the Government.

I repeat, as has been detailed precisely by the Minister, that there are many circumstances such as the delivery of the structural steel that have resulted in delays and problems. Things have been uncovered in the course of construction which we could have covered over and perhaps allowed a future Government in 10 or 15 years to discover. In carrying out this project, we are ensuring that it lasts, that it is of high quality, and if we have to spend more money to do it we shall. That is the policy being adopted by my colleagues, and they deserve support for that stand.

We have had enough of this particular issue. No doubt, the Opposition will try continually to crank it up. We hope that the Centre will be opened as soon as possible. The Minister will provide, as he has done for months, regular reports based on the information that he has received, outlining the situation. That information will be provided. Members opposite can ask questions. Let us have a daily question when Parliament is sitting and we will provide up to date information.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It is the Government's intention to get this Centre open and operating as soon as possible. There is no question of that, but it will not be done on a half-baked basis: it will be done properly, because we hope it will be a facility that will last and will provide countless benefits to those involved in this sport. We are doing this within the context of a capital works programme that is providing wide-ranging benefits to a whole range of sports and not using up every single cent on the one particular project, as the disastrous plans of the previous Government would have us do. We treat this motion with contempt, and I move an amendment in the following terms:

Delete all words after 'that' and insert—

This House supports the building of the Aquatic Centre at North Adelaide and condemns the Opposition for its denigration of the project for political expediency.

The SPEAKER: Does the honourable Leader seek to reply? If he does, he closes the debate.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Mr Speaker. What a pathetic response from the Premier on behalf of his Government. The cover-up continues, but it is not complete. The reason that it will not be complete, yet the Government would will it that way, is that we have been successful in another place in asking the Auditor-General to investigate and report to Parliament on this matter by 1 September. Whilst the Government in this

House refused to respond to the request of the Auditor-General (not mentioned by the Premier or the Minister—just ignored on the basis that they did not want an investigation or were not prepared to accede to an investigation), let us just say we have trumped them. There will be an investigation, because a House of Parliament has asked for it to take place.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: It is all very well for the honourable member to say, 'We're very happy with it,' now that it is a *fait accompli*.

Members interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: It has been taken out of the amendment. I tell the Parliament that it is a *fait accompli* in any sense. We have to have an investigation, and the Government is a bit late. It had the opportunity, but it did not take it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader to resume his seat. So far in this debate there has been reasonable decorum. At the moment there is barracking across the House. Obvious consequences can follow from that, and I ask that it cease. The honourable Leader.

Mr OLSEN: In their remarks today, neither the Minister nor the Premier responded to a censure motion on the Government or to any of the allegations made specifically by myself and the member for Torrens. They were ignored. In fact, one could use a whole range of adjectives—dull, uninspiring, pathetic—to describe the Minister's response to what is one of the most important resolutions that can ever be put before a House of Parliament. It was treated with contempt by the Minister. In the first part he quoted from a book. He read from the *Steel Journal* and did not attempt—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader to address the Chair. The honourable Leader.

Mr OLSEN: Mr Speaker, the Minister and the Premier have purposely ignored the allegations made against them today. They have sought not to answer the questions and there is a simple explanation for that: they have no answers to the allegations that have been made. Obviously, the second speaker was to have been the Minister of Public Works, but we all noted the message that was delivered after the Premier had been embarrassed when the House's attention was drawn to the fact that he was refusing to take part in this debate. He had been goaded by that embarrassment to get to his feet in what is a pathetic attempt to shore up the stocks of the Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Minister of Public Works.

Members interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: The Minister got a bit of colour back when he got the message that he did not have to get to his feet. It was quite clear. Obviously the Premier could not afford to have two Ministers up with the same track record, performance and contribution as that of the Minister of Recreation and Sport so far in this debate. The Minister of Tourism, for example, was embarrassed, as was the Premier, who in fact left the Chamber whilst his Minister was responding to a censure motion in this Parliament. The ultimate embarrassment is having to walk out of the Chamber whilst his Minister is trying to respond. The Premier was so embarrassed at his Minister not even attempting to answer the question. What about the PBD monthly report? Nobody has addressed that question. We well know that the Public Buildings Department puts out monthly reports on projects, keeping both the Minister and the client department informed of cost overruns. That would put the lie clearly to what the Minister of Recreation and Sport has said in this Parliament on a number of occasions.

The reason those concerned have not referred to it is that they do not want to produce that documentation in this

Parliament because, if they produce documentation here, clearly it would show that the Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Minister of Public Works have misled this Parliament, not once but indeed on a number of occasions.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: The Auditor-General will give it to us.

Mr OLSEN: It will be interesting to see the report of the Auditor-General by 1 September. That is what I meant by the cover-up being continued by the Government, but it is not complete, because the Auditor-General will suss out the information that this Government is not prepared to give. We have asked today repeatedly for the Government to table documents to support its case, but it has not done so. In fact, it has refused to respond specifically as regards the tabling of documentation today.

Both the Minister and the Premier selectively pulled out documents from the file of the former Administration, floating them along the front bench and relating them to the House in an attempt to shore up their case. Where is their great support for the freedom of information? Where is the documentation now that it is their turn on the Treasury benches? The Government is not going to front up to that. The Premier was challenged to refer to the documentation, but he refused to be drawn. He said, 'Ask a question'. What we want is not response to questions in an attempt to fudge—we want documentation (documentation which, I might add, has been doctored; documentation which has had papers removed from the file).

It is interesting, yet again, that nobody responded to the allegations about doctoring departmental files and removing from those files certain quotations. The files have been doctored and the Government did not respond to or attempt to rebut that allegation. It clearly ignored the matter.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: The Premier clearly ignored the responsibility to refute that allegation. It is a serious allegation for any Minister or department to be removing papers from files so that they do not get caught out. They know that resignation is clearly the end result of being caught out doctoring departmental files. The Premier knows that his Ministers are responsible in this matter, are guilty as charged and have not responded to the charges or allayed the fears expressed concerning this matter.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: He won't defend them.

Mr OLSEN: Indeed, he has not defended them. When the Premier got to his feet, unlike the Minister who said that he does not like apportioning blame (at least he acknowledged there was blame to apportion) and that he would not lay the blame with the contractors or with Baulderstone, he was looking for anyone to whom the buck could be passed and to sort out the contractors and sort out the company concerned.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon: Which company?

Mr OLSEN: The Premier clearly referred in his reply to the contractors associated with the project.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon: Which one?

Mr OLSEN: The Premier can look at the *Hansard* pulls and clearly identify which contractors he put up, unlike the Minister, who was not prepared to do in the contractors and was not prepared to apportion the blame or to pass the buck. The Premier did so. The basic accountability and responsibility of any Government or Minister is this: with any chief executive the buck stops with the boss. In this instance the buck stops with the Minister of the Department.

The Premier said that mistakes are made in departments and started to pass it off in that regard. He said that mistakes have been made but they are down the line; it is nothing to do with the Minister, and therefore the Government cannot be held responsible. Under the Westminster system I always thought that a Minister of the Crown was

responsible for all actions of all departmental officers at all times.

The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: Indeed, I am glad the Premier has raised that matter, because in a motion in this House in 1982 my very first words, in response to an interjection from the now Minister of Public Works, were that I accepted as Minister—unlike this Government—full responsibility for every action of my departmental officers. They were my first words. The Premier can look at *Hansard* and clearly identify that matter, unlike the Ministers here today who have sought not to accept responsibility. They like being in Government but do not like the responsibility. One cannot separate the two. The buck stops with the Minister.

The Attorney-General in another place sought not to blame the Ministers. He sought out the Public Works Committee and said that it was to blame for this fiasco. The Attorney-General said that it must be the Public Works Committee and that it should have investigated thoroughly before allowing the project to go ahead. I remind the House that the Public Works Committee is a bipartisan committee comprising members of both sides of the House and chaired by a member of the Government. Clearly, this Government is running scared. It is attempting to pass the buck to whoever is walking by at the moment, rather than standing up and being counted. However, it knows that it is accountable and responsible in this action.

The fiasco relating to the swimming centre at North Adelaide is a direct reflection of the incompetence and negligence of the Ministers concerned. It has also been proved without doubt, both from the Ministerial statement yesterday and from documentation in the *Steel Journal*, supported by the Minister of Recreation and Sport and independent of any allegations I may have made, that clearly the Minister has misled the Parliament. There is no other price for misleading this Parliament than to resign forthwith.

The House divided on the amendment:

Ayes (22)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, Bannon (teller), M.J. Brown, Crafter, M.J. Evans, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Plunkett, Slater, Trainer, Whitten, and Wright.

Noes (20)—Mrs Adamson, Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, Ashenden, Baker, Becker, D.C. Brown, Chapman, Eastick, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Ingerson, Lewis, Mathwin, Meier, Olsen (teller), Oswald, Rodda, Wilson, and Wotton.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Payne and Peterson. Noes—Messrs Blacker and S.G. Evans.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

The House divided on the motion as amended:

Ayes (22)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, Bannon (teller), M.J. Brown, Crafter, M.J. Evans, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Plunkett, Slater, Trainer, Whitten, and Wright.

Noes (20)—Mrs Adamson, Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, Ashenden, Baker, Becker, D.C. Brown, Chapman, Eastick, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Ingerson, Lewis, Mathwin, Meier, Olsen (teller), Oswald, Rodda, Wilson, and Wotton.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Payne and Peterson. Noes—Messrs Blacker and S.G. Evans.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Motion as amended thus carried.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: LEADER'S REMARKS

Mr TRAINER (Ascot Park): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr TRAINER: I wish to clarify, for the benefit of the House, an action of mine which was the subject of quite incorrect allegation on the part of the Leader of the Opposition. I want the report to be quite clear. It was obvious that the Leader was referring to me in the context of my having conveyed a message to the Minister of Public Works. I wish to make it absolutely clear that the content of that message was met by the Minister of Public Works not with relief, but with disappointment.

Mr Mathwin interjecting:

Mr TRAINER: With your protection, Sir, from the outrageous interjection by the member opposite, I would like to continue with my personal explanation.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ascot Park.

Mr TRAINER: I am surprised that members opposite are not sufficiently conversant with Parliamentary procedure to realise what I am leading up to.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. I ask that while the honourable member is on his feet there be order and silence and that the honourable member simply state the matter about which he believes he has been misrepresented and then clarify the situation. The honourable member for Ascot Park.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TRAINER: The message I conveyed in my capacity as Whip to the Minister of Public Works was one asking him not to participate in the debate despite his wish to join in because it is tradition to give the last word in such a debate to the Opposition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: AQUATIC CENTRE

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Minister of Public Works): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: During the debate, allegations were made by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Torrens that documents relating to the Aquatic Centre have been removed and destroyed, the inference being that I was responsible for doing that. I reject that completely and challenge the Leader to give proof of this or admit that he has been misleading the House.

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Mr BLACKER

Mr S.G. EVANS (Fisher): I move:

That four weeks leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Flinders (Mr Blacker) on account of absence overseas on Commonwealth Parliamentary Association business.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO STEAMTOWN PETERBOROUGH RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY INCORPORATED

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Tourism): As Chairman of the Select Committee, I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee be extended to Wednesday 15 May.

Motion carried.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) (1985)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 12 March. Page 3096.)

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): The timing of this debate is yet another indication that this Government has run out of ideas and initiative. It is a tired, divided Government, grasping at every possible opportunity to avoid its responsibilities to this Parliament and the people. This legislation is to grant Supply for the early months of next year. Why, therefore, is it necessary to have this debate now? Why cannot it wait until the April or May sittings of the House, when more precise information would be available about the progress of the Budget? It seems clear from the timing of this debate that this Government intends to curtail this Parliamentary session as soon as possible.

This is the earliest this form of Supply Bill has come before this House since 1979, and we all remember what the Labor Government was gearing up for in 1979—an early election. I hope that the Premier, in his reply, will explain the timing of this debate this year, because in each of 1980, 1981 and 1982, the Supply Bill was brought in during June. In 1983, it was May, and last year, April.

If the Premier is planning to wind up Parliament early, he must explain why the Government has not proceeded with a number of important pieces of legislation foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech to open this session. I refer, for example, to industrial health, safety and welfare legislation. The Government promised that a Bill to overhaul the existing legislation would be introduced this session, but we have not seen it yet, and developments in Victoria, I suggest, are the reason. There, a radical move in this area is inevitable following the socialist left's infiltration of the second Cain Government. This move will significantly increase business costs and erode the rights of employers by giving trade union officials much wider powers. Once this system is brought in by Victoria, there will be significant pressure to introduce it in South Australia. It will be the kind of pressure that this Government is incapable of withstanding. Therefore, this issue is on ice until after the election.

The same can be said of workers compensation. Again, the Governor's Speech foreshadowed legislation this session but none has materialised, because the Deputy Premier knows he is losing the battle to justify his scheme, which would involve massive long term costs which the whole community ultimately would be forced to bear. Other major legislation promised, but not forthcoming so far, includes changes to the voting system, a new basis for public sector management following the Guerin Report, Aboriginal heritage and beverage container amendments, ratification of agreements to share water resources in the area of the South Australian-Victorian border, and controls over building work.

There are other indications that this Government is keeping its options open for an early curtailment of this Parliamentary session. It has asked that all matters outstanding on the Legislative Council Notice Paper be dealt with this week, by Thursday. There is little in the way of major legislation before this House. In view of the timing of this debate, the present state of the Notice Papers for both Houses and the number of pieces of major legislation promised for this session but not so far introduced, I ask the Premier in his reply to inform the Opposition about the intention of the Government. Is Parliament to rise early and, if so, why? Have the April or May sittings been can-

celled? I trust that the Premier will respond to those questions when he replies in this debate. Is it still the intention of the Government to proceed with the Bills to which I have referred and, if not, why not? The Parliament is entitled to answers to those questions.

The information the Premier has put before the House in introducing this Bill is very imprecise so far as the progress of the Budget is concerned. Certainly, last year, the House, in debating the 1984 Supply Bill (No. 1), was far more aware of the likely end of year Budget result than it can be at this stage. The Opposition's task is not helped by the unavailability of the monthly Treasury summaries of receipts and spending. The latest we have is for January.

The Premier referred in his speech yesterday to an improvement on the original estimate for the recurrent budget and indicate that this is because of both savings in expenditure and improvements in receipts. There is no further detail relating to the expenditure side. However, the receipts side indicates a further significant increase in stamp duties revenue, mainly from real property transactions. The increased amount forecast this year of \$15 million means that, in just two years, this Government will have earned \$50 million more than it budgeted for in stamp duties.

While the Premier naturally did mention this, it must be recognised that Government actions which have forced up property values have contributed to this tax windfall. The desperate shortage of land for home building in metropolitan Adelaide is one of the major reasons for the rapid escalation in home building costs which, of course, feeds into the Government's tax take from stamp duties. The Opposition has been saying for almost two years that it is essential for the Government to rezone broad acres already held by the South Australian Urban Land Trust to provide a greater supply of land for building allotments and to provide people looking for a home with more choice. The Government's attempts to introduce compulsory union labour in the building industry are also forcing up housing prices in a way which will become even more apparent in the next few days.

The Premier's speech yesterday did not indicate other areas where receipts may exceed Budget Estimates, but on the basis of the information available so far it appears that total State tax collections this financial year will exceed the Budget Estimates by at least \$22 million. With windfalls like this, it is little wonder that South Australia has experienced the highest growth in State tax collections during the past two years. The Premier's Budget Estimates for this financial year conservatively indicated a 39.7 per cent growth in total State collections since 1982-83. Compare that with the other States. The increases over the same period are as follows: Western Australia, 39.3 per cent; Tasmania, 24.1 per cent; New South Wales, 20.2 per cent; Victoria, 17.2 per cent; and Queensland, 16.8 per cent. The average growth rate for the six States is 21.8 per cent. South Australia's growth rate is almost double that of the other Australian States.

These figures are based on estimates of tax receipts given by each of the States in their Budget Papers for 1984-85. They give the following results on a *per capita* basis for State tax collections in 1984-85: Victoria, \$655.99; New South Wales, \$595.02; South Australia, \$564.31; Western Australia, \$473.87; Tasmania, \$454.29; and Queensland, \$363.69. This indicates that South Australia is the third highest in State taxation on a *per capita* basis—not fourth, as the Premier suggested last week. In 1981-82, South Australia was \$116.94 below Victoria on a *per capita* basis, and \$58.69 less than New South Wales. Those gaps have now narrowed to \$91.68 in the case of Victoria and only \$30.71 less than New South Wales over the past three years.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: 'We want South Australia to win'—the only prize that the Premier wants South Australia to have is for it to be the highest taxed State in Australia. Clearly, we are well on the path to achieving that, even though when the present Government assumed office it inherited a position where South Australia was the lowest taxed State per capita in Australia. We can compare the track records of the respective Governments. The former Government reduced State taxation by 5.4 per cent—a negative growth—to the lowest level in Australia by 30 June 1982. Since that time we have had a 39.7 per cent climb in State taxation.

The escalation in State taxes during the past two years, the extent to which the gap is being narrowed in relation to other States, and the impact that that has had on South Australia's competitive position, as well as the tax windfalls that this Government has been earning, mean that the Premier should not only be considering tax relief now but should also be implementing it now. The Premier's officers have promoted speculation in the media today about relief in Government electricity and land taxes. One knows about these background briefings given by the Premier's staff on a purely speculative article, when the Premier can say, 'Well, that is a speculative article; you cannot expect me to comment on that,' when his officers have been to the media saying, 'You ought to run a story or two.' Clearly, yesterday they were working overtime.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: That could be the case: having been gagged in the previous debate from talking about a matter that is the Minister's direct responsibility, it will be interesting to see what his performance is like in his position as Acting Treasurer on the front bench.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: I can assure the Minister that his performance in the Ministry is a comedy, and his track record shows that. We will see some interesting housing figures shortly.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ferguson): Order! Will the honourable gentleman address the Chair, please.

Mr OLSEN: In the next couple of days we will see the track record of the Minister clearly exposed. I think it is quite clear that the Premier will attempt to buy office at the next election, in the same way that he did in 1982. But the House should consider how genuine he is in holding out this promise of tax relief to the electorate. First, let us consider the tax on the Electricity Trust. Feedback from the electorate would indicate clearly to you, Mr Acting Speaker, and your colleagues that taxes and charges are high on the list of concerns of South Australians. In the two Budgets that he has introduced, the Premier is to earn more than \$48 million from this tax. Electricity consumers in South Australia are paying that amount directly as a tax to the Government through their electricity tariffs.

In the four Budgets introduced by the former Liberal Government that tax collected only just over \$8 million more—that was in four Budgets, compared with the two Budgets introduced by the present Government. Yet the Premier has the gall to criticise the former Government constantly for that impost—that tax legacy of the former Dunstan Government which introduced it in 1971. Were the Premier really serious about limiting electricity tariffs for anything other than electoral gain, he would have taken action before now. It should be borne in mind that he had a windfall of \$35 million from stamp duty last year, and \$15 million from stamp duty this year. With that windfall, why have we not had tax relief? Why has relief not been given to the small business sector?

Mr Mathwin: It is an ill windfall.

Mr OLSEN: Indeed it is. With the anticipated tariff rise of 10 per cent later this year, in real terms electricity tariffs will have risen by 7.3 per cent more than they did under

the previous Liberal Government. In relation to land tax, the amount collected this financial year will be an estimated \$32.8 million—almost double the amount collected in 1980-81. That will mean an increase of 36.4 per cent in real terms since 1980-81. When this is compared with trends in New South Wales, which has had a growth in land tax in real terms of 15.2 per cent (less than half of ours), and with trends in Victoria, which has had a reduction in real terms of 11.7 per cent, the need for action in South Australia becomes all the more apparent and all the more urgent. The longer that the Premier leaves tax relief, the more Government taxes will feed into the CPI and put pressure on wages.

The CPI for the six months to December 1984 is the basis for the current national wage case. On a national basis, selected State and local government taxes and charges were responsible for 13.9 per cent of the CPI increase over those six months. In Adelaide, however, their contribution amounted to 18 per cent, almost one-third greater than the average of the eight capital cities. An analysis of State and local government charges over the past year shows that in South Australia this group of charges has increased more rapidly than have other prices. To demonstrate this point, I seek leave to insert in *Hansard* without my reading it a table which is purely statistical.

Leave granted.

**MOVEMENTS IN SELECTED STATE AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CHARGES AND IN THE ALL GROUPS
INDEX EXCLUDING SELECTED STATE AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CHARGES (1980-81 = 100)**
ADELAIDE

	All Groups Excluding State and Local Government Charges		Selected State and Local Government Charges	
	Quarters	Annual Average	Quarters	Annual Average
1983				
March	123.2		155.8	
June	126.7		156.3	
September	128.2		162.0	
December	130.5	127.2	171.4	161.4
1984				
March	130.6		168.9	
June	130.9		166.0	
September	132.7		166.2	
December	134.8	132.3	179.7	170.2
Percentage Change				
1983 to 1984 ...		+4.0%		+5.5%

**NATIONALLY
(Weighted Average of 8 Capital Cities)**

	All Groups Excluding State and Local Government Charges		Selected State and Local Government Charges	
	Quarters	Annual Average	Quarters	Annual Average
1983				
March	122.7		153.6	
June	125.4		155.9	
September	127.3		159.9	
December	130.1	126.4	167.5	159.2
1984				
March	129.9		161.2	
June	130.4		159.0	
September	132.1		162.6	
December	133.7	131.5	167.4	162.6
Percentage Change				
1983 to 1984 ...		+4.0%		+2.1%

Source: ABS Cat. 6401.0 Consumer Price Index

Mr OLSEN: This table shows that in the aggregation of the quarterly movements for the all groups index, excluding State and local government charges, the Adelaide index moved from 127.2 in 1983 to 132.3 in 1984. Nationally, the figures were 126.4 to 131.5. In both cases the annual increase was 4 per cent. However, that is where the similarity ends. For State and local government charges, Adelaide's index moved from 161.4 in 1983 to 170.2 in 1984—an annual increase of 5.5 per cent and 37.5 per cent above the increase in all other prices.

Nationally, the movement was from 159.2 to 162.6 index points—an annual increase of 2.1 per cent or 47.5 per cent less than the increase in all other prices. If the Government had restrained or reduced its take from taxes and charges, the CPI and therefore wage movements would be increasing at a slower rate. For instance, during the December quarter of 1984 if selected State and local government charges had moved in line with the national average, the CPI for Adelaide would have been confined to 3 per cent. The impact of increased State Government taxes and charges on business in South Australia has been the subject of a survey undertaken recently by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The respondents indicated that the cost of State taxes and charges as a percentage of total labour costs was 15 per cent in 1981-82. In 1982-83 it had moved up to 16.6 per cent, and, with the revenue raising initiatives taken since then by the present Government, it is expected that this ratio will increase significantly. When measured against total company operating expenses, this ratio, after being a constant 8.3 per cent over the previous three years, moved to 9.3 per cent in 1982-83.

Land tax liability concerned 76 per cent of the respondents, and 93 per cent cited electricity tariffs as the State charge causing most concern. Clearly, this question of State taxes and charges is having an impact on business confidence. This matter was raised by the Premier at the weekend following my challenging the figures that he gave at an investment seminar in Sydney last Thursday. Those figures, comparing current trends in State taxation, are more favourable to the Government than are those that I have presented. My figures are based on official Treasury papers for each of the States.

My research staff have examined the Premier's figures in detail and have compared them with the Treasury papers of other States. My staff have undertaken a detailed analysis, but they can find no basis for the results that the Premier has presented. It will be interesting to hear the Premier respond in detail to that in due course. I do not resile from the figures that I have presented and I do not accept that by raising them I am eroding business confidence, as the Premier alleges. Nothing does more to erode business confidence than high taxing, interfering Governments of the type that the Premier now leads.

Apparently, the Premier believes that businessmen are naive, that they cannot read statistics and follow trends. Let me assure him that in my continuing contact with business leaders in the Eastern States I am often asked about the tax increases that this Premier has imposed. It is no use the Premier trying to pretend otherwise: all the fiddling with figures, all the nice rhetoric in the world will not change the perception, the hip pocket reality or the cost to those business people. Only real tax relief will do that, and only a Liberal Government will be capable of achieving that.

In his Sydney speech, the Premier used figures to suggest that his Government is a low taxer, even though he admitted that South Australians are taxed higher than Queenslanders and Tasmanians. Yet when South Australians were the lowest taxed per capita in Australia (under a Liberal Government in June 1982), this Premier accused that Government of being a high tax Government—but it had the best

record in Australia. The Premier said as much in the economic document that he published in May 1982. At page 49 it was stated:

It is in fact a high tax Government.

Nothing exposes this Premier's hypocrisy and dishonesty more than that. The Premier plays with figures in the same way that he has played with the hip pockets of South Australians. Soon, he will lose on both counts. Of course, the Labor Party is so sensitive to this tax question, so unable to deal with it honestly that it has also resorted to misrepresenting the question of State charges.

Members will recall that the Premier, when he was Opposition Leader, kept a tally of charge increases by the former Liberal Government. Again, I quote from the Premier's economic document. He calculated that the former Liberal Government had increased almost 100 separate charges as at May 1982. His colleague, the former member for Unley, Mr Langley, was a little more charitable to the former Government. In a list that he had inserted in *Hansard* in June 1982, the honourable member put at 90 the number of charge increases by the former Government.

Mr Groom interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: Now, however, the member for Hartley claims that the number is 185 and, further, he is interjecting out of his seat. While the honourable member has claimed this result based on detailed research, his statement about it in this House on 21 February gave only 27 specific increases. I would welcome the opportunity to inspect the other 158 increases which he claims the former Government imposed. Perhaps before he presents the evidence the honourable member might confer with the Premier and the former member for Unley to check how they each missed almost 100 increases in their calculations. There is no doubt that between now and the election the Labor Party will try every means possible to mislead and confuse the public on this issue of taxes and charges. The same tactics were used before the 1982 election by the Labor Party. They will not work this time.

Honesty and credibility are what count. They are not given to a person but are earned by one's performance and on one's track record. However, this Premier and this Government, by their actions, have none. Because of the effectiveness of the Opposition's campaign against rising taxes and charges, the Premier is now dangling the tax relief carrot. He is feeding out tax relief. The Premier went on a talk back programme and said, 'I cannot talk about these speculative articles,' but he has fed them out himself.

But it is clear that any relief promised by this Premier will be only temporary—for the purposes of the next election and nothing more. A re-elected Labor Government in South Australia would be committed to even higher government spending and higher taxes to fund it. That is what will happen in Victoria under the second Cain Government; that is what South Australians would face under a second Bannon Government; and that is precisely why there will be no second Bannon Government. Despite the improvements in the national and international economies, South Australia has not made the progress that it should have made over the past two years in job opportunities. And there are some particular areas of concern.

Regarding youth unemployment, the January figures will show that 28.8 per cent of South Australians aged between 15 and 19 are unemployed. The number in this age group who cannot find work has increased by 3 100 since November 1982, since the change of Government. Action must be taken to arrest and reverse this trend if we are to avoid the possibility of having a group that is permanently alienated from the rest of society and afflicted with problems of low

self esteem, drug addiction, alcohol related problems and crime.

The key issues which must be addressed in proposing any realistic solution to this problem are training systems which increase opportunities and incentives for learning and training and improve skills for a labour market which offers less opportunity for unskilled workers because of automation and technological change; the wage structure and whether it is pricing too many people out of jobs; and the social problems inherent in longer term unemployment and assistance necessary for people to make the adjustment from being unemployed to going into full time jobs.

I believe that our education and training systems must be given particular attention. Less than 60 per cent of 16 year olds in Australia are continuing their full time education compared with 80 per cent in Canada and 92 per cent in Japan. Associated with this is the growing number of people who are leaving home at an early age. We have to examine the causes of these trends and what can be done to reverse them.

The possibility of more widespread introduction of job sharing and permanent part time work also needs greater study, for these may also provide the opportunity to create more jobs. We simply have to find a better solution to unemployment than short-term schemes if we are to improve the long term job prospects of young South Australians. As well as declining youth employment, South Australia also faces the problem of a further decline in employment in our largest industrial sector—manufacturing. During the past two years alone, 8 600 jobs have been lost in manufacturing industry in South Australia. However, this decline does not need to be continual or inevitable, if manufacturing industry is given the support it deserves to adjust to the new opportunities of a new technological age.

Under the next Liberal Government, a Department of Manufacturing Industry and Technology will be established with a number of major tasks to support manufacturing industry, the key and principal employer in this State. Diversification of South Australia's economic base will be a major objective of a Liberal Government. This means attracting new investment and new industries—an entrepreneurial role which will remain with the Department of State Development. But, in looking to expansion, we must not overlook existing industry. Our manufacturing industries must be given every encouragement to remain a key element of our existing economic base. This needs specialist support from a department of specialists.

The Government has been making a habit recently of copying Opposition initiatives, such as our firm commitment to tax relief and our deregulation policy. A proposal was hurriedly pulled together on Thursday afternoon. A would-be chairman was hurriedly telephoned so that the Government could announce deregulation. It was said to that person, 'Will you be Chairman? I have already sent out the press release.' The Government has also copied our proposals to improve road safety. Regarding our boating, tourism and leisure policies, which we had announced in January, when the Minister opened the boating show he took a carbon copy of our policy speech and said, 'This where we are going.' We like that sort of endorsement about the homework we have done and the good policies that we have put together. As I said at a press conference in February, it does not concern me that the Government picks up and runs with our initiatives and policies. That is an endorsement, the best we can get, that we are on the right track. We know where we are going and we have a long term plan for South Australia.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: I opened my remarks today by saying that the Government has run out of ideas and initiatives. It has

lost steam and it has lost a little bit of confidence, having heard the community's response to its door knocking. No doubt we have all recognised the despondency that has prevailed in Government ranks in recent times. Clearly, that is a direct reflection of the mood of the electorate. In terms of the Government's picking up our initiatives, it may be that the Government will copy our initiatives in regard to the manufacturing industry.

Issues like the future of manufacturing industry and youth unemployment require positive, realistic and responsible responses from Government at all levels. Yet, so far they have been virtually ignored by this Government. It has no plan for the long term future of this State. It has no economic strategy which addresses the potential of this State and its problems.

It does not know where it is going. That is why we are having this debate today—because this Government does not want to face this Parliament in April, May, June or July. But this Government must soon face its ultimate test, when it will be unable any longer to evade the consequences of its failings.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I want to raise one matter that highlights again the dishonesty of the Labor Premier of South Australia. I will mention that theme once or twice later in my remarks, but in the Premier's thrashing around to try to excuse the enormous tax slug that his Government has imposed—a record tax slug—on the public of South Australia (the hard-pressed householders—the people who have to pay for the household budget) he is suggesting that back-bench members of Parliament on this side of the House should no longer make any requests to Government for expenditure within their districts.

He has put that proposition to this House on two or three occasions. In fact, he is using up public sector resources, I understand, in getting a 'global' figure (to use his word) in relation to the total number of requests put to Government by members on this side of the House. Of course, the Premier is seeking to disguise what is the tax slug in this State and to inhibit the proper functioning and role of members of Parliament. Is the Premier suggesting that we close down electorate offices?

What he is suggesting is this: if, for example, an approach is made to a back-bench member by a school council that wants some repair work done, needs a new classroom or is looking for a new school, the member concerned is no longer entitled to put that request to Government. That is what the Premier is suggesting, because he will lump all those requests together and say that the Opposition is making impossible demands upon the Government.

Someone may want a water extension to a new subdivision. This happens quite frequently, not only in country areas, where they are universally and routinely turned down, as the member for Eyre can readily tell the House. It has happened in my district and in others. Is the Premier suggesting that a back-bench member has no right to bring that request to the Government's attention and that the total function of the Government is to play its own particular hobby horse or attend to the things that happen to waft past Ministers' attention with the help of some of their lackeys?

Is the Premier suggesting that everyone who comes into an electorate office with a complaint is to be told, 'No, I'm not prepared to put that to the Government'? What an absolutely absurd and stupid proposition to try to put to this House in order to excuse the Premier's enormous tax slug. I will be very interested to hear the global figure as to requests put to Government. I will bet that there have been quite a few requests from the Premier's electorate office

and electorate offices of other members opposite, unless they do not have half as much to do as we have.

All those requests are routinely put to Government. It is part of the functioning of the system. They are fed into the system by way of letter, request, deputation or question in the House, and they are dealt with by Government in due course. I get a large number of letters in response to requests I make to this Administration, and normally the answer is 'No'. However, the Premier suggests that we should not even approach this Government in its ivory tower—it is not to be approached, touched or requested to do anything.

He advances as legitimate argument and an excuse for his enormous tax slug the strangling of the proper function of back-bench members of Parliament. The Premier really is scraping the bottom of the barrel when he dredges this sort of defence up in the House and when members are doing nothing less than their duty in putting to Government legitimate requests from their districts. It is absurd of the Premier to suggest that if one of the schools in his district makes an approach to him, as the member for Ross Smith, he universally says to them, 'Oh, no; we cannot put that request to Government. We cannot consider that, because we are in straitened financial circumstances.' That is nothing short of a stupid proposition to put before this House and it is a complete distortion of what is the proper and responsible function of members of Parliament.

However, the Premier does not want to accept the responsibility of the Government, which is the responsibility of decision-making. If there is one thing that characterises the track record of this Government it is its inability to make decisions and set proper priorities. I will continue to make requests that come to my electorate office. Indeed, I think that every member of this Parliament would be delinquent in his or her duty if they did not continue to make requests to Government on behalf of constituents, organisations, local government and education authorities. There is no way that I will fob them off, whether in Government or in Opposition. There is no way that I will say, 'Oh, no, it is not our legitimate right to put that request to Government.' That is what democracy is all about.

For the Premier to say in this place, 'I'll get my little sums book out and tote up all the requests that members of Parliament have made to this Government, and I will therefore explode this myth of the Opposition that it believes there should be a degree of restraint,' is a completely dishonest pose for the Premier to adopt. I will be very interested to see his list of requests.

I think we should check the number of requests that the Labor Party, when in Opposition, put to Government for expenditure of money. One will probably find that since the day that responsible government first operated in this State, and certainly since the Labor Party instituted the idea of everyone having an electorate office, it has become a daily routine—and the function of a member of Parliament—to put the requests of his constituents and all other organisations within his or her electorate. This Premier is saying, 'No, you are no longer allowed to do that, because if you do you are being dishonest.' We know perfectly well who is the dishonest leader of this State.

On this question, there were two arms to the Labor Party's economic policy. It fulfilled one—it promised it would put on more teachers, and it used the education lobby effectively. The Labor Party knew that there were votes in health and education. Former Premier Dunstan knew it. The Labor Party promised the world in those areas: the new Leader of the Opposition at the time learnt well—plenty of promises. In terms of personnel we heard, 'We will put more people on and return the Public Service level to the pre-1979 level. We will put on 600 more teachers and fix up the ancillary staff formula. We will not introduce any new taxes while

we do all this, nor will we increase the rate of taxes or introduce any methods of back door taxation.' Of course, the Premier knows perfectly well that that was a completely dishonest statement and one made by a completely irresponsible Leader of the Opposition.

The absolute hypocrisy of the present situation is that the Leader now puts forward rational alternatives and the Premier seeks to denigrate them. He can speak from his own experience. He only has to accuse the present Leader of the Opposition of doing precisely what he did.

The present Leader of the Opposition is not doing that, but the Premier only has to regurgitate to the House and the public, and accuse the Leader of the Opposition quite dishonestly, precisely what he did, namely, to promise an enormous increase in Government expenditure because, as he well knows if he takes any notice at all of his Treasury figures and trends, the big expense is in terms of people on the pay-roll. He knows that perfectly well.

In the lead-up to the election he promised to put a lot more people on the payroll and he has kept his promise. He knew only too well, because his discomfiture was obvious when it became apparent that he had scraped in on election night, from accurate economic information that he so confidently told all media commentators that he had, that he had to back pedal as fast as he could. He had to look at the books and, having done so and having made confident predictions that there would be no need for any increases or new taxes, he knew darn well what was the position, but he sought to hoodwink the public.

So, he has kept one side of his bargain. He has put almost 4 000 more people on the pay-roll, but to sustain his Budget he has had to increase taxes in South Australia to an absolutely record level. I want to query one or two other matters during the course of my remarks in relation to what is happening to ETSA at present. Some strange decisions are being made in a whole range of matters affecting ETSA. I will refer to some of them, but in these remarks I want to refer particularly to what is going on in relation to planning in bushfire areas.

I have had a number of complaints from people in not only my own district but through the Hills Area in relation to what is going on with the unannounced surreptitious decision to underground domestic power lines. The decision is a stupid one. As an example, I was told of a block in Belair in a street of eight houses with overhead power connections. It was the only vacant block in the street and the house was to be built on it. The attachment was made for the power to come into the fascia board, as is always done. The householder was suddenly told, 'Bad luck, we only make underground connections from here on in.' If anybody suggests that that is going to make one iota of difference to the bushfire hazard in that area, they must be plain silly. One more house in a street with overhead power connections will not cause a bushfire. One house with an overhead supply will make no difference to the bushfire hazard.

I have had complaints from people with property to sell when suddenly the cost of the block they wish to sell has gone up in one case by \$16 000 due to an unannounced decision made to underground power supply to that block. These people ring me and ask when it was announced. I contacted the Electricity Trust and was told that it had not been announced. That is a most surreptitious and undesirable way for such an organisation to proceed.

I did note that the Government recently made a new appointment to the Board. The ETSA Board is fast becoming a repository for worn out Labor politicians and fellow travellers. You, Mr Acting Speaker, may even aspire to be a member of that Board if the current trend continues. There was a tradition to which I succumbed—I believe with hind-

sight, wrongly—to appoint a past Labor politician to the Board of ETSA because of the longstanding tradition of having one member from the Liberal side of politics and one from the Labor side of politics on the Board of ETSA over the years. The Labor man had retired (I think Cyril Hutchens from memory) and I appointed the Hon. Glen Broomhill, the former member for Henley Beach. So, Sir, you can aspire in due course to a position on the Board of ETSA, although I believe that is highly unlikely, because I cannot see the Board of that Trust continuing in its present vein. However, that is a goal at which you can aim, Sir.

Latterly, when in Government I enlarged the ETSA Board from five to seven members because it was my firm conviction that there needed to be an infusion of business expertise, so that sound economic decisions could be made by the Board because some fundamental economic decisions have to be made in relation to our next year's power supply. It had been put to me that, if a couple of members of the Board were away, only three people would be making decisions: that was a fairly small number of people to be making fundamental decisions affecting the whole future of the State. One of the members I appointed was Mr Bernie Leverington. Unfortunately for Mr Leverington, he was also Chairman of the Chamber of Mines in South Australia and he felt constrained, in the public interest, to make a public statement about the Labor Party's closure of the Beverley and Honeymoon uranium mines.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, he, like any logical thinking citizen, could not understand how the Labor Party could suddenly—like Paul travelling to Damascus—see the light on the road. The Labor Party was suddenly struck with a great flash of light when Roxby Downs passed from being a mirage in the desert to something the Labor Party felt constrained to support in the heat of an election campaign. Suddenly, it had a visitation of new insight and members found themselves able to support Roxby Downs after they had done their damndest in this House to defeat it. In June it was a mirage in the desert, but by September it was highly desirable from their viewpoint.

However, their vision was not quite complete for them to see the Beverley and Honeymoon mines proceed, although they were far closer to coming into production and a lot further down the track. They did find it within their competence to approve the environmental impact statement for the Honeymoon mine. The Labor Party did manage to conclude that it was environmentally safe. The Department of Environment and Planning concluded that way, but unfortunately the Minister of Mines had some serious doubts about it. Nonetheless, the Government approved it, and he shut down the Honeymoon and Beverley uranium mines quite illogically. The Department of Environment and Planning said it was safe. The Government threw several hundred people out of work. Bernie Leverington felt compelled to say publicly that he could not understand its thinking, that it was damaging to South Australia, and that there would be a downturn in mining exploration. In the view of the Chamber of Mines there would be a downturn in exploration in South Australia, and there was such a disastrous downturn. For his trouble he got the chop. The Labor Party shunted him off the Board of the Electricity Trust.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: He joined the Liberal Party.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: He had been a member for many years. The Minister of Mines and Energy was heard to say that he would not get away with that when he made that statement publicly. They deposited a former Minister of Transport (Hon. G.T. Virgo), ensconced him on the Electricity Trust Board alongside the former member for Henley Beach. What a cosy little arrangement! To get even cosier, last week, on the retirement of Mr Keith Lewis,

they shunted in their mate from the Trades and Labor Council. No announcement was made about that but their union man was appointed. We have three cobbers, comrades, or whatever the word is, down there. They will be able to have a sub-branch meeting of the Labor Party on the Board of ETSA. What a cosy little arrangement for the Labor Party!

That is not done without reason. It is my firmly held view that the sort of decisions we will get out of the Electricity Trust will not be those in the best interests of South Australia; they will be political decisions and I believe there is evidence of that right now.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Is Bill Hayes a Labor Party supporter, Roger?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I do not know his politics. I have never seen him on any list of members.

Mr Trainer: Your smile says otherwise.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I smile because I am a pleasant person all the time. That is just my habitual agreeable countenance.

Mr Trainer: Like a crocodile.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Members opposite are trying to upset my train of thought. They must aspire to join the club—the Labor sub-branch of the Electricity Trust of South Australia. With one more they will have a majority. What has happened to my proper desire to see that ETSA has some good strong hard-headed sound economic thinkers on the Board? I have nothing against Glen Broomhill, but in a moment of weakness I agreed to this tradition, and on he went, but, if I had known what would transpire, I would have broken the tradition and unloaded all the people who were on the Board not because of their intrinsic worth in being able to contribute to the deliberations of the Electricity Trust.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Is John Carnie no good?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: You put him there; that is for you to say. In my view it is a tragedy that politics is so obviously predominant on the Board of ETSA when it is having trouble in relation to decision making about future power supplies for South Australia and the setting of ETSA tariffs. Good luck to Mr John Lesse, now on ETSA. The business representative, Mr Leverington, got the chopper because he had been outspoken about the sacking by the Labor Party of several hundred people when it closed down those mines which the Government said were environmentally acceptable. So much for the treatment of a man who was honest enough to stand up and say what was true. We can now expect some even more curious decisions, I suspect, from the Electricity Trust. Let me pursue this nonsense which is going on in relation to the undergrounding of power lines in the Hills.

An honourable member: It is expensive.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: So it is. Let me refer to the figure quoted by the first committee for the cost to underground in the bushfire prone area. What an absurd definition that is; you would not get a more bushfire prone area than Yorke Peninsula in full crop or anywhere in the country, particularly the South-East. If undergrounding of power lines is to take place in bushfire-prone areas, all power lines would need to be undergrounded. It is my view that the cost of undergrounding from the northern hills down to Victor Harbor has been seriously underestimated at \$120 million.

Even if the lower figure quoted in the Scott Report of \$120 million was accepted, that would incur an annual interest repayment of \$15 million. Forgetting the undergrounding of power lines, which suddenly burst into prominence, if \$15 million a year was spent in clearing away some of the load of fuel along the roadsides and in Government reserves particularly, and if we did something about convincing householders to clear some of the load of fuels

around their houses, some impact might be made in respect to bushfires. The end result of undergrounding would be that there would be prolific growth on roadsides where ETSA at least has done some work in getting their lines clear, and we would find that the major cause of fires in those areas would not be from ETSA overhead lines but from other causes.

A spate of bushfires has occurred in the Adelaide Hills this year. We had one in the Black Hill area, not far from where I live. The conclusion has been reached that some of those fires have been deliberately lit. The bushfire that went through the area in which I live on Ash Wednesday was deliberately lit. A man was caught and charged in relation to that fire. Spending \$120 million to put these power lines underground (to partially do it) will be money badly spent indeed. It will be an enormous cost, and it is suggested that ETSA will bear half. That means that the general community will have their tariffs increased. ETSA says, 'We will pay half,' but the general community down here on the plains and elsewhere will have their tariffs increased.

The people living up in the Hills will get clobbered twice: there will be a loading because they happen to live where the power lines were put overhead in the past through someone's lack of wisdom. That would be, in my view, an absolutely futile waste of money. The greensies and the environmentalists have jumped on this band waggon, but if this Government has \$15 million a year (that is the interest on \$120 million, which I believe is a phoney figure) to spend on bushfire protection by putting power lines underground, it would get a damn sight more for its \$15 million a year by doing other things in the Hills area. All the power lines will be underground, the fires will start down on the plains, at Magill or somewhere at the foot of these parks, and they will burn out the Hills residents at the top when the fire comes completely uncontrollable, out of that Hills face zone. That is where the enormous danger zone is.

In the Gumeracha District Council area, in which I live, one-third of the land is under Government control, and if a fire starts there the chances are that it will become uncontrollable. The Government held land in that area is an enormous fire hazard. Putting power lines underground will not reduce the risk one bit. Power lines are not the major cause of bushfires in bushfire-prone areas. If power lines are to be undergrounded in that area they should be undergrounded throughout the State. Some of the South-East fires were caused by power lines and when that happened there was enormous publicity and a big insurance bill. I think that the Government, by going down that track, is not pursuing sound economic policies.

I have more to say about ETSA, but I will say it on another occasion because I am now out of time. In conclusion, Mr Deputy Speaker, I look forward, as you probably do, to your retirement from this place. With any luck at all, you will get a chance to join the ALP club, on the Board of ETSA.

Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth): I wish to relate my remarks to that part of the funding provided by this measure for the administration of the road network in this State. Although I am more than pleased to support the Bill, I would in this context like to draw to the attention of the House a serious problem that exists in the road network in the west of my district. Specifically, I refer to the Angle Vale township and surrounding district, the residents of which cannot drive along roads in their area without being reminded of the constant threat to their lives and the lives of their families which the designation of Heaslip Road and Angle Vale Road as major arterial roads presents to them as road users.

This matter was raised at a public meeting held earlier this week at Angle Vale. The meeting was attended by a significant number of local residents and also by several members of this House. In this context, I acknowledge the joint interest in this matter that I share with the members for Napier, Goyder, and Light. Unfortunately, the member for Light could not be present at that meeting but he forwarded an apology. The other members and I were present, and I believe that it was an experience that we will share for some time because of the deep feelings expressed by residents on this issue.

The matter was also raised in this House by my predecessor (Hon. Peter Duncan), who took a considerable interest in the problem. As a result of that meeting, certain resolutions will be forwarded by the newly formed Angle Vale and Districts Progress Association to the Minister of Transport and to the City of Munno Para. However, I regret to say that the situation is now even worse than it was some time ago, and the resolutions from the meeting must now receive special priority from the Minister and from his staff when they consider allocating funds in the future year to which this Bill refers.

It would be appropriate if I were to put on the record, for the benefit of members and others who may read *Hansard*, a brief history of this matter. When Angle Vale Road and Heaslip Road were under the care of the Munno Para council, the standard of the roads was such that it was necessary to place a 10-tonne load limit on vehicles because of the danger to public safety caused by the deteriorating condition of the road surface. However, when the roads were taken over by the Highways Department several years ago, substantial money was spent on them and they were upgraded to a point where the load limit could be removed. While such improvements in the road surface would normally be expected to meet with the approval of local residents, in this instance the residents would have been better served had the road remained as it was in its obviously poor condition and the load limit retained for safety reasons. A strange result has followed from the ever increasing use of these roads by semi-trailer and truck drivers as a means of bypassing the traffic lights on Main North Road.

Although the trip through Angle Vale and Heaslip Roads is slightly longer in terms of distance, it is in reality much quicker, because drivers can achieve a straight run without let or hindrance from traffic lights along Main North Road. However, unfortunately, local residents and drivers of other small vehicles passing through the area get in the way of the larger vehicles occasionally, and this is where the problems begin for local residents and passing motorists. Although the road surface has been upgraded by the Highways Department, the traffic control treatments on the various intersections have not, as yet, been similarly upgraded. In defence of the Highways Department and the local council, I must say that both have given this problem serious attention over the years, but financial considerations (and that is what we are debating today) have meant that the response has been necessarily limited by their budgets.

In the meantime, the accidents continue, and honourable members will be only too well aware of the recent fatal accidents in this general area and of a long history of fatal and near fatal accidents in the district. While I appreciate that the Government and the council must operate within the confines of their budgets, I hope that they will both give full and urgent consideration to the resolutions which were adopted by the public meeting to which I have referred and which were supported by the overwhelming majority of the local residents present at the meeting and, I suggest, by the members of Parliament who were present at the meeting as well. One solution that would cost the Highways Department almost nothing to implement, which would be

a good thing in the context of today's financial situation, would be the reimposition of a load limit. Now that the road surface has been upgraded, there is a significant legal doubt about the power of the Highways Commissioner to implement such a measure.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: How about the Road Traffic Board?

Mr M.J. EVANS: I understand that the Highways Act empowers the Highways Commissioner to declare a load limit on a road where he considers it to be in the interests of public safety, but up to the present legal interpretations of that measure have meant that such directions are restricted to circumstances where that public safety problem arises because of the deteriorating condition of the road surface. Unfortunately, the limited sum spent to bring the road surface up to scratch has meant that the load limit must be abandoned, and these other problems have arisen as a result. Although there is doubt that the Highways Commissioner has such power, I believe that it would be appropriate in the circumstances for the Minister to review the Act and, if necessary, to seek a firm legal opinion from the Crown Law Office on the implications of the Highways Commissioner's power in this area. If appropriate and if thought reasonable by the Minister, he could well seek the authority of this Parliament to extend the power of the Highways Commissioner in this area so that, where the Commissioner feels in the interests of public safety and of motorists generally and, in fact, of the residents of a specific district, that it is necessary to impose a load limit, he may do so even though the road surface itself may be adequate to support heavy vehicles, because the road surface is not the only question to which we must address ourselves.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: You must separate the Road Traffic Board from the Highways Department.

Mr M.J. EVANS: If the honourable member wants to take up that suggestion, he should consider it himself, but my theme is the development of the matter of the expenditure that must be made on the road treatment network in that vicinity.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: I'm just trying to help.

Mr M.J. EVANS: Certainly, and I appreciate the honourable member's contribution. Over the years, successive Governments have developed Main North Road as the major transport corridor for heavy vehicles travelling north-south, along with the Port Wakefield Road, on which substantial sums have been spent in recent years. Consequently, it is unreasonable for any Government, of whatever political complexion, to expect residents in this area to tolerate the conditions that prevail on what should be simple local suburban roads because heavy vehicles prefer the short cut that Heaslip Road and Angle Vale Road present.

In fact, at the public meeting I suggested that the residents would be better served if the council took over the control of these roads, dug the odd trench across them, and reimposed the load limit because of the deteriorating public safety on those roads. I appreciate that the Minister is sympathetic to the matters that I have raised, because I have raised them with him personally and in correspondence, and his response has been sympathetic. The officers of his Department who attended the meeting (indeed, they were brave to attend) presented a reasonable case to the residents. I believe that the officers of the Highways Department have devoted considerable attention to these problems. I thank them for that, but more attention needs to be paid to them.

The finance that we are considering today will go in part to the salaries of those officers who will be ensuring that these roads are improved over the next few years. Now that the local residents have taken the matter a step further, and as one of the four local members involved in this issue, I appeal to the Minister to again review the matter with

special reference to the aspect of a load limit, even though that is only a temporary solution pending the upgrading of the various intersections along the road, a matter that I am aware is under active consideration by the Department and by the council.

Plans on display at the meeting related to the upgrading of the Gawler by-pass intersection with Angle Vale Road—a very important measure. I am sure that the public using the roads in that vicinity will be pleased when that intersection has been upgraded. The cost is significant and can only be met over a period of time, but I appeal to the Minister to review the funding of that situation, because I believe that that intersection is a threat and a serious hazard to road users that deserves special attention.

I believe that this matter deserves special consideration. I would like the Minister to pay attention to my remarks, as he has indicated to me that he will. In the time that I have remaining to me I want to refer to another matter of local concern. This matter relates to the funding issue that was before us today. I refer to the Lyell McEwin Hospital. Members would be aware that I have raised this matter in the House by way of a question to the Minister of Tourism, representing the Minister of Health in another place, and that he was good enough to respond.

It is appropriate that I should now place on record my congratulations to the Minister of Health and to the Government in general for the letting of the stage I tender for the Lyell McEwin Hospital redevelopment. Work on stage I has commenced on site, and part of the funding allocated in the Bill will go towards the further development of stage I works. The people of the district were very pleased indeed to see bulldozers and other items of heavy machinery and equipment moving back and forth across the hospital site, preparing the car parking areas and generally preparing the site to a condition where redevelopment work can begin. I assure members that residents of the Elizabeth, Munno Para and Salisbury areas are overjoyed that the stage I redevelopment has now at last begun.

Members would be well aware of the extended history of this project which over successive Government terms has been canvassed, feasibility studies sought and reports obtained from public servants. On many occasions the matter has almost been finally determined. However, finally, the project is in hand and the people of the district can have confidence in it.

While the Lyell McEwin Hospital was indeed a welcome and worthwhile facility at the time when the City of Elizabeth was begun in the early 1950s, and of course the people of the area have been well served by the hospital over the years, it is now hopelessly out of date, and the redevelopment is indeed of great benefit to the people of the area. I want to place on record my congratulations to the Minister of Health for his presiding over the development of this work.

I also want to place on record my concern about the eventual preparation of stage II and stage III tenders. The commencement of this project is only the beginning, and obviously we must now proceed to further development of stages II and III. Stage I, while beneficial, will certainly not achieve full benefits for the people of the district. Stages II and III will provide very much needed facilities by way of patient ward accommodation, theatres, administration blocks, outpatient quarters, domiciliary care headquarters, and the like. Of course those are all essential to the delivery of health care services in the northern region.

While I appreciate that the matter of stage II and stage III funding is subject to allocation in the long term and does not involve a decision to be made in regard to this Budget but one for subsequent budgets, I believe that, to secure Government support for measures of this kind, it is essential that one places on record as early as possible the

need for these facilities. I know that the Minister of Health fully recognises this, and I am sure that he will give the project his very best consideration. I commend to him the benefits in terms of the credibility of the project and indeed the faith that the people of the district have shown in it, and I urge the Minister to place on record as early as possible his commitment to stages II and III.

At a recent public meeting the Minister indicated that he was not yet able to give a firm commitment in relation to that because of the heavy demands on the future Loan works budget of the Health Department. I can fully appreciate that. However, having commenced the project, the Government is, I believe, obliged to finish it. No Government in this State would countenance in any sense the abandonment of this project one-third or two-thirds of the way through. Accordingly, I ask the Minister of Health in due course when the five-year Loan works programme has been formulated to give special consideration to the needs of the area and a clear commitment to stages II and III to follow consecutively upon completion of stage I. I think that such a commitment would be exceptionally well received by the people in the district involved.

The Lyell McEwin Hospital serves a very large catchment area, similar in magnitude, I would expect, to that which is served by the Modbury Hospital, which is a very reasonable, modern facility that enjoys substantially higher revenue funding than does the Lyell McEwin Hospital. That matter, of course, is under debate, and recently the Minister saw fit to supplement the funding for the Lyell McEwin Hospital by a significant additional amount—in fact millions of dollars is involved. I am sure that that funding will generate significant benefits for health care for those in my district. So, too, would be a contribution and a commitment towards stages II and III, as well as a general upgrading of the revenue budget for the hospital.

I shall conclude my contribution with those remarks. Again, I thank the Minister of Transport for his assistance in considering the Angle Vale and Heaslip Roads problem, and I commend to the Minister of Health the need for a future commitment in relation to stages II and III of the Lyell McEwin Hospital redevelopment project.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON (Torrens): I refer to what I believe is an example of financial irresponsibility on the part of the Government. First, I would like to say to the member for Elizabeth that, in relation to his specific problems, he needs to realise the difference between the Highways Department and the Road Traffic Board. As Minister of Transport previously, I had to deal with the matter involving Heaslip and Angle Vale Roads, and I believe that we had solved the problem for the time being, anyway. However, it appears that the problem has arisen again. I well remember it as being a considerable problem, and I am very pleased that the honourable member has brought the matter forward in the House. The real answer to the matter is to separate the Highways Department from the Road Traffic Board because, as the honourable member would realise, local government is as much a petitioner to the Road Traffic Board as is the Highways Department, and justice must be seen to be done as well as be done. I am not saying that justice has not been done: I am saying simply that the only way to handle these matters is to separate the two bodies.

However, I wish to address the House in relation to a crisis that is developing in schools in South Australia because school assistants are not being replaced. The Opposition has been contacted by representatives of at least 20 schools in the metropolitan area as well as by a number of country schools which are complaining that they are below their entitlement for ancillary staff and that they are being refused

permission by the Education Department (of course that means by the Minister) to replace school assistants.

Also, there is the matter of groundsmen: employers at schools have been instructed by the Minister or the Department that, if groundsmen leave a school through one reason or another, they are not to replace them. I refer to this by way of introduction, because this is the nub of the problem. It has been brought about due to the Government's promise (espoused while the Labor Party was in Opposition) that it would not compulsorily transfer ancillary staff from one school to the other. The former Government tried to compulsorily transfer ancillary staff from a school that had become over entitlement to other schools that were under entitlement.

Most members would realise the very major role played by the present Minister, when a member of the Opposition, in whipping up public concern about that action proposed by the previous Government. However, I must say that the previous Government was at least honest in what it was trying to do, namely, solve the problem existing in schools which were under entitlement in relation to ancillary staff and which were not getting replacements.

The Minister while in Opposition gave an undertaking, to be exact, that he would not oppose an application before the Industrial Commission for clause 13 (3) of the School Assistants Award to be removed from the award. In fact, he has carried that out, and the South Australian Institute of Teachers applied to the Industrial Commission, and that clause of the award, which gave the Minister power to move ancillary staff from one place to another, has been removed. I understand that the Department has received instructions from Treasury, that in respect of ancillary staff it must live within its Budget allocation. I also understand that, given current circumstances, about the only option available to the Department is to refuse to fill vacancies.

Further, I have been told that as a result of ancillary staff now being handled on an area basis compared with the previous central approach the position in some areas has become even more critical and complex. In fact, because of the Minister's promise and the carrying out of his promise not to invoke that clause, many schools are under entitlement; on the present formula they are entitled to more ancillary staff than they presently have. But, when they apply for more ancillary staff, they cannot get them. Even though many schools are over entitlement, because staff cannot be removed compulsorily, they remain at those schools.

This is very difficult and unfair, because obviously the schools that are under entitlement deserve more ancillary staff under the formula but are not able to get them. This is an example of financial irresponsibility. The Minister made a promise to the public of South Australia but, in carrying out that promise, he did not take into account the financial implications involved. Really, the only thing that the Minister can do to correct the present situation is obtain more money from Treasury to fill the vacancies in those schools that are under entitlement.

Obviously, Treasury has said, 'No, you cannot have it.' In this regard the Government has no alternative. But the Government will accuse me of asking it to spend more money. It is the Government's own fault, because of the promises that it has made, that it is in this jam. It is not so bad that it is the Government's fault and that the Government is embarrassed: that is really not a problem as far as I am concerned. The problem is that the schools that are entitled to staff are not able to get them. I can cite examples. On Tuesday 26 February the Principal of a school was advised by the Superintendent of Staffing for that area that the groundsman had retired from the school because he had found full-time work—he was working for only 10 hours at

the school. The Principal was advised by the Area Director that that groundsman would not be replaced. When the school questioned the decision, the Superintendent advised that the direction had come from above not to replace staff and that this sort of responsibility should be placed on the school council. The member for Bragg brought this matter to my attention.

This means that the Education Department is saying, 'If you lose a groundsman whose salary is presently paid by the Education Department, that groundsman will not be replaced when he leaves. However, if you want to re-employ a groundsman, it becomes the responsibility of the school council.' So much for free education! A decision of the Adelaide area Superintendent of Personnel affected a school in my district so that from 28 February that primary school will have no groundsman and thus no means of maintaining the large school grounds in an acceptable manner. In fact, the school involved was disadvantaged in many respects: there had just been a merger and special entitlement had been granted to that school in relation to ground staff. But, because of the present situation and the restrictions on staffing, the school is no longer able to employ a groundsman.

Those two instances highlight the situation regarding groundsmen, but the same applies to a school in the district of the Minister of Transport. A letter to the Minister (of which I have a copy) states:

The school council wishes to convey its support and concern regarding the unresolved issue of ancillary staffing for the school.

The council has been pressing the issue for 12 months and it is now getting to the stage where it believes that it must take desperate action to try to resolve the ancillary staff position. I make the point that the Government cannot have it both ways. If the Government is not prepared to move staff from one school to another (and at least by doing that it is carrying out its promise), it must find the wherewithal to provide staff for those schools that are under entitlement. I do not want to be told by the Minister that I am asking the Government to spend money, because this is a self-inflicted wound.

At this stage I diverge: I resent the allegations made by Government members that members on this side, especially back-benchers, are not supposed to make genuine requests on behalf of their constituents. You, Mr Acting Speaker, would know as well as anyone, because of the situation in your district, that members are besieged by constituents to do something, and members of Parliament have a duty to petition the Government on behalf of their constituents. We all know that that is not always successful, and sometimes we know that the demands are unacceptable. However, every citizen has a right to be represented in this Parliament and to be represented to the Government. I resent being told that members on this side have no right, because of the financial situation in which the Government has placed itself, to make representations on behalf of their constituents because, by doing so, we are asking the Government to spend more money. That is patent nonsense, and I want to put that on record.

Finally, I return to the school assistants situation. The Minister set up an inquiry into all aspects of this matter and in particular the formula applying to the relationship of school assistants to teachers at various schools. I understand that that inquiry has not yet reported and that it is 18 months overdue in its reporting. I have questioned the Minister about this in the House before. He has said that they are doing surveys, which is fine. It is great if the inquiry conducts surveys, but it is high time that the Minister—if he has not already done so—demands that the inquiry reports, because the school assistants situation is now so grave that the Minister and the Government must take action about it; otherwise schools that are already disad-

vantaged as regards ancillary staff will become even more disadvantaged and the position will become untenable.

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): In the *News* of 13 February appeared a cartoon showing the Leader of the Opposition standing on a soapbox pointing to a crowd of people with a sign saying, 'No tax rises'. The Premier was standing on a similar soapbox with another sign saying, 'No tax rises'. Underneath it said, 'My oh my! Doesn't three years pass quickly when you are having fun!' That cartoon has a lot to say. First, it could be shrugged off as just a cartoon saying that all politicians of both political persuasions, come election time, go around promising tax cuts and it is to be passed off as a cynical cartoon. But, the track record of the two Parties in this area must be looked at, because they are like chalk and cheese. First, I refer to the Liberal Party's standing on a platform saying, 'No tax rises'. The track record when it was in Government from 1979 to 1982 is that South Australia became the lowest taxed State in the Commonwealth.

On the other hand, since 1982 South Australia has reverted to the fourth highest taxed State in the Commonwealth. If one looks at this sort of cartoon and the scenario of moving into the next election, one can anticipate the Labor Party once again going to the people, as it did in 1982, promising no increases in taxes and charges. The Liberals, when they were elected in 1979, said that they would reduce taxes, and their track record indicates that they did so.

I well recall a pamphlet that appeared in my letterbox in Glenelg (and no doubt in others around the district; I understand that they were spread all over Adelaide), which I cannot incorporate in *Hansard*, but which has on it a photograph of the Premier saying, 'Elect a Bannon Government: we want South Australia to win,' in which he made this profound statement:

We will stop the use of State charges—like transport fares, electricity, water and hospital charges—as a form of backdoor taxation. The ALP will not reintroduce succession or death duties—this is the best of it—
and we will not introduce new taxes.

I will come back to that in a minute. There are a few other interesting promises in relation to money. Under 'Health', he states:

A Bannon Labor Government will stop any further funding cuts to our public hospitals.

That is a classic! We saw exactly what happened this last financial year at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which experienced a reduction in real terms in moneys allocated to the hospital at a time of growing waiting lists for surgery due to Medicare, which was imposed by the Federal Government. However, the promise of the Bannon Government that it would stop any further funding cuts in our public hospitals has proved to be as incorrect as was the Premier's other statement that he would not do anything about putting up transport fees, electricity, water and hospital charges and that he would not introduce any new taxes.

I cannot say that the Premier of the day lied because that is unparliamentary, but it is a blatant abuse of good faith for a political Party to send out a pamphlet around a district containing this material, knowing damned well that when it got into Government it would throw it out the window and, indeed, do what the Government did in introducing taxes and charges. The track record of Cain in Victoria indicates that he did it and that the ALP did it in Western Australia. Once again, we have seen the Labor Party doing the same thing here.

The Government promised that it would give a 50 per cent cut in household electricity bills to holders of the health benefit card. That was appreciated; we all like to see that. However, one must bear in mind that the Liberal Govern-

ment had already promised that, and the Labor Party picked it up. So, we were both going in to bat on that issue. But, as soon as the Labor Party came to power it turned around and in one great swipe and on three occasions put up electricity charges and wiped out any concession that disadvantaged people received from the \$50 deduction. We have now reached the sad state of being the inflation capital of the country—a position of which the Government would not be very proud.

It is a fact of life that we are now the inflation capital of the country. Soaring living costs in South Australia have upset what was an impressive December quarterly CPI. If it had not been for South Australia, the CPI inflation rate nation wide would have been even more impressive. We performed poorly. We were around the level of Tasmania: Brisbane and Darwin bottomed at one per cent with Hobart and South Australia running at over 2 per cent.

The contributing factors to that bad showing in South Australia were put down to increases in State and local government charges, which had moved completely out of line with charges elsewhere. I will quantify this. During the December quarter increases of 7.1 per cent were recorded in Housing Trust rents; electricity charges rose by 12 per cent; public transport fares by 16 per cent; motor registration fees by 10 per cent; and drivers licence fees by 25 per cent. Selected State charges for the December quarter contributed to a massive 28 per cent of the 2.1 per cent increase in the CPI for that quarter.

Imagine that: 28 per cent of the increase for that quarter was tied up with increases in charges in the State and local government areas at a time when the Government had come into power on a promise that it would not increase taxes and charges and use that as a source of revenue. In South Australia there has been a tax explosion. We have now seen some 40 per cent increase in State charges and taxes since the election of the Labor Government.

During that time the Labor Government has introduced a new tax, has raised six others and increased 160 charges. I defy the member for Hartley to place on record in this House a list of the charges that he attributes to the Liberal Party. Bear in mind that even if there was some semblance of truth in that they were spread over 3½ years in Government, whereas this Government is still just below half way through its term of office.

It is indeed alarming that we are the inflation capital of Australia when Premier Tonkin managed to have a negative tax growth and reduced taxation by 3.1 per cent. I refer to the editorial in the *News* of 1 February, which sums up the general public thinking. It states:

While the CPI rate was good news nationally, there was a sting in the tail of South Australia. City by city, Adelaide recorded the highest increase. Much of this was attributable to State and local government increased taxes and charges.

South Australia is supposed to offer cost advantages compared with other States. But the opposite has happened. By no coincidence, release of the figure came shortly after the report of the South Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry forecasting a bleak year ahead for the State's economy.

We are in every sense paying the price of Government unwillingness or inability to cut costs but instead to increase tax and charges far beyond inflation rates.

We are looking down the barrel with the inflation rate when we compare it with rises in taxes and charges. This State needs what the Leader of the Opposition has been advocating for some time, namely, a total freeze on taxes and charges in this country. It concerns me greatly that the Labor Party is starting to talk about radical tax changes. It is doing it at the Federal level and is talking now in terms of a tax summit. It concerns us greatly that the Government of the day in Canberra will have worked out in advance, as with the accord, what it would like to see come out of the tax summit.

Also, here in South Australia the State Labor Party is about to enter into its March ALP Convention and is planning on a radical overhaul of State taxation with the possible abolition of pay-roll tax but with the introduction of new State taxes. There are those amongst the Party who are prepared to look at a full range of capital transfer taxes which, of course, will include death duties and, I imagine, a capital gains tax. It concerns me that, when the Labor Party starts talking about tax reform, and reorganising tax scales, the bottom line invariably is that the taxpayer pays more. It never starts talking about how they will prune its taxes and prune the cost of running government. The cost of running government does not seem to matter. They can have a \$50 million overrun, and that is fine. However, they run into the obsession that their costs will go on. They must not reduce the size of government but will have to get the revenue from elsewhere. I would put money on it that, when the conclusions of the resolution come out of the State Convention, if they talk about reorganising their tax scales, the bottom line is that the taxpayer out in the street will end up paying far more than he is paying at the moment. It will be shifted around and will be perhaps under another name. We will see other forms of taxation.

The State ALP platform urges the State Party to negotiate with all State Governments and the Federal Government with a view to the abolition of pay-roll tax and its possible replacement by increased Australian Government transfers or new State taxes. It could take out 'new State taxes', it would be fine if the Federal Government could collect all these unpleasant taxes on behalf of the State Government, including death duties, and the like. But, if the Federals disagree and decide for political reasons that they will not collect those taxes, the ALP Convention has left itself wide open to consider new State taxes.

The Premier has smelt the air and has realised that he is in trouble in the electorate on the whole question of taxes and charges. He is talking about the day coming when taxes will be reduced. The bottom line of the State Convention is that it will still look at new methods of raising taxes. I do not trust the Convention to come out with anything other than a new form of taxation, which means that the people in South Australia will pay more. The alternative, the Liberal approach, is to look at the cost of government, reduce the size of government and run it more effectively. That is the way to go.

In South Australia living standards have been knocked for a six. The living standards of years gone by are dropping, the cost of living is rising and the Government must accept a major amount of responsibility for the amount of money that the householder pays out each week in some form of State or Federal taxation. It is absolutely appalling, and the public is revolting. Everywhere that I go doorknocking people talk about the need for a tax freeze. It is essential that this tax freeze be implemented and for the Government to get on with the business of reducing the size of the Administration and doing something to help the taxpayer.

I have looked at a couple of tax issues which affect employment. There are many taxes and charges—indeed 160 charges and six or seven taxes—that increased. Land tax on commercial properties is one area to which I should refer. Commercial property values have increased considerably over recent years through inflation and with the way in which land values in South Australia have escalated. I quote the example of a factory at Somerton Park which, back in 1980-81, had a site value of \$66 000. By 1984-85 it had gone from \$66 000 to \$81 000—a modest increase of some 23 per cent. Its land tax over that time went from \$267 to \$408—a 52 per cent increase. I refer also to a showroom at Brighton Road, Brighton, slightly out of my electorate. The site value increased 86 per cent—in other

words, the value of the site through natural rise of property values went up 86 per cent, whilst the percentage of land tax on that property went up 251 per cent.

A shop on Norwood Parade, although out of my electorate, is an interesting example. It had a site value of \$27 000, which rose to \$82 000—an increase of 198 per cent. However, land tax went up 63 per cent. Another office at St Agnes had a site value of \$31 000, and that rose to \$104 000—a 234 per cent increase—whilst the land tax has gone up 890 per cent.

Mr Ashenden: He is going to sell out because of the land tax.

Mr OSWALD: I understand that that is so. My friend would have knowledge of that case because it is in his area. I have given a cross-section of examples from within my area to right across the other side of town in order to illustrate that the Bannon Government is cashing in on this massive escalation in property values to the extent that we have reached the point whereby land taxes are increasing in some cases 11 times the rate of inflation. That is a most disgraceful position. It is a blatant example of a socialist Government's being prepared to reap in revenue from any quarter it can. It is coming from the business sector with and for whom we know the Labor Government has no great affinity or affection. If the Government can rip in that sort of revenue from the small business area, it will do so until such time that the business men scream. Suddenly, the Premier will come out with a grandiose statement about the Government's being pro small business. However, nothing is further from the truth.

Small businesses are subject to enormous cost pressures at the moment. Their cost pressures are not just related to land tax but cover workers compensation, general insurance, increasing salaries, and lower margins from which to gain profit, yet they are meant to keep their doors open. These enormous cost pressures apply, yet one business man found that his office rent went from \$69 to \$890 over a period of three years. It is one more straw on the camel's back, and the businesses crumble. It is intolerable for the Opposition to sit back and watch small business people having to succumb because the Government wants to rip them off for the purpose of increased revenue.

I have two other examples of cases in my electorate. One constituent has on Jetty Road, Glenelg, an old property with several shop fronts. Similar to others, the properties attract a percentage of land tax. This financial year has dealt them a severe blow which, in today's economic climate, those involved can ill afford. Unlike council rates, which are adjusted with property revaluations in mind and which involved an increase of approximately 9½ per cent, E & WS rates increased by 50 per cent and land tax by a monstrous 300 per cent. That involves a total increase of 280.95 per cent. Precise figures for 1983-84 were \$1 095, whereas in 1984-85 it was \$3 076. Another property in Glenelg North is responsible for land tax. In 1983-84 the land tax was \$57.69, whereas in 1984-85 it escalated to \$268, a 464.55 per cent increase. Another constituent in Glenelg East has a block of flats, the land tax on which went from \$189 in 1984 to \$530 in 1985.

I am aware of the reaction of honourable members opposite. They say that they are commercial properties that, they have value and that they can afford to pay. They therefore want to cream off the money while they can. However, we realise that that should not be that approach to take if we look at the cost of running businesses. Land tax is just one very small part in the overall cost structure of running a business.

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

Mr OSWALD: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr OSWALD: I would now like to look at another area of charges that the Government is inflicting on small business, and I want to look first of all at the impact of electricity tariffs on the average consumer. According to ETSA the average quarterly M tariff consumption for all electric households is about 1 300 kilowatt hours. I will quote some figures concerning the average increase in M tariff under the Bannan Government. First, in 1982, it was \$94.59 per quarter. They increased the cost of electricity by 12.4 per cent in 1983 to \$106.28, and in November 1984 it went to \$119.28. The impact of this on small business is quite crippling, and I will refer to businesses such as a small shop with refrigeration, a small suburban supermarket, a large shop and then a very large shop.

A small shop with refrigeration involving, say, 1 000 kilowatt hours per quarter, in June 1982 was paying \$135.60 for electricity, and by November it had gone to \$189, an increase of 40 per cent. The suburban supermarket, which had an account in June 1982 of \$1 149.26, has now seen that account rise to \$1 613, an increase of 40.4 per cent. A large shop on 50 000 kilowatt hours per quarter with an account of \$3 819 is now running at around \$5 366, an increase of 40.5 per cent. For the very large shop/departmental store with 250 000 kilowatt hours per quarter, an account of \$16 706 is now running at \$23 481 per quarter, an increase of 40.6 per cent.

Those figures, on top of the increases in land tax, local government charges, registration fees and wages costs, are in actual fact a crippling aspect of running a business today. They are also part of the massive CPI increase that we saw in the December quarter. About 28 per cent of the increase in the CPI was related to taxes and charges at Government and local government levels. The public should also be aware of the impact that these tariff increases are having on State Government revenue. It is interesting to note that under the ETSA Act the Trust is required to pay the State Government a levy of 5 per cent on its total revenue from sales of electricity.

In 1981-82, the amount collected by the Government from this source was \$14.8 million. Following the recent tariff increases, it is estimated that ETSA will pay the Government approximately \$26 million during 1984-85, an increase of 76 per cent under the Bannan Labor Government. In addition, during 1983-84, the Government increased the interest rate on State Government loans to the Trust from 6.4 per cent to 12.2 per cent. The rearrangement increased ETSA's debt servicing costs during the year by some \$12 million.

Overall, when the royalties that the Government collects from ETSA's consumption of natural gas are taken into consideration, the Government receives around \$42 million from ETSA's operations. When one looks at it in that light, it is very difficult to turn around and blame ETSA and its Board for the tariff increases. What we have to do is look once again at how the socialist Government can use an instrumentality such as ETSA as a source of revenue for the State Treasury.

It would be very easy for the State Treasury and, through that, the Government or Cabinet to do something about that \$42 million that it creams off ETSA's operations during the year, but unfortunately this Government chooses not to do anything about that. As a result of the cost increases, the ordinary householder is paying more to use electricity in the home, but there is a flow-on also into the areas such as education, and we are all aware of the rising charges that

sparked the crisis in, I think, TAFE, where the adult literacy and business management courses were reduced because of power costs incurred by the college in question. They were forced to cut courses once again, because the Government chose to inflict these heavy charges on the Electricity Trust, and they had little option but to pay it.

The Bannan Government now is talking about tax concessions, and we are going to hear a lot about this, I imagine, as the year rolls on, which only means that 1985 is an election year. Once again, I remind the public that before the last election the Premier, who was then Leader of the Opposition, talked about doing something regarding taxes and charges. They were going to have a tax summit; they were going to reduce taxes and charges, but that was not the case. The track record is such that charges went up—160 charges in all. A new tax was introduced which the Premier promised faithfully he would not introduce, and other taxes are due to rise. This Government cannot be trusted in the area of taxation relief.

The public is demanding a taxation freeze at the moment, and I totally support that move. It is the only logical course until such time as a Liberal Government can win office and bring in a policy which reduces the size of Government and runs Government more efficiently. In the long term the bottom line is that the taxpayer in South Australia must benefit, and that can only happen if we return to a position similar to that under the Tonkin Administration, when South Australia was the lowest taxed State in the Commonwealth. It is a crying shame to see it rise from the lowest taxed State in the Commonwealth to become in such a short time (in two years or so) the fourth highest. I look forward to that day when we get tax relief under the Olsen Administration.

Mr ASHENDEN (Todd): I wish to address myself this evening to matters of vital importance to residents not only in my district but throughout South Australia. The first area to which I shall address myself concerns an organisation which is trying to do a tremendous amount of good in the community but which is running into all sorts of brick walls in its efforts to respond to the needs of a large group in our community. I refer to a group of people who have been subjected to one of the many unfortunate accidents that occur on South Australian roads. As members are only too well aware from the media reports over the past few weeks, the road toll in South Australia is alarming. The media is making much of the accidents that have occurred and of the fatalities and the injuries that have resulted, but one group of people who suffer tremendously as a result of road accidents are those who suffer injuries to their neck as a result of whiplash, which is an injury that occurs usually because of either rapid deceleration of a vehicle moving forwards or very rapid acceleration of a vehicle which is stationary and which is hit by a vehicle from behind.

I have had approaches made to me by representatives of the Whiplash Association in South Australia. Until those approaches were made, I was totally unaware of the extent and the number of injuries that have occurred within the South Australian community as the result of accidents that cause whiplash. I was also unaware of the number of ways in which persons who have suffered from such injuries are affected. This evening, I will outline in depth the information that has been placed before me, because I believe that this will bring to the House the serious effects of this type of injury.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the honourable member will link these remarks concerning whiplash injuries to the Supply Bill.

Mr ASHENDEN: Certainly, Mr Speaker. I will make the point that approaches have been made to me to seek financial

assistance from the Government to help this group in the work its members are trying to do for the community. I point out that at this stage the Government has been more than somewhat reticent in providing the necessary funds for these people to be able to carry out the work that they wish to do in the community. Therefore, I see this as very much relating to the funding that is provided by the Government and, as you, Sir, would only be too well aware, this is a Bill for Supply, which is the provision of Government funds to enable the Government to operate. I assure you, Sir, that members of the Whiplash Association have made more than one approach to this Government seeking financial assistance, that assistance so far having been rejected.

I was first approached in 1983 by a constituent of mine who outlined to me only too clearly the problems of persons suffering from whiplash. On 28 November 1983, I wrote to the Minister of Health, and I believe that it would be of considerable assistance to the House if I placed that letter on the Parliamentary record. The letter states:

I am writing on behalf of a constituent who wishes to establish an association that will provide assistance and counselling to persons who suffer whiplash injury as a result of motor vehicle accidents. The constituent who has approached me has herself suffered this injury, and is therefore very aware of the serious problems and difficulties that are encountered by victims of this injury. She has found that there is no support group or organisation that victims of whiplash are able to turn to so that they can obtain both advice and support following injury. It has been pointed out to me that the victims of whiplash find that virtually all areas of their lives are affected.

The injury is such that time off from work is frequently required, often for long periods, which can cause financial hardship. The injury severely affects any ability to continue or undertake sporting activities, and also has severe effect within the home because the person so injured frequently is unable to carry out many duties within the home, forcing additional burden on their partners. It has been pointed out to me that, in fact, this can place very great strain on marriages. Additionally, the victim is unable to turn to any professional organisation to obtain counselling and advice that would help both the victim and his or her family.

Victims of whiplash often require medical treatment that extends from the psychiatric profession, through dentistry to physiotherapy and chiropractors. The constituent who has approached me has, under her own initiative, called a public meeting and, as a result of that meeting and recent publicity, she has been inundated with approaches by both telephone and letter from persons seeking help and also expressing their total support for the formation of an official organisation to provide victims of whiplash with medical and legal advice and, at the same time, providing vitally needed counselling and support services. A Whiplash Association of South Australia has been formed, but due to a lack of funds, this organisation has yet to be incorporated.

Of course, this is as far back as 1983 and, since then, the Association has been incorporated. My letter continues:

This, of course, severely hampers its ability to be of assistance to victims of whiplash. This Association, which was only formed in August this year, already has some 300 members, and its aims are:

- (1) To increase public awareness of whiplash as a significant community health problem.
- (2) To improve the curative services available to whiplash victims.
- (3) To establish a clearing house of practical information for whiplash victims.
- (4) To expand opportunities for self-help for whiplash victims.
- (5) To improve social services available to whiplash victims.
- (6) To assist in ensuring correct medical treatment.
- (7) To speed up processes that would enable earlier compensation.

I am therefore writing to determine whether your Government would be prepared to provide funding to the Whiplash Association of South Australia to enable it to undertake steps that will place it in a position to provide the desperately needed forms of assistance outlined above. It has also been pointed out to me that victims of whiplash frequently would benefit from domiciliary care and that presently this is not available to such victims. I would therefore ask whether changes could be made that would enable domiciliary care to be made available to those victims of whiplash injury who need such assistance. I have been provided with the opportunity to read correspondence from many professional persons and organisations, all totally supportive of the establishment of an association as outlined above. I therefore

sincerely hope that your Government will be able to be of assistance, and I look forward to your advice.

That letter was written in November 1983 and, since then, I have also made direct approaches to the Minister of Health, placing the representations of my constituents. Additionally, I have tried to arrange a meeting between the Minister and members of the organisation, as well as between the members of the organisation and the Minister's officers. Unfortunately, however, the response from the Minister has been less than that for which one would have hoped, and I have received only two letters from the Minister in response to my representations. One was an interim response, dated 5 December, which advised that 'the Minister is considering the matter and he will write you as soon as possible'.

On 9 January 1984, I received from the Minister of Health a letter which, unfortunately, was not the type of response for which either I or the members of the Whiplash Association were hoping. In his letter the Minister thanked me for my earlier correspondence, and pointed out that the Minister receives many requests from various self-help groups. He then went on to say:

However, I applaud the development of self-help groups in the community to provide support and share information with people in similar conditions. I would be pleased if you would convey my best wishes to the association.

I am sure that members of this House would realise that 'best wishes' do not help an association that is trying to provide desperately needed help to so many people. Following receipt of that reply, I then wrote to the Minister on 22 February (as well as on various other dates) trying to convey to him the desperate need of the Whiplash Association. Unfortunately, really all that has happened to this stage is that members of the Association have been provided with only the type of response from the Minister to which I have referred, that is, wishing them well and not much more. The thing is that this Association represents a large group of people in the community who are severely disadvantaged. We have heard all sorts of promises made by members of the Government about what they would do to assist the disadvantaged or the handicapped. I point out to members opposite that people who suffer whiplash injuries comprise a severely disadvantaged group and that that disadvantage that they suffer is not recognised. The group wants to raise community awareness. Surely that is a responsible approach for it to take, and surely it is not too much to expect the Government to provide more than hollow words.

The Association wants support services: an office, secretarial assistance, a telephone, equipment such as typewriters and photocopiers, and finance to enable it to buy stamps so that it can communicate with people who have been injured and who are suffering from a whiplash injury. As I have said, surely it is not too much to expect the Government to provide that. I would say that probably a Government allocation of \$10 000 would more than meet the needs of the Association, or at the outside, a sum of \$20 000 a year. The Government cries poverty all the time, but it can find \$4 million or \$5 million because of its overspending on the North Adelaide swimming centre. Further, it must find tens of millions of dollars because of overspending on the ASER project, and millions of dollars to fund the Grand Prix. In other words, when it wants to, the Government has no trouble digging up finance. But here is a group of severely disadvantaged people who want only a small amount of money but the Government has ignored them.

Mrs Appleby interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: The member for Brighton is carrying on over there as she usually does. Perhaps there are no people in her electorate with these difficulties.

Mrs Appleby interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: That would not be true. The point is that if the member of Brighton were close to her electorate she would be only too well aware that there are many people in the community that she represents who are disadvantaged because of injuries. Obviously, the honourable member has no interest in their problems at all.

To support my arguments I refer to professional advice that I have received following representations that I have made to the Government in my efforts to try to help these people. I refer, first, to correspondence from Mr David Worth, a Master of Applied Science, and whose Association's head office is in Victoria. He advised me in the following terms:

I wish to present the following information in support of the claim for Government financial assistance to the establishment of supportive services for victims of motor vehicle accidents who sustain cervical spine injuries.

Since 1981 I have been conducting research into movements of the cervical spine in normal people and motor vehicle accident victims at Flinders University of South Australia, as my Ph.D. project...

My findings so far indicate the following:

1. Current X-ray techniques are not sufficiently sensitive, failing to demonstrate certain departures from normal groups...
2. Out of 52 volunteers from the Whiplash Association, all of whom had suffered cervical spine symptoms following a motor vehicle accident, the following data were collected:
 - 90.4 per cent had X-rays after their accident which were reported as normal.
 - 73.1 per cent had current litigation claims.
 - 30 months was the average time between accidents and my examination. The range was 1 to 294 months.
 - The average rear end victims in this sample presented a loss of 50 per cent (approx.) of flexion-extension range of movement at the atlanto-occipital joints and head on victims 30 per cent (approx.) loss of the same movement.
 - 75 per cent (approx.) complained of pain + physical + behavioural symptoms.

It is my clinical experience that these people suffer long and complicated symptoms which result in psychological disorders. They would be greatly helped by the following services:

1. Home help.
2. Child care.
3. Resources and advice on sex for the handicapped.
4. Diagnostic and therapeutic areas of excellence specializing in the cervical spine.
5. Rehabilitation counselling.
6. Dissemination of up to date management of the acutely injured cervical spine amongst casualty departments of hospitals.
7. More research into accurate diagnosis of cervical spine injuries.

This professional person refers to home help, child care, advice, diagnostic and therapeutic assistance, and rehabilitation—all of which are areas that the Association is concerned about. Surely honourable members opposite would agree that such help is desperately needed and that a responsible Government should help to provide it.

Mr Worth then goes on to point out the types of assistance that he believes should be provided in the medical area, but that is an area outside the representations that I am making tonight. I am seeking assistance from this Government in its Budget to provide simply a few thousand dollars to enable the Whiplash Association to be able to carry out work that it wishes to undertake. I also have a copy of a letter from the Professor, Rehabilitation Studies at the Flinders University of South Australia. In a letter of 7 November 1984 he advised me as follows:

My experiences with hyperextension injuries associated with car accidents affecting the neck are much the same as those of other practitioners of rehabilitation or rheumatological medicine, that is to say it has become clear during the last decade or so that there is a group of injuries associated with high speed deceleration in motor cars, in which wearing the seat belt may or may not be a contributory factor, but certainly rapid stopping or rapid deceleration due to a rear end collision does seem to produce a syndrome called the Whiplash Syndrome which is characterized by:

1. No significant bony change on X-ray other than an increased straightening of the spine.
2. No significant pain for up to 24 hours after the accident; the situation then is that pain develops over a matter of a day or so until the neck is extremely painful and extremely stiff with radiation to both shoulders.

This Association has pointed out to me those two areas of concern that the public does not seem to appreciate, namely, the way in which people suffer, and because an x-ray does not show up the injury; they are just wiped off and cannot get the assistance that is required to provide support to other members of the community who are suffering from identical injuries. The professor then goes on to refer to physiotherapy, the use of collars, bed rest, etc. But he points out to me that although this can be undertaken it does not overcome the major problems that these people experience. The responses that I have received from professional people from whom I have sought advice on this matter have been unanimous in the points that they have made to me.

They have said that one of the major aspects of whiplash injury is that it is not physically easy to recognise, that no sign of injury shows up on X-rays. But, these people suffer extreme trauma, and that is one of the greatest frustrations that they face. They know that they are suffering pain, they know the effect it is having on them and their family, and they know that this trauma is very real. Unfortunately, however, because there is no record of the number of people who suffer from this injury and because it is so difficult to prove (and I use the word 'prove' in inverted commas), they have very real difficulty in convincing even the medical profession that they are suffering. This organisation wants, first, to set up an association. It would have a number in the phone book and would advertise publicly so that the public would know that there was a Whiplash Association of South Australia which was in a position to provide the type of support and help that is presently not available from the medical profession. These people want an office, a secretary, a typewriter, a photocopier and some money to buy stationery and stamps so that they can let others know that they are there and able to provide a service to the community.

Goodness only knows how many people are suffering the symptoms of whiplash. I know from contacts that these people even begin to doubt it themselves, because everyone tells them, 'There is no physical reason for you to be suffering like this. We have taken an X-ray and nothing shows up.' They are almost told that it is psychological, which is a handy excuse at any time. The point is that the pain and suffering that these people are enduring are real, as are the effects on their spouses and families. This is one area of the community that does not receive the recognition that it deserves. All this Association wants is a few thousand dollars so that it can get to these people. The Minister of Health has been fairly expansive with words but has provided minimal real assistance to these people.

In 1983 the Whiplash Association wrote to the Minister of Transport seeking the introduction of eye level brake lights. Any member who has been on a study tour overseas would know that in the United States and Canada it is compulsory for motor vehicle manufacturers to install eye level brake lights in all motor vehicles produced—in other words, brake lights on the rear window at eye level. People might ask why another set of brake lights is needed. Eye level brake lights do not necessarily help the driver with the vehicle in front, but all members would realise from driving in the metropolitan area that many motorists (including me and, I suggest, all honourable members) try to read the traffic patterns: to do that we frequently look through the rear window of the vehicle in front, observing not only what the vehicle in front is doing but also what the vehicles in front of that vehicle, *ad infinitum* as far as

we can see, are doing. I note that the Minister of Education agrees with the point I am making, and I am delighted about that. If these lights were fitted, drivers would be able to observe traffic patterns well in advance of the vehicle immediately in front; in that way this type of tail light would have very real value in traffic movement.

The time between the stimulus of our seeing a brake light go on and our response, that is, putting our foot on the brake, is measurable. The greater the time between our observing a stimulus and responding, the more likely it is that we will be able to respond, to brake and avoid hitting the vehicle in front. The Whiplash Association wrote to the Minister of Transport on 30 November 1983 asking that legislation be introduced in South Australia similar to that which exists in the United States and Canada making these lights compulsory on all vehicles produced. Let us face it: if that had happened at the beginning of 1984, a lot of cars would have such lights fitted. Attached to the letter was a report from Washington on automotive engineering and referring to the work that was being done in the United States in this direction. However, to this date the Minister of Transport has not indicated that he is prepared to introduce legislation along these lines.

I assure members that I would support any Government, of whatever political persuasion, or any private member's Bill in this regard. Sure, that provision would increase the cost of motor vehicle production, but I point out that that cost would be more than balanced by the reduction in the pay out from insurance companies, through public hospitals and other areas in relation to whiplash injuries. I also have correspondence pointing out the work that dentists and other medical professionals could do to provide direct help to people who suffer from this injury.

I have spent my entire time in this debate talking about this matter because I have become fully convinced of the need for assistance for this group. As I said at the outset, I had no idea of the number of people who suffered from this injury, or the extent of the trauma that they and their family suffer. I have written letters to the Minister, I have spoken to the Minister and I have tried all other representations possible, but to this stage the Minister and the Government have not indicated that they are prepared to provide financial assistance, which would be a pittance compared with the total Budget. These funds would be of very real benefit. I have considerable correspondence (but unfortunately time does not allow me to quote it) from people involved in the medical profession setting out the very real problems and traumas that are suffered in the community. I hope that the points I have raised tonight will result in this Government's considering the needs of these people. As I said, just two of the measures I have suggested could be brought in cheaply and easily, eye level stop lights being one of these.

Only a few thousand dollars would be required. That amount alone would move us a great distance towards overcoming the problems that these people suffer. If this Association was better able to communicate with the media and with fellow sufferers, its effectiveness would be greatly increased. It has been pointed out to me that one of the difficulties that these people suffer is that no-one believes them. They are suffering real trauma, and they need assistance to get out into the community, to communicate with the community and to support each other, hopefully to overcome the problems that are so real at present. I urge the Government to consider the representations that I have made tonight and to provide the funding that I seek on behalf of the Whiplash Association.

Mr PETERSON (Semaphore): First, I will link my comments to the Supply Bill, because I understand that several earlier speakers were required to do so: I will speak about

the operation of Parliament. Expenses, salaries and the operation of Parliament are paid out of the appropriation, so my comments are linked to the Bill. This matter was brought to mind recently when I read an article (from the current Parliamentary reading list, No. 426), published in the *Illustrated London News* of December 1984, headed 'Reforming Parliament', which of course refers to the British Parliament. I read from that article as follows:

The British Parliament has developed over so many centuries that its workings often seem archaic. Without seeking to challenge the democratic tradition on which it is based many people today are critical of its structure and of its methods of operation, many of which were fashioned in a different age and take little account of modern practices and none of the advantages of new technology. The working arrangements of the House of Commons, its voting procedures and methods of debate, the working hours and conditions for MPs, the lobby system and reporting methods, the operation of select committees, as well as the composition, powers and existence of the House of Lords—all of these and many other parliamentary practices have at times been strongly criticised, but suggestions for reform have seldom been widely supported within Parliament—

and I refer further to the following key statement—which is inclined to urge change on everyone but itself.

That brought to mind a little exercise that we are undertaking in this Parliament.

Mr Ferguson: It's taking a long time, isn't it?

Mr PETERSON: Does the honourable member want to make the speech?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Semaphore has the floor.

Mr PETERSON: Thank you for your protection, Sir. Some time ago, we instigated moves for revision of our own Parliament. I thought after reading that article the other day that I would go back over what has happened and at the proposals, because they seem to have gone into limbo. I am sure that one or two members of this House will recall that we were trying to revise the operations of this House so as to make it more efficient and effective, to give members better access to grievance debates and to make better use of the time available.

My research revealed that on 1 June 1983 a Joint Select Committee on the Law, Practices and Procedures of Parliament was formed, the main aim of which was to eliminate time wasting and late night sittings. Fancy talking about that in this debate. At that stage, apparently that committee lost its way by inquiring into the Public Accounts Committee, the Public Works Committee and all the other Parliamentary committees, but eventually it seems that it turned—

Mr Becker: Who made that silly statement—lost its way looking at the Public Accounts Committee?

Mr PETERSON: I am ignoring interjections, but I used the Public Accounts Committee as part of an example. The committee then turned its attention to Standing Orders. The most important occurrence was that on 26 April 1984 the first meeting of a bipartisan (which is a wonderful word to use in this place) subcommittee of an investigative committee was held. I believe that Messrs Trainer, Klunder, Eastick and Becker were members of that subcommittee and that they were to look into what was assumed to be time-wasting late night sittings and aspects of Standing Orders.

They were to draft bipartisan suggestions, which they did, and those suggestions were circulated to all members, including the member for Flinders (Mr Blacker, the National Party member) and myself, at that stage. It seems that very little happened after that circulation. It would be good to look quickly at the points that were raised for comment. The document concludes as follows:

It is hoped that the Joint Select Committee could produce an interim report containing recommendations that Cabinet could

adopt for presentation and Sessional Orders when Parliament resumes on 2 August.

That was in 1984, and eight points were raised in that document, to which I will return later. On 21 November 1984, the current Government Whip, as convenor of that subcommittee, again circulated the draft proposals in a little more detail. They were the same proposals but there was a reminder that the Government had agreed to most of the submissions. Again, nothing much happened, except that the press had a bit of a field day with it at that stage. In the *Advertiser* of 26 November the comment was made that even the public, who do not take much notice of how we operate in this place, would appreciate any improvement. Since then, my inquiries to the Whip about the stage that this proposal has reached have produced nothing. All I could ascertain was that the Government was still waiting for an Opposition response on this matter.

I noticed in the newspaper report to which I referred earlier that the Hon. Dr Eastick (the member for Light) at that stage said that it would only be a few days before he assumed that the matter it would be settled. However, we are still waiting! I remind honourable members of what was included in the submissions on proposals for change, which would do no harm. Perhaps we can comment on each as we go through. The document of 21 November varies very little from the original submission. That indicates that the propositions were accepted by that committee. There was very little other input to this committee for change to the original proposals, so it seems that they must have been acceptable all round. The 21 November 1984 submission reads, in part:

To encourage further response, I am circulating those draft recommendations with additional explanation of some of the details.

It was issued and there was no response or reaction from that committee, so it appears that all the hours put in by the committee in investigating and preparing the document have been wasted. Those points need to be emphasised and looked at again. Let us see at what we can do to streamline proceedings of this House.

Point (a) related to sitting times and was aimed at minimising late night sittings by having a 12 midnight cut-off time for debate. Certain subclauses covered the fact that occasionally it is necessary to sit past midnight. It was the view of the subcommittee that the frequency of such occasions could be minimised by requiring a suspension of Standing Orders before the debate could extend past midnight. It was envisaged as part of those controlled hours that the adjournment debate on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, as is now the case, would normally still be moved at 10 p.m., with the House rising at 10.30 p.m.—similar to the present arrangement—and that the House would rise on Thursdays at 5.30 p.m. If there was a requirement to go beyond 10 p.m., it would be only a matter of a motion from the Minister to extend the sitting time. Similarly, if it was necessary to extend beyond midnight it would require suspension of Standing Orders. That seems to be accepted. I thought that it was sensible. I was amazed that there had not been more reaction to it.

Point No. 2 referred to maintaining the 2 o'clock starting time for the House. We tried early morning starts. Those starts did nothing whatsoever to reduce the hours put in in this House, and the proposal put forward by the committee was to continue with the 2 o'clock start. Suggestion No. 3 was innovative and referred to the use of morning sessions for private members' time, the disallowance of regulations and regular grievance debates. This year we have been back for 10 or 11 days, and I think we have had a grievance debate on two nights. They are a very important part of the operation of this House for back-benchers. Ministers get

plenty of chances to have their say on important matters, but as they also have constituency problems they deserve a go in grievance debates.

Sittings starting at 12 noon on Wednesday could be utilised until 12.30 p.m. for two or three grievance speeches for which we do not get the opportunity now, and we could use the 12.30 to 1 o'clock slot for the disallowance of regulations or for private members' business. On Thursday we could start at 11 a.m. with a special sitting which may not need to include the whole House. The period from 11 to 11.30 a.m. could be used for a grievance debate or matters of public importance and from 11.30 to 1 p.m. for private members' business.

Mr Becker: Is this your submission to the Select Committee?

Mr PETERSON: I thought that the idea of this debate was for members to raise such matters. I am amazed at the levity and attitude of certain members, as this is an important issue.

Mr Becker: Why didn't you put in a submission?

Mr PETERSON: The result of the committee's multiple hearings has been that the same matters have been put forward, with the same result, and one that I believe is acceptable. I see no reason to suggest any adjustment, because I think that the outcome is reasonable.

Another proposal is that morning sessions need not necessarily involve a full House comprising all Ministers and all members. Ministers might not have to attend, and that would allow them to carry on with Ministerial matters. The House could still conduct some of the other operations that do not require the Ministers attendance. Another point relates to grievances. Extra time made available for grievances could come from a reduction in the time for the Address in Reply debate. Not too many members would object to such a reduction, as that debate takes up a great deal of time. I was intending to check from the record the hours spent on it but have not done so.

Grievances in the morning session would help people get their point across, and the opportunity for such grievances would be practically guaranteed, whereas under the present system we have no guarantee. We have sat 10 or 11 days and only six people (on two nights) have had a chance to speak. There is no guarantee that again this year there will be any more time for grievance debates. If we use the morning session we could be 100 per cent sure, unless we have a carry over from the business of the night before and one would not get the chance.

Mr Trainer: Or a no-confidence motion.

Mr PETERSON: I doubt that the Parliament would be in full session at that stage. We could get that at 2 o'clock with the full session.

Mr S.G. Evans: The individual is forgotten under the present system.

Mr PETERSON: Yes, absolutely ignored.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the new rules will be more stringent with interjections.

Mr PETERSON: Under the proposal, it appears that private members' time would be reduced, but in fact there would be an increase. Private members' time has disappeared under the present system.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: What has this got to do with Supply?

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have just marked off four speakers from the list.

Mr PETERSON: Private members' time has been suspended in the current session, and it does not look like being restored, whereas with morning sessions it would be guaranteed every week. Comment was also made in the

proposal that arrangements could be made for committees to operate as they do now during the Parliamentary session.

I spoke earlier of a reduction in the time for the Address in Reply debate. Currently the ability is there to speak for 60 minutes. The proposal was for it to be reduced to one lead speaker for each Party or grouping who would have the opportunity to speak for 60 minutes (I do not know where Independents stand under that system, but that could be worked out and 30 minutes would be allocated to other members. It was suggested that the option would be left open at 60 minutes for new members. I am sure that there would be no objection by anyone to that as new speakers need 60 minutes to tell their story.

Another proposal was for briefer speeches in general debate (and that is surprising when we talk about that in this debate), unlimited time being reserved for the lead speaker, backed up perhaps by two supporters each speaking for 30 minutes and the time for all other members being reduced to 15 minutes. In general debates in this House, if one cannot say what one wants to say in 15 minutes possibly too many words are being used, except in a situation such as this where I am making important points and need to go through them.

The exception relates to no-confidence motions, which come on in normal proceedings at 2 o'clock. There was also a provision for conscience issues, which are now few and far between in this place. Again, it is covered in the proposal for 30 minute debates. There was also comment about negotiating a programme for this House so that we would know where we were going and what we were doing, which would be a vast improvement on the current situation. The document has been agreed to by a bipartisan committee, and I assume that both sides of the House agree to it or at least have no objection.

Mr S.G. Evans interjecting:

Mr PETERSON: I assume that the committee members report back to their respective Parties and reach agreement.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr PETERSON: It is amazing that a committee can be formed without members reporting back to their respective Parties.

Members interjecting:

Mr PETERSON: I can only assume that, as there is no amendment to the first or second copy of this proposal, the members for Light and Hanson agree. There was talk about the duration of the Parliamentary sessions, the number of sitting days per year, and a 10-day cut-off for the introduction of new legislation. I think that is valid and I do not think anybody here—

Mr S.G. Evans: That's one of the good points.

Mr PETERSON: We have reached common ground at last. As it is in a report by a bipartisan committee, I must assume that it has been agreed to at least by the committee. There was no exception report called, so I assume it is agreed. The comment is made that there should rarely be more than two successive sitting weeks without a non-sitting week to follow, but I do not know about that. However, that is the situation as it has existed for nearly two years. We make the laws here, and people have to comply with them, but we do not do anything about our own procedures.

We all agree on the recommendations in this matter—as far as I am aware, not one contrary submission was received from any member, and I assume that everybody here is at least prepared to accept these recommendations—but we have done nothing about the matter in two years. I believe that implementing the report would make for a more efficient House and for more effective representation of electorates by members through allowing them more time, and I think we should get on with the matter as quickly as possible.

Recently in the debate on the visit of the *QE2* to Outer Harbor, I mentioned the risk of turning Outer Harbor into a banana port, with the provision of stalls and selling various things. I subsequently received a letter from the Craft Council of South Australia, and I appreciate the letter, because what I said I meant in good faith. What I saw down there on the day, from a very brief look out the back, were a couple of fairly nondescript stalls. I am not even sure what they were selling, but it did not impress me, and I did make the comment about a banana port. They took the point and have written to me.

I appreciate that, because it has certainly allowed me to study the booklets and information they sent me, and I have become more aware of the crafts made and available in this State. I thank the organisation for that and I would like to applaud them for the way they are promoting themselves and the magazine they put out which is of great interest. I know that crafts are supported by the State through certain funding arrangements and, to look through these books and see the range of goods that are made by people and the success they have made of their work and skills (leatherwork, woodwork, pottery and glasswork, etc.) through organisations such as the Jam Factory and others, one must applaud the people concerned. I certainly hope that the Craft Council does not lean too heavily on me in the future, because I was certainly not putting it down with the comment that I thought needed to be made.

We had a little problem in my area involving school staffing levels which I have taken up with the Minister, and I know he is looking into it. I did go to a meeting of the parents at the school and was surprised—I think that is the right word—at the reaction of those people to the way that they feel education is going. They do not feel happy about the system as it is. They feel as though their children are being neglected under the system and not being treated correctly. I said to one of the mothers there who was very strong in her comments, 'Why don't you put it down in writing?' and she did. I said, 'If you put it in writing I will read it out for you in Parliament your feelings on education,' and indeed I will do that for her. Actually, the lady who wrote it does not live in my electorate. She lives in West Lakes, but I will read the letter anyway, because I said I would. However, her child goes to a school in my electorate. The letter I received states:

Please find attached a letter plus signatures from concerned parents regarding South Australia's education system. As mentioned at the Ethelton school, you promised to read this plea to the people concerned in Parliament. We appreciate your help in this matter.

That is the letter from the lady, and there are 40 signatures. This matter is serious. These are really concerned people who wrote to me, as follows:

Dear Sir,

This is a desperate plea from very concerned parents. Education should be No. 1 on the list, but somehow it has been slightly forgotten. We were taught the three Rs, and also learnt discipline, self-respect, and given a great chance to manage the experiences of life. Don't take this away from our children. Today, children's education is of a far lower standard—

1. What with open space units distracting children:

2. Composite classes (due to inadequate numbers of teachers) definitely affecting each individual child receiving the appropriate year level teaching, and because of this, the loss of personal contact between the teacher and student:

3. And basically the Government's apathetic attitude to the most important facet in one's life—education.

Special needs: In every school there are always children who require extra help either due to slow learning capabilities, language problems due to multi-cultural aspects, reading difficulties and in many other areas. These children need special teachers, but at present, they are not available due to staff cut-backs. Do you care?

Have you taken time out lately to visit one of the State Schools? Do you realise that the children are leaving to attend private schools, especially at high school level? Why?

Maybe, you should look into these aspects? These are our future Australians we are discussing. Please do something now!

I promised I would read that for the lady in question, and I have done so. I agree that in many ways education is seen by parents not to be achieving their aims for their children. I think we should take more notice of people's views. We received a booklet yesterday from the Minister about the involvement of school councils. People are not becoming involved because they do not feel confident in education, for many different reasons, many of which are laid down in that letter. We need to look at those reasons; we need to involve the parents, the people connected with the schools and children themselves. They must become confident in our system of education or else it will fail. Many parents are taking their children out of school because they do not feel confident in the system. If we are to make education work, we must make the people confident and comfortable in education. Whether that requires a redirection of education or a redirection of attitude is up to the Department to determine.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The Chair feels obliged to point out to honourable members that this is a second reading debate on the finances of the State: it is not a grievance debate. I suggest that some members who have spoken so far have strayed considerably off the finances of the State. I assure the House that, while I am in the Chair, future speakers will be made to come back to the subject matter of the second reading debate on finance. The honourable member for Brighton.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MEMBER'S REMARKS

Mrs APPLEBY (Brighton): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mrs APPLEBY: Although I interjected during the address by the member for Todd, I was asking a question on a matter of importance, whereas the honourable member sought to give the impression that I was not being serious in my approach to this issue. I want to set the record straight. I was trying to ask the member for Todd a question concerning his ideas on how whiplash could best be treated to help those suffering from this serious condition.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) (1985)

Debate resumed.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): It surprises me that members have not tackled the document before them. I am pleased with the ruling that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, have given, because my speech will deal with certain aspects of the Supply Bill. The Premier told Parliament yesterday that present indications were that there was a significant improvement in the recurrent Budget for this financial year. The State Budget showed a \$25 million deficit on Recurrent Account. However, he is a game Treasurer who can make predictions at this stage when such wide fluctuations are being experienced within our economy. It is interesting to note some of the statements made by the Premier as Treasurer. For instance, he said:

By far the most important factor influencing the improvement in receipts is stamp duty collections. I stress that there are still three months of the financial year to run. However, to date there has been a significant increase in duty from real property transactions above budgeted levels.

Concerning the latest statement of the Consolidated Account—unfortunately, the latest figures that we have are for the month of January 1985. In these circumstances, it is easy for the Premier to deliver a speech in Parliament on 12 March and advise members on the situation for the first nine months, yet the figures that we have to work on are for only seven months, so we are two months behind the eight ball. This is most unfair. I have often complained about this over the past 10 or 12 years. When I first came into this place, we always received the statement of Consolidated Account within the first seven days of the month following the subject period: that is, within seven days of the end of the month we would receive the statement of Consolidated Account. Now, however, we are about two months behind and it seems that there is a conspiracy in the Treasury to keep the politicians in this place in the dark.

Referring to stamp duties, the Budget estimate for the year 1984-85 was \$187 million and, in the first seven months of the financial year, the State has received \$94.4 million. On a quick calculation, the State should receive about \$15.5 million a month from stamp duties, according to the Budget figure. This means that we could expect to have received \$108.5 million for the first seven months, whereas we received only \$94 million. So, I have trouble in linking the statement of the Treasurer and the figures available to the Opposition, although my figures are two months old. That is annoying, because the Opposition must have the same information as is available to the Government. Indeed, when Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier often reminded the then Government that the finances of the State were not what they appeared to be. I am convinced that our State finances are not in that good a shape, even after a period of the highest taxation increases that we have ever experienced; so, if the Premier and the Treasury believe in open government it is time that they got their act together and supplied figures by means of which the Opposition could look more constructively at the State's finances. If they do not want to do that, they must put up with criticism from the Opposition from time to time.

Referring quickly to the recurrent receipts, which is the most important aspect of the State Budget to the taxpayers of South Australia, we note that, by way of property taxation, the State should receive, according to the Budget, \$2.8 million a month and in the first seven months we would have received \$19.2 million. In fact, however, the Treasury has received \$25.6 million. In respect of gambling taxes, on a monthly average of \$3.8 million, the Treasury, according to the Budget, should have received \$26 million over the first seven months, whereas it received only \$22.9 million, so there is a short-fall there.

In respect of motor vehicle taxation, the average monthly receipts, according to the Budget, should have been \$5.5 million to give a total of \$38.5 million for the first seven months, whereas, in fact, the Treasury has received \$32.7 million. By way of pay-roll tax, on an average monthly Budget figure of \$20.8 million, the State should have received \$145.6 million, whereas \$148.2 million has been received. So, there is an improvement there, with the Treasury receiving about \$2.6 million more than it budgeted for. Such an excess affords a chance to give young people some benefit, for instance in respect of employment, as a result of this apparent economic recovery.

The sum of \$2.3 million a month should have been received in respect of financial institutions duty, according to the Budget, making a total of \$16.1 million over the first seven months, whereas the actual amount received was about \$16.5 million. In respect of business franchises, the average income budgeted for was \$9.7 million a month, making a total in the first seven months of about \$67.9 million, whereas \$72.2 million has been received. There

again is an improvement of \$4.3 million in the first seven months. Therefore, it is fair and reasonable to say that the Premier's estimate of \$5 million additional income at this stage is correct, although I would dispute whether that improvement would be in the area of stamp duty collections. I appeal to the Premier, as Treasurer, and his officers in the Treasury to provide more promptly financial figures for the benefit of the Opposition, otherwise members on this side will continue to criticise, constructively, the handling of the State's finances.

The Premier referred to a lift in the sales of new motor vehicles and said that this was having an influence on the State Budget. However, there is a short-fall in royalties from the Cooper Basin and the Stony Point production site because of difficulties that are being experienced by Santos. Indeed, I believe that something has gone astray and could well be costing Santos production losses amounting to \$85 million.

Had that been a Government department everyone in this House would be up in arms. Private enterprise, in this case Santos, has obviously made an error in its calculations or in relation to the type of equipment that it has acquired and the shareholders in that organisation are suffering a short-fall of some \$85 million. No-one is complaining about that—not a shareholder. It is a little like Western Mining Corporation and the hole in the ground around which it built Roxby Downs: not one of the shareholders has challenged the wisdom of that exploration hole.

I am also concerned about the interest component. While there may be some benefits from the South Australian Government Financing Authority, I have yet to see them. There can be difficulties with borrowing large sums of money from overseas. To this stage we have been lucky to have not been affected by the fall of the dollar and the interest rate movement that is occurring at present. South Australia would be well advised to borrow its money locally rather than turn to overseas markets. The Premier went further to advise the Parliament that:

The amount of money provided in this Bill is significantly greater than the \$360 million provided at a similar time last year.

He further stated:

As from 1 July 1985 the Government has decided to change the basis upon which departments are charged for superannuation costs. Under present arrangements departmental accounts show the Government's portion of pensions paid during the year in respect of staff previously employed. The new system will involve departmental accounts showing each year an estimate of the superannuation liability incurred as a consequence of employing staff in that year.

At long last we are moving towards greater accountability in relation to the Government's liability on superannuation. I make it clear that I would oppose very strongly any move to make any alteration to existing superannuation schemes enjoyed by those in the Public Service in South Australia. Those people who are contributing to the superannuation scheme have a contract with the State, and it would be terribly wrong to alter that contract. Any new scheme introduced would have to be for new people coming in and contributing under that new arrangement. But the existing superannuation scheme must stand for those who are contracted in that scheme. Certainly, I think that what previous Governments have done in deferring their liability on superannuation was totally wrong. The funds are now being criticised because of the huge contributions that have to be made from Treasury, but this is the fault of previous Governments, which must bear the blame.

I was a little disappointed to read recently that the Ombudsman had retired from his position. I wish him well. I want to make a public appeal to the Ombudsman to bring down an interim report before he retires. My interpretation of the Ombudsman Act is that he could do it. There is nothing to stop him from doing it. I think it would be a

shame if the Ombudsman were to leave his office three-quarters of the way through the year and not report to the Parliament before leaving his position.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: He will have a great successor!

Mr BECKER: I have a lot of time and respect for Mary Beasley, and I hope that I will have just as much success with her as Ombudsman as I have had with the present Ombudsman. I have found him a very competent and capable person. Although I know that not everyone liked the style of his approach, he got results and he was prepared to take up the cudgels on behalf of the people who believed that they were aggrieved, who believed they were not receiving a fair go from various authorities and Government departments. I think he did his job extremely well, and I wish him every success in his future endeavours. I make an appeal, which I hope the Government and the Premier will support, for the Ombudsman to bring down an interim report before he leaves that office. Another area that concerns me greatly is Government advertising and the involvement of Ministers in the Government's advertising programme.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: It is a bit blatant, isn't it?

Mr BECKER: It is extremely blatant. In several Questions on Notice I have asked for details of the budget of the Government's advertising programme for this year, and I have also inquired whether South Australian advertising companies are being used. There has been and should always be Government advertising and promotion, and I believe that that should be done through South Australian agents. Advertising is a very competitive field. I support the stand that has been taken by the Auditor-General of New South Wales. An article in the *Business Review Weekly* of December 1984, under the heading 'The BRW Accounting Award—Jack O'Donnell of the New South Wales Government', states in part:

O'Donnell, 59, has smote many other areas of government. During this year's New South Wales election campaign, he challenged the right of Ministers to fund propaganda for themselves and their departments from the public purse, causing those concerned to delete their portraits from advertisements.

It was obvious to everyone that what was happening in New South Wales was blatant but what is happening here in South Australia is exactly the same. The following advertisement appeared in the *News* of 20 February 1985:

\$1.2 million in 18 months—to keep people independent and comfortable in their own homes . . . and that's money well spent through the Home Assistance Scheme jointly operated by the State Government's Special Employment Initiatives Unit and participating local councils. It is a scheme which provides services ranging from occasional child care, transport for the disabled and advice on household management, to carpentry repairs, fencing, roofing, and guttering work.

I agree wholeheartedly with the programme, it is an excellent programme, but why did the advertisement contain the photo of the Deputy Premier and Minister of Labour? No reference is made in the advertisement to the Minister, and there is no reason for his photo to be there. This is simply a promotion from the South Australian Department of Labour. Incidentally, it further states (in very small type):

Who can apply? You: if your council is a participant in the scheme; if you are receiving unemployment, old age, invalid, single parent, special benefits or other low fixed-income pensions; and/or you are physically unable or can't afford to carry out the work required. See your local council now!

So, this was a promotion by the Department of Labour of the scheme in which one became involved through one's local council, and there was no reason whatsoever for the Minister of Labour's photo to appear.

An advertisement appeared in today's *Advertiser* for the South Australian Government Financing Authority, headed 'SAFA Bonds. A great rate and a great State,' and so on. It points out that they are Government guaranteed at 13.1 per

cent per annum of seven years, 13 per cent per annum for four years, or 12.8 per cent per annum for two years. It then states how one can earn high interest and improve the State by purchasing SAFA bonds, etc. The advertisement contains quite an attractive photo of the Premier, although there is no reason for it; there is no statement from the Premier in the advertisement. Again, this is a blatant use of a Minister's portrait in an advertisement promoting something in regard to which a photo is entirely irrelevant.

That makes two advertisements that we know of. The local government one is also reproduced in the Messenger newspaper. I see no reason for this at all. I do not object to advertising by Government departments or by SAFA, but there is no need for those advertisements to contain portraits of a Minister or the Premier, particularly when there is no statement from or reference to that person.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson interjecting:

Mr BECKER: Some people are starting to say, 'Who is the little boy?' I support the ruling of the New South Wales Auditor-General. I have written to Mr Sheridan, the Auditor-General in this State, about Government advertisements saying that in my opinion a similar situation is arising in South Australia so that his ruling would be appreciated. I said:

Several television commercials in relation to road safety, bushfire warnings and the South Australian Financing Authority and radio commercials featuring the Premier have been excuses to promote a flagging public image.

I firmly believe that. I further said:

As I believe that the New South Wales Attorney-General has established a principle, your consideration to my request will be appreciated.

I do not want to put the Auditor-General on the spot, but I believe that a decision must be made now about the use of taxpayers' money to promote the Ministers in this sort of advertisement. That sort of thing has gradually built up. I would bet my last taxpayers' dollar that what has happened in New South Wales will happen in South Australia, if it has not happened already. I hope that the Premier will accept this warning and that the Auditor-General will heed my plea, because I think the time has come for Governments to be made aware that we are not prepared to put up with this sort of promotion of Ministers.

One of the things that concerns me is the huge amount of pay-roll tax that is paid by commerce and industry in this State. Unfortunately, we have made very little inroad into youth unemployment in South Australia, and this is International Youth Year. A lot of rhetoric has been spoken and there will be a lot of excellent activity to support it in this respect, but still very little has resulted in the way of providing full-time and worthwhile employment for youth. For some two years I have been involved in a programme with the Epilepsy Association of developing employment opportunities for those with that disability, and probably one of the most difficult things is to convince employers that these people should be in the workforce.

We have been able to place only 47 people in full employment in two years, and, although that is not a lot, each person who is placed in employment saves the taxpayers of this country about \$11 000 per annum—a colossal saving. It is a tremendously cost effective programme, and it has enriched the lives of those people: because they have been accepted as normal individuals, they have been given the opportunity to become independent financially. So, we cannot measure in dollars and cents only what employment has done for these people—and they are mainly young people.

My theory is that, if we can work out a programme for one of the most difficult groups to place in employment, we should have success in placing able-bodied people. I

would like to see the programme, which was funded by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, extended within the youth area, but no-one seems to be very interested. I brought the concept for that programme back from America following my 1981 Parliamentary study trip, and I will never tolerate criticism of any politician who goes on a study trip and brings back something of benefit to the State. I am concerned when I read articles such as that in the spring 1984 edition of the Institute of Public Affairs document. Referring to youth unemployment, it stated how 50 000 jobs were lost. It was stated:

There is in fact no incentive for Government departments and authorities to economise budgets by appointing young people.

The article referred to a report 'Teenage employment in the public sector: Where have all the jobs gone?' by David Kalisch and Alan Stretton, who concluded that:

... if the age structure of public sector employment in 1981 had been the same as in 1971, there would have been an additional 50 000 teenagers employed in this sector. This represents almost 55 per cent of the number of teenagers unemployed in 1981. If these 50 000 had obtained jobs, youth unemployment rates would have been reduced to levels much closer to adult levels.

The report continued:

Why did teenagers lose out in the battle for public sector jobs? The report says that increased competition for public sector positions has been the main reason for the declining teenager employment. Lower relative wages in the private sector may have encouraged better qualified adults to apply for public sector positions. A number of administrative changes have also enabled adult females to effectively compete for public sector employment. These include the removal of upper age limits applying for some jobs—

which is an absolute disgrace—

maternity leave and the removal of the bar to married women being appointed as permanent officers.

However, women in this country have achieved what may appear from this article to be to the detriment of youth employment, it may appear that some of the old hang-ups still involve women in employment, but, even so, I believe that Public Service employment trends demonstrate the savage effects on youth jobs when young people are prevented from effectively competing with adults. That is one area in which I have always believed that we could offer pay-roll tax concessions to employers who were prepared to take on young people.

Concessions should be granted through pay-roll tax only on the basis of each position that is created. In that way we will make definite and strong inroads into the youth unemployment problem. As the Government reduces pay-roll tax (as this Government is committed to doing and to which I think all Governments would be committed) and removes this huge impost from employers, more employment opportunities will be created. Furthermore, the public sector must be aware that there is a necessity to recruit young people for training so that they can fill the positions of those who retire. There has been a lag in that area over the past few years, but I believe that we are starting to catch up. Youth unemployment is one of the biggest problems faced today, and it should be the aim of all Governments to tackle this problem so that we can quickly settle down the youth of the country. Unfortunately, young people are terribly frightened; they are not sure of the future and they are blaming politicians of all political persuasions because they feel frustrated and believe that they have been let down.

Much has been said about the huge tax increases that have been forced on the people in this State since the Bannon Labor Government came to office. Sure, 157 charges have been increased and eight taxes have been effected. But it has not been spelt out that, when we talk about one charge, that charge may subdivide into 40 or 50 different

fees. It is therefore possible that about 500 or 600 fees and charges have been increased.

I turn now to the Police Offences Act, which was amended on 6 December 1984, and under which 40 traffic infringement notice fees were increased by between 5 per cent and 43 per cent, or by an average of 16.5 per cent. Exceeding the general limit by a speed not in excess of 15 km/h attracts a fine of \$40, whereas previously it was \$35; for failing to hold an appropriate licence or a learner's permit, the fine is \$50 whereas previously it was \$35—a 42.3 per cent increase. That gives some indication. However, we have not said that 40 such penalties were increased in that area.

For example, water and sewerage rates increased by something like 43.2 and 53.3 per cent. Under the Mining Act some 33 fees were increased by between 8 per cent and 170 per cent. Those are just two examples. We could go on to illustrate the point that South Australians are being taxed more than ever before. In relation to fisheries, the Spencer Gulf prawn fishery fees are up 64.8 per cent. The authority and licensing fee is \$14 049, compared with \$8 524 previously; that increase is absolutely savage in an industry which is of great benefit to the tourist, because, as the member for Coles would know, tourists love our seafoods. That is one of our attractions in South Australia—certainly the Spencer Gulf prawns. There were other fees as well.

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

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON (Coles): The Premier's speech, in introducing the Supply Bill, was interesting more for what it did not say than for what it did say. The speech was full of subtle hints and veiled suggestions of good management in the past and the promise of things to come for the taxpayer that might make life a little more tolerable. The first two paragraphs are interesting indeed. The Premier says that it is customary to consider two Bills for the appropriation of money in this period of the year—one in respect of Supplementary Estimates for the current financial year and one to grant Supply for the early months of next year. This Bill, says the Premier, is for the second of those purposes. However, it is very early in the piece to be granting Supply for the early months of next year.

One cannot help but ask why this Bill is being introduced in March and not in May, when we are scheduled to sit. One is bound to ask: are we coming back in May and, if not, why not? The Premier says that at this point he does not expect to find it necessary to introduce Supplementary Estimates, yet he is seeking from Parliament approval for a very large sum, namely, \$440 million—a bigger sum than usual that is being asked for earlier than usual. One can only make the observation that it is strange indeed.

Further, the Premier makes the comment that with over one-quarter of the financial year still to run it would not be appropriate for him to seek to make precise forecasts of the final Budget results for 1984-85. That is a very coy statement: it is a move that other Premiers have not shied away from. Other Premiers have been much more frank in presenting Bills of this nature to Parliament than this Premier has been.

All the Premier is prepared to say is that forecasts are likely to show an improvement. He states that the improvement is occurring on both the expenditure and receipts side. The Premier also said that the State's finances are now feeling the benefit of the improved economic performance of our regional economy while also experiencing reduced pressure on the payment side as a result of strict Budget monitoring and control of departmental expenditure. He could have fooled us! There have not been many signs so far in the life of this Government of strict Budget monitoring and control of departmental expenditure. One has merely

to look at the tables identifying recurrent expenditure in this year's Budget papers, listed on pages 21 to 25, to identify a variation of a colossal amount of approximately \$31 million. That is to say, there is an overrun—a situation where Ministers have allowed their departments to exceed Budget Estimates by a collective total of \$31 million.

Of course, that has had to be found out of the increased taxation that this Government has imposed upon South Australian taxpayers. I refer to some of the variations that are listed in those papers. This is for the preceding year, and one can only, in the light of lack of information provided with this Bill, look at the past record rather than the current performance to see that there were variations—that is, increases of expenditure over budget—in all areas of this Parliament itself (the Legislative Council, the House of Assembly, the Parliamentary Library and the Joint House Committee) in the previous financial year. One wonders how the Parliament is performing in the current financial year.

That record shows that the Standing Committee on Public Works had a very minor overrun; the State Governor's establishment again had a very minor overrun; the Department of Premier and Cabinet was underspent, which reflected savings from staff vacancies in that area; the Arts Department last year was the best part of \$1 million overspent; the Department of Labour involved the best part of \$750 000; the Police Department \$5.3 million; Emergency Services \$43 000; Attorney-General's Department \$432 000; Courts Department \$500 000-plus; Lands had a \$1.4 million overrun; Transport had a \$1.1 million overrun; Highways had a \$2.6 million overrun; and the State Transport Authority, as usual a star performer in the overrun stakes, had a \$4.7 million overrun. The Education Department had an overrun of \$30 million, and the Health Commission \$31 million. So one could go on and on through the list.

They are big figures which indicate that the Government, from the word go, has failed to control expenditure. Yet the Premier seems to be very optimistic that as a result of what he calls his 'strict budget monitoring' things will be better this year. We can certainly only hope that they are. He indicates in his speech that by far the most important factor influencing improvements in receipts is stamp duty collections. Obviously, there have been significant increases in duty from real property transactions because of the increase in the average value of properties. The credit for that cannot be given to the Government unless one looks—and one would hardly call it credit—at the fact that the Government's rationing of land has forced up the price, which has been to its own advantage in terms of Treasury receipts.

The Premier says that if the trend of increased stamp duty collections is broadly maintained, it will bring additional revenue to the State's finances of approximately \$15 million. That is a pretty substantial sum to cream off from the increased financial activity, and the same, although to a lesser degree, will occur with the stamp duty on motor vehicle registrations. When the Premier turned in his speech to the capital Budget, he had the gall—some would say the brass nerve—to state:

Again, our close monitoring suggests that capital expenditures overall are proceeding according to plan.

He said that yesterday, for his day that one of his Ministers was being censured for the very complete failure to monitor capital expenditure. Yet, the Premier can stand there, quite poe faced, and make this statement that can so obviously be challenged by a reference to any of the papers, even those out of date like the 1983-84 capital expenditure variations, telling what my colleague the Deputy Premier would describe as blueys (a pictureque word and we all know what it means). It means that the Premier has been less than frank?

The Hon. Ted Chapman: I think a more recent doctrine in this place is 'fudging'.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Yes, that is another good word, describing a misuse of the English language to convey meaning. The Premier says that some relatively minor variations below Budget are expected to be offset by equally minor variations in the other direction. If this afternoon's debate can be described as minor variations in Budget, then the English language for me has lost its meaning.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: Treating the truth loosely is another way of describing it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Alexandra is not due to speak for another nine minutes.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: On page 26 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement that accompanied this year's Budget is a table identifying the variations from Budget in capital expenditure for 1983-84. Again, as with recurrent expenditure, the Government would need to greatly improve its performance of monitoring and sticking to Budget in the capital area if it is going to fulfil the Premier's hopeful prophecies made in his speech introducing the Supply Bill.

The variations from Budget last year in capital expenditure were from \$10 million for the Local Government Finance Authority of South Australia, a reduction of \$1.5 million for Treasury, and a reduction of \$999 000 for the Department of the Arts. The Department of Environment and Planning was \$600 000 overrun as a result of the additional acquisition of properties. That, in itself, is interesting because the properties acquired not only caused an overrun on capital expenditure but will place enormous restraints on the Department's recurrent budget.

It is well known, and unfortunately has almost come to be well accepted, that the Department is inadequately staffed for the proper management of its existing properties, without acquiring new ones. The Health Commission was \$1.8 million overrun in capital works, whilst the E & WS Department was \$2.2 million overrun. The Department of Recreation and Sport overran by \$1.5 million in 1983-84. We can guess the reason—expenditure on the Aquatic Centre. The warning bells were ringing but even then nothing was done.

The Public Buildings Department, other Government buildings programme, was \$1.3 million overrun. That was last year's variation from Budget for capital expenditure and the total amounted to \$10.8 million. If one looks at the overrun on one single item this year alone, namely, the Aquatic Centre, one can see, unhappily, that that total is in danger of being exceeded this year. The Government has had quite a few good things going for it in this period for which it can take no credit whatsoever, by comparison with the period of the previous Government when the State and the nation were suffering from almost unprecedented drought. The Government in its first couple of years in office has enjoyed the benefit of good seasons which certainly have contributed to the improved regional economy to which the Premier referred in his speech. It has also had the benefit of the wage pause, which was not the case when the previous Government was in office.

The Premier again, in his particularly snide style, stated that the Government was required to introduce a number of revenue measures following what he described as the extraordinary weakening of the State's financial position that occurred under the previous Government. The lie has been put to that many times in this House, but it is certainly worth reminding the House that FID, the 11 per cent increase in liquor tax and ETSA charges did take some of the gloss from the Premier's statement that he hopes to be in a position to make those moves, that is, a consideration of concessions in the next financial year.

Indeed, as the Leader said this afternoon, it certainly must be an election year if the Premier is making veiled

suggestions, not for the first time, about considering concessions after having slugged the South Australian taxpayer very solidly for virtually every month since he came to office, contrary to the promises he made. The Premier concluded his speech by stating the details of certain changes to superannuation. In it he says that the changed approach in terms of departmental charges for superannuation costs has only a minimal net effect upon Consolidated Account, as the Government still pays pensions only when they fall due. That is correct but it raises the question as to why the same approach is not adopted for long service leave and why the deferral of long service leave, particularly in the Education Department, is building up enormous cost burdens for future years when teachers are going to be paid at higher rates due to deferrals and when the length of long service is leading up to the point where, in certain years to come, the burdens will be almost insupportable because they have not been spread in the way that they were designed to be spread, as leave has not been taken when it has fallen due.

I wish to highlight the ways in which a Liberal Government will be more responsible in its management of State finances and refer particularly to the financial policy announced a fortnight ago by the Leader of the Opposition with respect to the structure of the Liberal Ministry. One of the important things he stated when making the announcement was not only that a separate portfolio of Treasurer would be created but also that, in our first year in office, Treasury would draw up a five year financial plan. This plan will forecast reviews and determine spending limits and debt ceilings under specific functions as well as estimate year end Budget results. The plan will be reviewed annually and presented to Parliament with the Budget so that the Treasurer can outline to Parliament the effects of the annual estimates on the five year plan. That is something for which many people have been calling for a long time. Many a departmental head would love to have such a five-year long-range plan and know that it would result in a far more cost effective use of funds.

The next undertaking was significant. The Leader said that all legislative programmes of a financial nature will be accompanied by five-year projections of their financial implications when presented to Parliament. If that had been done with some significant pieces of legislation introduced over the past couple of years by this Government, I believe we would be in a much better position to judge the future burden of recurrent and capital costs to the South Australian taxpayer.

The childhood services legislation is a classic example of the complete failure of the Government to indicate to the Parliament the financial implications of its legislative measures. The Australian Formula One Grand Prix Bill was another classic example where Parliament was simply not told of the long term running costs. It was told of the likely estimated, hopeful, optimistic, glorified possibility of costs for the current year but was not told of long running costs.

Mr Trainer: Did you support that Bill?

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Yes, but I do not support inadequate financial information which was what we got. Members opposite, I am certain, will be feeling rueful in the next 12 months and the following 12 months, when the full cost implications of that event come home. Had Parliament been presented with the full cost implications, much better budgeting and planning would have been likely.

Other Bills have had enormous cost implications, the Controlled Substances Bill for one. It has never even been discussed in the debate what the cost consequences are likely to be, but after the next election things will be different and all Bills that have a financial implication will have those

implications spelt out when they are introduced in Parliament.

The other principal and very important alteration to this structure of Government under the Liberal Party will be the amalgamation of building and construction activities in order to rationalise, co-ordinate and make more cost effective the Government's administration of those activities. When one looks at the total expenditure for 1983-84 and the actual expenditure of \$389 million on capital works, it is easy to see, even if we saved 10 per cent through more effective management (and bear in mind that 10 per cent is approximately the overrun), how much the taxpayer could be saved, on the one hand, or alternatively how much more could be achieved for the State's advancement and benefit, on the other, if the money saved were put to effective use.

All in all, the Premier's speech, as I say, is more notable for what it does not say than for what it does say. It is curious indeed that the Bill should be introduced at this stage rather than later as is customary, and one can only speculate as to the reasons for that. The Premier himself has generated speculation on his own account in terms of the possibility of tax concessions. I would very much question his good faith, and one can only, on the basis of his record, question his good faith when he makes undertakings of that nature. I feel quite confident that the electorate, which has a memory somewhat longer than the Government gives it credit for, will bear very much in mind the promises made before the last election by the Labor Party when we approach the next election.

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

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): This Bill seeks approval of \$440 million for the Public Service of the State, covering the period to 30 June 1986. I indicate my support for the passage of this Bill, but I take the opportunity to remind the Government that it needs to apply itself in a more businesslike way if it is to survive in office and, indeed, if the community at large is to survive under its taxing style of administration.

We hear too often in this place complaints of the burdens the community is required to carry as a result of increased taxes and charges and, indeed, complaints of new taxes and charges applied by this Government since it took office in 1982. I do not wish to specifically canvass those details except to remind those few of the Government members who are presently in the House that they have an obligation to ensure the overall economic future of this State when considering increasing and/or introducing new forms on taxation. I wish to remind them in particular of the base on which this State exists financially. Approximately 60 per cent of South Australia's export income is derived from the rural sector, and it is true to say that that agricultural community, in particular some 20 000 primary producers, really have their backs to the wall at the moment. I know that members like the member for Peake from time to time stand up in this place and talk about the broad-brimmed-hat-wearing cockies of the outback who are wealthy and need no further propping up and assistance from this or the Commonwealth Government. We hear that they are too well fed and too well supported in a number of directions. The member for Peake's general hatred towards that section of the community is forever reflected in his remarks.

I want to indicate to the honourable member and others who are so critical of our breadwinners in the South Australian community that, unless we in this Parliament are a

little more sensitive toward that group, many will in fact go to the wall, not as a result of natural disasters beyond their control, but as a result of being burdened with costs that in fact exceed their income. It is always very difficult to sell that situation to people such as those to whom I refer.

I want to place on the record a round-figure description of the financial position of the average meat, wool and grain grower in South Australia at the moment. It might seem a little hard to understand when I say that most, if not the vast majority, of our primary producers in that category that I have described are millionaires on paper but are finding it very difficult to survive financially. A general average property producing these commodities is worth about \$500 000 on today's land market. One might reasonably add to that capital land valuation a further \$200 000 to cover the value of the farmer's livestock and plant, giving the average farmer a total capital asset valued at about \$700 000.

The average capital debt applicable to our farming community is about \$80 000, the repayment of which is required at the rate of up to 10 per cent per annum: plus, of course, interest rates at 10 per cent or more per annum on the outstanding debt. Added to that, it is fair to apply yet a further debt carried by the average farmer of about \$20 000, representing a stock mortgage and/or local trading bank overdraft. The latter debt attracts an interest rate of about 16 per cent, so it is costing about \$3 200 a year to service it. It is an ongoing debt that invariably reduces and increases over a period, so that at any given time it is about the average trading account debt that applies to the farm as outlined.

One can guess at all sorts of figures, but my observations indicate that a farm of the size used in this example and producing the commodities to which I have referred would return a gross figure of about \$60 000 a year, of which half would be required to service the property, plant and livestock, leaving about \$30 000 for the farmer to service his debt and to live on. If we calculate the interest rates applicable to the two major items of debt that are involved in the average run of the mill property, we see that the farmer has about \$15 000 a year on which to pay whatever income tax is required as well as the Government charges on that net balance and to live as well.

So, on a \$700 000 investment the farmer in fact receives, as per my example, not more than 4 per cent on the capital involved. I know of no other section of the community, either in the country or in the metropolitan area, that is required to carry on its business on such a meagre income and for such a meagre return on its investment. As against that, those in the rural sector are faced with the same level of State charges as is everyone else, more especially as regards electricity and fuel charges. Fuel especially is becoming an enormous burden on the primary producer. The escalating costs of fuel are not reflected in the return from his produce. Indeed, the primary producer is one of the few producers in the community who relies entirely on the system of agency marketing for his returns. He cannot budget for other than what he might guess his produce will attract on either the domestic or the export market. Indeed, in the main, having delivered their grain, meat or wool to the marketing or auction point, there is little or no opportunity for farmers to return that product to the paddock if the right price is not received.

So, primary producers really are at the mercy of the market place in respect of their incomes and, indeed, at the mercy largely of the Government in relation to the costs and charges applicable to their farming activities. It is important that, when considering introducing new charges or taxes or increasing existing charges or taxes in respect of registration, permits, stamp duty and other State taxes, the

Government consider the position of our basic primary producers and our breadwinners of this State.

I am prompted, therefore, to proceed on behalf of the rural sector and identify my concern about what appears to be a very critical article in an overseas bulletin, *Middle East Economic Digest*, which is produced in the United Kingdom and circulates within the Middle East and the near Mediterranean region. On page 53 of that bulletin, reference is made to South Australia's current and future involvement in agricultural projects. South Australia and Western Australia have for some years been prominent in their involvement and from this State SAGRIC International, a State-owned authority, has, according to the article, been 'set up to help boost agricultural sales'. Referring to both the Western Australian and the South Australian Middle East companies, the article states that they 'benefit both from their official status and the access this gives them to Government agricultural resources in Australia, where most research and development is in the public sector.' The article continues:

SAGRIC is bidding energetically for new work, including a cadastral mapping survey in Tunisia and design of an Omani desert agricultural project. Negotiations are also under way to extend a \$Aus 10 million (U.S. \$7.7 million) five-year dry land farming project for Iraq's State Organisation for Land Reclamation which runs out this year. A livestock facilities pre-feasibility study for North Yemen's Hayel Saeed Anam group has just been completed and bids tendered for an Algerian agricultural machinery requirements study to 2000.

Other possibilities on the horizon include integrated forestry schemes in Algeria, a demonstration farm in Tunisia, a poultry farm management deal in Saudi Arabia and an agricultural planning project in Kuwait. In addition, bids have been submitted for further work in North Yemen and for a project in Morocco. 'We're a very aggressive organisation,' a SAGRIC officer comments.

The article goes on to identify the State Governments' proposal to involve themselves in yet another Libyan project. No author is identified in this feature article, but the former Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Brian Chatterton) and his wife Lynn are mentioned. It does not necessarily follow that they produced this report, but I am concerned that there is a clear implication in the article that terms are being negotiated to be agreed on between South Australia and Libya for the continuation of a project in that region.

Early in 1980, shortly after we came to office, the Libyan project was completed and, for reasons that were made clear to the Department of Agriculture at that time, it was decided by the Government that we would not renegotiate another agricultural project in Libya. I should like to know, from whatever source the information might be available, whether the Government is indeed trying to renegotiate a contract in that region and the reasons that would justify such a move. I do not wish to use up my time in being critical of that historic project or the previous Labor Government's involvement in it. However, evidence clearly reveals that it was of little potential use to Australia in general or to South Australia in particular. Indeed, it served no useful purpose to the Libyan community either.

Frankly, we were left with a debt to meet after that project was finished, and the Liberal Party's policy towards such overseas projects is that, while indeed we encourage South Australian public and private participation in those regions concerning State funding, we guaranteed recovery of all public costs incurred from each of the contracts entered into. That was not the case with ALP policy or with certain projects that the Liberal Party inherited in taking office in 1979.

I mention this matter because it is one of several matters that we as a primary producing State must pursue. We need to remain close to that region of the world and to assist them, albeit at their cost, to develop and acknowledge our skills in both dry land and irrigation farming and our skills in livestock management. In the meantime and beyond, we need to maintain a relationship that will enable us to sell

both our surplus livestock and primary produce to those countries that need to import these products. We must also maintain our relationship with manufacturers and our support for those who may wish to sell machinery in the region.

Any suggestion of criticism, as occurs in the article to which I have referred, is disturbing to me and indeed to the Liberal Party, because I know that the officers of the Department of Agriculture, the Liberal Government, and indeed the Labor Party have put an enormous amount of effort into establishing and securing a good relationship with that region of the world. Any article in publications, particularly those that circulate in the Arab States, as is the case in this bulletin, which criticises or downgrades Australia's involvement in selected Middle East States is indeed damaging to us all.

If, when researching remarks applicable to this debate, the Premier or officers of his department can throw any light on the current position regarding with which Middle East countries the Government is considering entering into contractual arrangements, I would be pleased to receive that information. Also, as I indicated earlier, I would appreciate more specifically information relating to the negotiations alleged to be proceeding with Libya. The *Bulletin* detail is available from the Parliamentary Library.

I mentioned earlier that the enormous cost of fuel is something that we in the rural sector cannot avoid. Very little of South Australia's agricultural region is serviced by public transport. Almost all primary producers and their families are required to have private transport for moving around their properties and to and from commercial centres. Primary producers are therefore burdened with whatever the cost of fuel might be. The escalation of costs of both petrol and diesel in recent times has meant that this cost now constitutes an enormous item on the farmer's budget. Anything that the Government can do to relieve its component tax on fuel at State level would be appreciated, and this matter could be considered for inclusion in the tax relief package that I understand the Government will present prior to the next State election.

In the remaining time that I have available to me, I want to refer to some local matters in the electorate of Alexandra. We all know that the tenets of the South Australian Planning Commission and the respective supplementary development plans at district council level are based on certain environmental and planning principles. For example, in watershed areas concentrated livestock or intensive industry practices are not permitted. That prevents a change of existing land use enabling multiple dwelling occupation or multiple residential development, etc., are not permitted, either.

Near the township of Meadows, in the northern part of my electorate, a village community co-operative has established itself. I understand that that has occurred contrary to planning law. In fact on 20 July 1984 the District Clerk of the District Council of Willunga wrote to one of my constituents and advised that the council was in the process of seeking authority from the State Planning Commission to commence legal action against the Village Community Co-operative Limited for contravening the Planning Act, 1982. As I have indicated, this action resulted from that organisation's occupation of an area which is precluded from such residential use.

I understand that the Council has been unable to obtain that authority from the South Australian Planning Commission, and that it has advised the council that it will proceed in its own right. The most recent information that I have obtained is that the Commission has failed to proceed also and that the organisation involved has lodged an application for a change of land use in the particular watershed area, which would enable it to remain there and indeed expand its operation in that region.

I place on record my concern that such valuable broad acre land in that region should be made available, with the Commission's approval or otherwise, for the alleged use of this community village co-operative. There are plenty of areas in more marginal regions of the State for the use of such residential village groups. In my view it is contravening the Planning Act, as alleged, and squatting as it were in this community is not only wrong in principle but also should not be tolerated. I have been prompted to raise this matter at this time pending a request to appear before the Commission to give evidence in the near future as a result of my own observations, communication that I have had with the District Council of Willunga as well as communication that I have had with several of my constituents living in the immediate area who are concerned about this matter. I hope that the Minister for Environment and Planning, who has just appeared in the Chamber, will take up this issue as a matter of urgency and report to the House at his earliest convenience on the situation that prevails in that area.

Part section 3403, hundred of Kuitpo, is the site occupied. I was further concerned to learn that officers of the Premier's Department or the Department of Labour were promoting and supporting this venture, even though, as has been alleged under district council letterhead, the law has been contravened. I conclude my remarks by appealing to the Government to apply its tax concession proposals as reported in the press recently, that is, to the whole of the South Australian community, and having real regard for the rural sector. When spreading relief benefits across the community I hope that the Treasurer and his officers will disregard the sort of comments made by the member for Peake and one or two other members opposite who ought to know better but who have failed in the years they have been in this place to recognise on which side their bread is buttered.

They have not recognised that the rural community in South Australia is our real economic base, the base on which all our futures depend. They do not appreciate that tax relief and assistance in reducing the costs of the primary producer benefit all of us, whether we are directly or indirectly associated with primary production or whether we have no association at all with primary industry but are merely residents and consumers within the State.

Mr PLUNKETT (Peake): Members will recall that in this House on Wednesday 20 February I outlined my opposition to concessions for primary producers. My comments were misquoted not only by the member for Davenport but also by the member for Alexandra, who has just resumed his seat, and I would like to clear up what I said. For many years—

The Hon. Ted Chapman: When was that?

Mr PLUNKETT: It was on 20 February. The honourable member was present, but he was very sleepy so he might not recall my comments. I hope that the honourable member will not be ignorant and arrogant and leave the Chamber before I voice my criticisms.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: I rise on a point of order. I am aware of the flexibility that is extended to members during a Supply debate, and indeed I take advantage of that flexibility, which is traditionally expected, but the member for Peake commenced his remarks by warning the House that he intends to make a personal explanation, indeed, to launch a personal attack on me (and I do not mind that at all) and on a member on this side who is absent from the Chamber. That is not consistent with the debate and it is—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order, as the honourable member knows. If honourable members adhere to the principle that they may not refer to

members who are absent from the Chamber, we could all go home.

Mr PLUNKETT: I point out that the member for Alexandra just criticised me, but I leave that aside, because I understand his problem—and he has one. For many years I have opposed concessions not only for registration but also for insurance, although I know that members opposite have not referred to insurance concessions. There is a large impost on taxpayers and, keeping in mind that this is a debate on the Supply Bill, I point out that there is also an impost on the finances required to keep the State Government going. There is a need for concessions in some sections of the farming industry. For example, small farmers should get concessions. During the five years in which I have been in this House the member for Davenport has never mentioned dairy farmers. Dairy farmers have been referred to only in connection with concessions. That situation is a little embarrassing for any member opposite who does not represent the small farmer or the small dairy farmer—those who really need concessions. However, most members opposite refer only to a certain section of the farming community.

I believe that concessions should be means tested. I hope that when my comments are read it will not be said that I am citing Labor Party policy. I have held these views for many years, and I believe that many people receive concessions to which they are not entitled. Larger pastoral properties often register vehicles in the names of various companies or families, or in joint ownership, so that the real ownership base of primary producer registrations remains hidden. We do not know whether a lot of people who get concessions are farmers or graziers, or even whether they are entitled to concessions. Elders GM receives concessions, and that company really needs them! Vesta Industries has several properties around Australia and is granted concessions. It is said that not many properties are involved—only a few—but there are many properties and many registered vehicles. There is no check on those people.

Perhaps we should consider other big companies and the millionaire grazier families such as the McBrides, the MacFarlanes, the McLachlans and, over the border, the Frasers. They are the farmers who expect to get concessions on registrations and insurance, but no-one ever mentions that that is at the expense of the taxpayer. Those concessions should not be available to everyone. I would be the first person to support means testing. The dairy farmers certainly deserve a concession. If a grazier is having a hard time and he runs, say, 5 000 to 10 000 sheep, he should be entitled to it, too. However, I would certainly cut out the concession for anyone above that level.

People who work in the industry, such as shearers, shed hands, classers and rural and farm workers, should also be entitled to the concession. I do not want to hear any stupid comments from the member for Alexandra, because I have further to go in my speech, and if he waits he will get his opportunity. In January 1985, 46 165 units were registered at primary producer concession rates, accounting for a 50 per cent loss in registration fee of \$3 570 461.

I have never heard that figure quoted here: all I have heard is a figure of about \$1.5 million—a pittance! It is not worth worrying about! It is a little like the bottom of the harbour schemes. We are supposed not to worry when these sorts of thing happen. I have constituents who came back from Greece and who were virtually made criminals by the actions of the previous Australian Government. That was a disgrace. Nothing came of it: it was some sort of election gimmick. We are told, however, 'Don't worry; there are not many people involved,' but it amounts to millions and millions of dollars. I represent people who do not want to pay taxes for bludgers.

I put this matter in context, especially if it is being reported in the newspapers. The concession should apply to people in need whether they be graziers or farmers, rural workers or shearers. The concession was originally given for working under bad conditions and knocking one's vehicle about, not for driving around in Adelaide. Many big companies have sons and agents driving cars registered at 50 per cent of the full rate. I cannot get that, nor can some other honourable members, but I will bet that Ted can, as can a couple of other members in this place.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Alexandra, not 'Ted'.

Mr PLUNKETT: The member for Alexandra has criticised me many times in this place. However, the member for Davenport has only spoken once about concessions on registration, and he spoke about the dairy farmer whom everyone recognises as having been in dire straits for a long while. The honourable member never mentions dairy farmers for the rest of the year. Many of his colleagues have never mentioned them, because it is not fashionable. Nowadays a grazier grows sunflowers and produces many products that the dairy farmer produced previously. If an honourable member on the other side who represents graziers or other property owners starts protecting the dairy farmer, he might find out that he is lost to the National Party. He has never covered the dairy farmer: the Liberal Party has never protected the small farmer. Only the Labor Party has done that, not the National Party.

Go back to the days of Curtin, and that is when honourable members will find out who covered the farmer. Curtin was the only person who ever put a quid on their backs. When wool boomed people started to think of farmers as capitalists instead of working on their farms. I do not want the members for Davenport and Alexandra to be nice to me. If ever Liberal members did that, I would have to watch them. The reports in the newspaper are very suspicious: if a newspaper reports me again I would like it to do so correctly.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: Which paper?

Mr PLUNKETT: One was the *Naracoorte Herald* and the other was the *Stock Journal*. I think it is the only time I have been mentioned in the *Stock Journal*. The member for Alexandra stood here the other night and again tonight and virtually said that I hated farmers and graziers. There is no bigger lie than that. I have a son-in-law and brother who are farmers. I come from a farm myself. My father had a soldier settlement block in 1918 just out of Coleraine, but he was starved off that property. I am very pleased that the member for Davenport has come into the House.

A very big part of my life was spent as a shearer and doing other farm work. Did I get half my registration and insurance reduced by living on a property, going from one place to another, travelling 300 to 400 miles on bad roads? No, I did not, and nor did anyone else. The member for Alexandra's ignorance will be shown in a second. I do not want to see him make a bigger fool of himself than he has already.

I would like to hear the member for Davenport speak about farmers on other occasions, because he has already broken the ice after some five years. I must go through *Hansard* and see whether he has spoken of protecting dairy farmers. He has never done so in the five years since I have been here. I do not want to hold up the House, although I do not think anyone could criticise me for that.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: I paid you a compliment.

Mr PLUNKETT: I know you did, and that is why I am suspicious. Before the member for Alexandra quietly sneaks out on the couch, I would like to say that he accused me of hating farmers getting concessions. I have more friends among farmers than he would ever have. As well as being a shearer, I was an organiser, and they are supposed to be

bad friends, but I have friends in grazing and farming all over Australia. I have never burnt my bridges: I can go back to my friends.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: Give us a list of names.

Mr PLUNKETT: Do not worry about that. When I went on tour to New Zealand I visited farmers there. I would like to see the member for Alexandra do that. There is an excuse for the member for Alexandra, but I hate saying this: we all know that he lived a very sheltered early life on Kangaroo Island, and they tell me that he still lives over there. This is what he said: 'Surely Keith Plunkett, being a shearer and an organiser, would know about the concession that he and shearers and pastoral workers get.'

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr PLUNKETT: The honourable member has found out since. It is the outside area undertaking, and the honourable member thought it was the primary producers cut. No wonder the honourable member has led a sheltered life. At the bottom it says that the outer area is the whole of Kangaroo Island. He would not know much about the mainland; he is very sheltered over there. It refers to all other parts of the State not within the municipal district council area of Whyalla or Iron Knob. That shows the intelligence of members opposite who criticise a shearer who does not know. It means that there is not one shearer, farm worker or rural worker entitled to that cut.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr PLUNKETT: The honourable member has pulled a dirty one. He has turned it around and signed the papers. The police in the area have to sign the form. If that car is not stationed in that outback area—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. As a point of clarification, I was not sure to what the honourable member was referring when he stated that the member for Alexandra had 'pulled a dirty one'. Possibly it is unparliamentary.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I am sorry that the member for Davenport must have some industrial deafness, but I heard the honourable member quite plainly.

Mr PLUNKETT: I know that I get emotional and carried away, particularly when I am provoked by the three members opposite. The member for Eyre also has had a protected life and a fairly expensive upbringing. The member for Alexandra still lives on Kangaroo Island. The member for Davenport would know a hell of a lot. The next time he gets to his feet and talks about the dairy farmer he can tell us how much he knows about them, instead of throwing it in to protect a concession. Most certainly I agree with the concession.

I will support the concession provided it is means tested. That is a dirty word to members opposite. They are the first ones to turn around if a person cannot get a job and say that that person is a bludger and is getting too much on unemployment benefits. If we are talking about a concession for a farmer or millionaire grazier, there are no worries in the world. Members opposite stand up and protect them. The member for Alexandra knows what a fool he has been. He accused me of not knowing. He does not even know. He thought that because it covered Kangaroo Island it covered Australia—it only covers part of it. It covers Coober Pedy and other places where there is no municipality. Honourable members may recall that, in my first speech in this place, I said that I left school at 13 and had no great education. I wish that the honourable member had come along with me. He would probably not be here now, but at least he would know that the outer area undertaking was nothing to do with primary producers.

Members interjecting:

Mr PLUNKETT: I have been here all day, and I have listened to some of the greatest rubbish anyone could hear. I am the only person members want to listen to. People have come into the House to hear me because I made a lie of what some members opposite have said. I want to ensure that, the next time the *Stock Journal* prints anything about me, it tells the truth. Tell them that Keith Plunkett does not agree that they should get the concessions. Keith Plunkett agrees that people on unemployment benefits should get more money, more pensions, but it should be means tested. I do not believe that the system at present that applies should apply to people from Elders-GM and millionaire property owners. They should not get that concession. I support the means test. This is my personal view. If people write me up they should write me up as I say it.

The member for Davenport got one thing right: I am an honest person and speak my mind. I hate being praised by the member for Davenport, because I am suspicious of him. He never took it out of *Hansard*. I will not hold up the House any longer but I hope that the member for Alexandra looks into the matter. Do not let any more people get that concession unless they are entitled to it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before calling on the member for Fisher, I point out that we are now fixing up the acoustics of this place, and I ask him to be a little quieter.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Fisher): I rise to speak to a Bill making provision for the Government to have Supply to operate the State until the next Budget is brought down. We all know that the situation is unusual: in fact, in the 17 years that I have been in this place this is the earliest that we have had a Supply Bill brought in. I do not know the reason, but, if the Government is running so short of money, it has to be a matter of concern to every South Australian. In explaining briefly why we happen to be debating such an issue, I will attempt to confine my remarks to matters relating to finance, in particular in areas where staff is required and areas in which the Bill will be making money available when it becomes an Act.

In recent times I have made the comment that people in the Hills should be compelled to plant exotic (that is, deciduous) trees. I am referring to those people who may build new homes in the more bushfire prone areas of the Adelaide Hills and who would be affected under the new controls the Government has put out for public consideration.

The intention under those proposed regulations is to give authorities power to require people to use certain types of building materials. In some cases it would give the authorities (whether a local council or the State Planning Authority) the opportunity to refuse permission to build a home on an allotment bought by an individual for that purpose. People who buy allotments, quite often are young people making their first investment in a piece of land to build their future home. If we say that a person cannot build a home on that piece of land because it has some fire risk, we take away automatically a significant amount of his wealth; in fact, in some cases we would take away all his wealth, and I do not think that is acceptable to society. It is not acceptable to me.

It amazes me that many people in the Hills and those who wish to go to the Hills have not learnt that there is a good method of protecting homes from the ravages of even the worst bushfires. That is what we plant—the type of trees or shrubs we plant near our homes and how close we plant them. When some people read my comments about compelling people to plant exotic or deciduous trees, there will be an outcry that I have no love for the native species, but on my 15-acre block, I have probably more native trees than the vast majority of people in the Hills. I admit, however, that I do not have one in close proximity to my

home. Those I will be planting (because it is a new home) will be exotics, not because I love the exotics more than the natives, but because those who have lived in the Hills for a long time have learnt from their fathers or grandfathers or other long-term residents not to take risks with natives near the home, no matter how beautiful they are.

Those who have witnessed the serious fires in the Hills in recent years have told stories of fire balls that spread rapidly through the eucalyptus oil, and gases virtually exploding and causing such rapid progress of the fire that human beings had in some cases no chance of avoiding it. If the Government will take a commonsense approach and ask its officers, in drawing up those regulations, to stipulate that people in the more fire-prone areas should have no flammable trees (which in the main are our natives) near their home but should plant exotics, we will not have a serious bushfire risk, because deciduous trees do not burn, although they will scorch and die in intense heat.

Such a regulation provides another benefit. Such trees stop radiant heat, so that, with a large glass expanse, the glass will not heat so quickly that it will explode and collapse. In advocating the compulsory planting of deciduous trees, I am suggesting an alternative to denying people the right to build, or requiring them to build a house that may be unacceptable to them and in a bad fire will not save them anyway. The only way is to provide a protective barrier of something that will not burn, even under extreme conditions, until the leaves have all been dried up with heat. That is not likely to cause a problem for that home owner.

I liken those people who leave native trees around their home so that they can shake hands with the possums or kiss the parrots to a person who takes his family to live in a jungle, or allows a tiger to roam the back yard, letting the children play with that animal that has been out in the wild; or a person who puts a crocodile in the swimming pool and lets the children go swimming with it (or swims with it as an adult; that is exactly the same). The day will come when that animal will attack, and the same situation applies with fire. Whether someone deliberately lights it, whether someone falls off a motorbike, or someone drops a lighted cigarette or match, a fire will occur. It could result from a motor accident. The greater the time between fires the more serious they will be, because of the build-up of fuel.

I am directing my comments not to existing home owners in the Hills who may have natives alongside their home, who have planted them or left them there when they bought the block. That is their decision. But when a fire comes, if they expect the CFS to fight it and help save them, I think they have been unreasonable to the CFS. People should think of that if they are asking volunteers to endanger their safety when they have not taken the right precautions themselves. They are unkind and very unfair.

No-one can give enough praise to the CFS, and that brings me to another area. A report was put out recently about undergrounding power lines. No doubt Government officers are looking at that now, and some of this money that is to be made available will help pay their salaries. If the amount of money that ETSA is charging to underground power to allotments that are just off the power supply main at the moment is an indication of how much it costs to put the power underground—and I am not doubting their figure; they are the experts in the field, and they have to put it there and pay the wages and overheads—the figure in the Scott Report of some \$250 million to underground all the power lines in the Hills is peanuts, and nowhere near the mark.

The figure we are looking at, if we were to underground tomorrow all power lines in the fire danger areas (and that is most of the Hills), would be more than \$500 million. If

we set out to do it tomorrow, by the time we finished it, we would be looking at \$1 000 million. Someone is going to say: 'Well, Evans, what right have you got to say Scotts are wrong?' I challenge the Government to do some assessments and ask the Electricity Trust to do some assessments now, after it has had more time to think about what is in the Scott Report, and tell me whether my figure is not nearer the mark than the Scott one.

Let us go one step further. It has been advocated that the people in the Hills, because they live there, should pay for the undergrounding. It is not their fault that originally the power lines were put overhead. That was a decision by the authority at the time, with Government approval; in fact, great praise was given to the man who invented the Stobie pole, which was going to save the State going from timber to that type of support for overhead lines.

Some of the Hills people may be rich, but by far the largest percentage of them are on average incomes, while others may be very poor. In many cases people are trying to pay off their homes, having been attempting to do that for 20 or 30 years. It is ludicrous to suggest that over the next five or 10 years those people should try to find half the total sum of \$250 million or \$500 million, or whatever the sum is.

I give credit to the Trust for in recent times putting spacers between all the lines in the Hills to keep them apart when high winds may induce slackness. The Trust has done that and has also undertaken a massive tree cutting programme. When those words are uttered, many people with a great love of trees immediately get upset. But, if human beings are going to live in the Hills or in any other parts of the State where there are trees, unfortunately at times action will have to be taken to remove trees or to cut limbs or roots in order to provide services required by society, particularly those required by Australian citizens who live in affluent conditions. The provision of sewerage and water facilities and power to these areas is involved. As far as money is concerned many people are now feeling the pinch more than was the case previously, so many people are not so affluent. One could claim that that is due to increased Government charges and the loss of value of the dollar's purchasing power.

If we stop cutting trees and put all the power lines underground, we would create one of the biggest bushfire menaces ever to be created in the Hills. I hope that members of all political Parties will stop and think about that proposition. I have not had an academic career, but I have had a practical career and am able to understand the practicalities of such situations. Society cannot suddenly leave all the trees to grow until they arch right over the road with no-one working around the trees once a year, cutting out the tops and the undergrowth around the them. If that work was not done, massive undergrowth would develop beneath the trees and the trees would form a complete archway over the road.

In the event of a bushfire, the heat would be so intense that vehicles would be unable to traverse the road for some time afterwards. Quite often it is important to be able to travel from one point to another to fight a fire. I hope that these matters are considered before people subscribe to this stupidity of thinking that if all power lines are put underground all the risks of bushfires will be eliminated. Only one risk will be eliminated, namely, the possibility of a fire starting due to a power line shorting or a tree limb falling on it and bursting into flames. The possibility of a lightning strike would not be eliminated, nor would any of the other potential risks.

By studying the history of this country and the signs of natural occurrences that occurred before white man came here, such as timber that was burnt, it can be ascertained

that before white man installed power lines, and so on, when natives inhabited this land, traditionally they burnt parts of the land systematically. Man can precipitate the burning of the land for all sorts of reasons. The elimination of power lines is a minimal measure. The spacers placed between power lines and the cutting back of trees have eliminated most of the risk of power lines starting a fire. I say that quite conclusively, and I think people should be made aware of that. What is to be done in regard to money supplied to those people who serve in the Country Fire Service? Do they have enough units? Should we be spending money on a yachting race, a Grand Prix, or whatever, instead of on measures relating to the safety of people who give their services for nothing? How many of our Country Fire Service units in this State are under equipped, without top class equipment that is available in this day and age?

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: The Athelstone unit is under equipped.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The member for Coles has made the point about the Athelstone unit. Many of them are under equipped. Very few units are equipped to the point where they can say that they have the best of equipment for those volunteers that they have available to work for the unit. I make the plea that the Government should think more seriously about this underground power line question before saying to people in the Hills that they have to pay half of the \$250 million, \$500 million, or whatever the figure may be.

In relation to the management of our national, recreation and conservation parks, I try to look at this matter in a practical sense. I do not know how we can say we want to preserve and conserve these areas when we do not take adequate precautions with fire breaks around them and undertake slow burns at the right time to ensure that these areas are preserved. Unfortunately, people tend to forget that at times of bad fires the heat is so intense that many of our reptiles, lizards and smaller animals as well as some of the shrubs are completely destroyed. However, a slow burn will not completely destroy this flora and fauna. Our Aboriginal brothers here before us learnt that centuries ago. They knew the right times to undertake this burning so that an area would not be totally wiped out. Imagine if they had not done so and had lit a fire somewhere around the area where Unley now is, for example, on a very bad day such as Ash Wednesday. Such a fire would have ended up at Bordertown or even further away than that. We must understand what we are doing in this regard.

Another matter that concerns me is in this State relates to medical care. I want to read a letter which refers to the Flinders Medical Centre. This is only one of many letters and complaints that I have received recently. Parliamentarians, including members of the Government, concerned about the suffering of individuals must talk amongst themselves and with the Minister of Health to try to find a solution. The Government must seek Federal aid if that is necessary. A letter that I received recently from a lady is as follows:

I wish to lodge a voice of protest at the delays in appointments and treatment in the physiotherapy and operations at the Flinders Medical Centre. My case, I believe, is just another of so many operations and treatments that have and still are being delayed. I find the trauma of anticipating and expecting to have an operation and to be told two hours before admission time that there is no bed available very distressing and hard to take—also to be told that they don't know when, so it is cancelled indefinitely. I have had a nasal problem for some time which disturbs my sleep and is affecting my health. I believe that if I were a private patient and not a pensioner I would receive attention much sooner. This medical scheme is not working for people like me; only those who can afford private cover. How long do I have to wait and suffer?

Another letter was from a person who has to go back to

England with his wife because of family business. He will come back to Australia. That man has been waiting for 15 months to have a prostate operation, and he is 80 years of age. Why in this day and age can one of our major hospitals say that it does not know when people can have an operation? Surgery is denied and people have to wait. When I contacted the hospital I was told, 'We are sorry. We don't have enough beds or staff. We don't know when we can accommodate him.' The State must find a solution to this problem. It is totally unfair. Some people say that elective surgery is involved, but it is a cruel world where a person of 80 years of age is told, 'We can't handle it. It is not urgent, and we can only handle urgent cases.' I am not saying that that should not be done, but we must find a way around the problem.

I hope that the Government takes note of my remarks and ensures that that does not happen. At the same time a community hospital like the Blackwood Hospital cannot obtain funds to build additions in order to cater for more people. The Government might be able to provide some sort of subsidy for these operations. Perhaps the bill could be picked up under Medicare, but we might be told no money is available. If we can find money for yacht races or for the Grand Prix and so on, surely we can find money to treat our aged and those with health problems. I thought that that would come first, but Government members may say that I am wrong. I hope I am not wrong, and I throw out that challenge. At the same time, the Stirling Hospital is denied the right to operate a nursing home. We should consider that matter, because many aged people are looking for nursing home care and more spaces will be required in the future. However, a Government subsidy has been denied. I ask the Government to consider this matter seriously and, if it cannot do anything, to take up the matter with the Federal Government so that we do the right thing.

I wish to refer to two or three issues which affect my district and of which I hope the Government is conscious. I refer first to the Old Belair Road which, although it is not in my area, serves my area. Mains for gas and electricity are being laid. I do not attack the Government for undertaking that work first; I hope it is done as quickly as possible. The Liberal Government and other Governments before that did not get on with the job, so I will not be a hypocrite and say it is this Government's fault. But I hope that the Government speeds up work on the gas mains. The Government should ensure that this work keeps moving. Also, where power lines are to be put underground, it should be done. I hope that there will be a reasonable surface on the road, but not to the point where people speed. If that happens, it will become a very dangerous road.

I am amazed that in the Stirling District Council area only one gang is installing sewer mains. That task has been continuing over many years. I ask the Government why it has slowed down that work. Why have some of the gangs been taken away? Why does the Government not consider that that community deserves sewer mains to be installed quickly? Will the gangs be sent back in the winter months, when they will be able to achieve virtually nothing because of the bad conditions? We have had one of the best summers in decades, and that work could have been carried out, but all the gangs except one were pulled out. I do not understand that. Again, it is my practical approach against an administrative decision which might involve more academics and which might not consider those who have to battle under certain conditions. I will feel sorry for the gangs if they are sent back in the winter to work under adverse conditions, but I have more sympathy for the people in the Stirling District Council area because one lousy gang has to do as much as possible under difficult circumstances as a result of which the operation may take another 10 years.

The Heathfield High School requested extra space for craft, home economics and other studies, and the Principal was told that a new type of larger classroom would be made available. However, that building could not be transported to the school. I ask the Government to ensure that it approves extensions to the permanent buildings to provide those facilities and not to put the request on a long list of programmes that might stretch years into the future. That community has a growing student population and it is looking for support.

Finally (and I would like to make other points, but I am constrained by time limits), I thank the Minister of Transport for providing extra transport services to Aberfoyle Park in peak periods. However, more bus services in offpeak periods are required. There are plenty of services along Henley Beach Road, to Elizabeth, and in the south, and Aberfoyle Park needs more offpeak services. If the Minister does not provide those services before the next election, he will get a kick in the teeth from the people in that area.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in the debate this evening. I wish to concentrate on an area that is involved with one of Adelaide's greatest resources, one that we cannot afford to let slip, that is, the market garden area at Virginia and Two Wells, north of Adelaide. Many people in South Australia do not seem to recognise that we are very fortunate that this area is so close to our main urban centre so that the costs of market garden produce can be kept to a minimum. We would not want that area to be forced hundreds of miles from Adelaide. Unless we take urgent action to help these people in various ways, that trend will occur.

I refer, first, to the question of water. The Virginia area has a long history in this regard. Successive Governments have made little headway and have avoided the responsibility of supplying adequate water to that area. It is all the more disappointing that so many resources have been made available. If one looks back in history, the expense at the time would have been relatively low compared to what we would be faced with today, but I do not think we can let that delay us. We must take hold of the problem and see what can be done in the future. In relation to the provision of services at Virginia, I wish to look at some history that applies to the area. Before the Second World War deputations from people in Virginia were refused an E&WS mains supply of water on the grounds that they had a plentiful supply underground. How lovely it would be to turn back the wheels of time!

Changes in land use that took place after the war accelerated the demand for a mains supply to serve a now rapidly expanding population and its commercial centre at Virginia. The receding levels of the underground supply and the increasing salinity of the shallow aquifers were causing considerable alarm in the community. Although the rapid expansion of the market garden industry on the northern Adelaide Plains has been blamed for deterioration in water levels in the underlying aquifers, there was a second and equally important contributor to the problem.

This was the completion of the South Para Reservoir in about 1956 to impound the water which normally travelled via the South Para and Gawler Rivers to the sea, in the course of this journey recharging the northern Adelaide Plains aquifers. This practically wiped out the recharging process. For those who are not aware, the Gawler River runs very close to Virginia to the north.

The importance of this periodic replenishment of the aquifers is acknowledged by J.R. Forth, senior hydrogeologist,

Water Resources Branch, in his booklet entitled *Northern Adelaide Plains Ground Water Hydrogeological Summary*. Under the heading 'Recharge' he notes:

The observed water quality patterns in aquifers A and B indicate that the predominant recharge sources are the Gawler and Little Para Rivers. The exact pathways for recharge are not known but presumably during periods of stream flow water moves first into the shallow water table aquifers and then downwards to the tertiary confined aquifers. This would require that the confining beds are less well developed, below the two rivers, than elsewhere. The pleistocene Hindmarsh clays contain more sand beds and coarser fragments in the vicinity of the rivers so this may well be true.

The completion of the South Para reservoir and the relocation of the market gardens displaced by the rapid expansion of housing development on the fringe of Adelaide suburbs on the northern Adelaide Plains occurred at about the same time as construction of the South Para reservoir, from 1956 to 1960. The need for a reticulated supply of water to the Virginia district was evident in the late 1950s when those members of the community who relied on the shallow more easily accessible aquifers found their water supply dwindling and becoming too saline for domestic use.

By 1963 the position was becoming desperate. The shallow aquifers were almost dry and had reached such a state of salinity as to be totally unsuitable for domestic use or irrigation. The first positive response to the community's demands for a reticulated water supply is recorded in *Hansard* of 30 July 1963, at page 166, where the member for Gouger (Mr R.S. Hall) calls for a reticulated supply of water to Virginia. Then we can trace the development, or hoped for development, of a reticulated water supply by looking at extracts from *Hansard* over the ensuing years. First, we see that on 20 August 1964, at page 533 of *Hansard*, Mr Hall asked the following question:

Some time ago I sent to the Minister of Works a petition signed by residents of the Virginia district who desired a departmental water supply in that town and district. Has the Minister any further news of investigations into the possibility of providing this supply?

The following answer came from the Hon. G.G. Pearson, the then Minister:

The consumption of water in the Virginia district has increased tremendously in recent years, mainly because of the usage of piped water for market gardening and glasshouse cultivation, and that has absorbed almost all the water available, in fact, it has rendered the supply quite inadequate. The department has been looking carefully into the matter had prepared a scheme for the reorganisation of the whole area. This is a costly and extensive scheme, but it will, I think, provide for all the needs of the area for quite a few years to come, notwithstanding the fact that it is expected that when further supplies are available the market gardening activity will increase. In order that the water may reach Virginia consumers it is necessary to reorganise the system from the Sandy Creek trunk main. The Engineer-in-Chief has submitted to me a scheme for the first stage of the programme, which I think, from memory, is to cost about £90 000 and he desires to get the project under way. I have not yet taken the matter to Cabinet, but I propose to do so in the next week or so, and after Cabinet has had a look at it I shall probably be able to inform the honourable member further.

The next we see is a question from Mr Hall on 15 September 1964, less than a month later, which reads:

On 20 August the Minister of Works, in answer to a question, said that he would submit to Cabinet a proposal to enlarge the Sandy Creek water main so that eventually users at Virginia and Two Wells could be supplied. Has the Minister further information on the outcome of his Cabinet submission?

The Minister's answer is as follows:

I submitted the matter to Cabinet which approved the expenditure of £90 000 involved in this stage of the scheme. I have additional information in a report but the honourable member already has it and I shall not take up the time of the House by repeating it. If he wishes, the honourable member may peruse the report again.

It seemed as though things were moving. Then we go through the better part of a year to 15 June 1965, when Mr Hall again raised the matter, as follows:

On 15 December last an answer was given by the previous Minister of Works to my query concerning the eventual water supply to Virginia. In part that reply stated, 'Further to the undertaking given in my reply in the House on 20 August 1964, Cabinet has now approved the expenditure of £93 000 as the first stage towards providing a reticulated water supply to Virginia area and improving the existing supply at Two Wells. As indicated in my earlier reply this initial stage forms part of a comprehensive plan which has been prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief and involves the enlargement of mains in the Two Wells area and extending the supply to Virginia. The whole project is estimated to cost £306 000, and if approved would be carried out over a period of five years. It is not possible to indicate when a start can be made on the laying of the new 26 in. main because the shortage of steel plate makes pipe delivery dates uncertain. It is hoped however that it will be possible to make a start towards the end of the present financial year'.

We then see that from the reply by the previous Administration it was obvious that a start was being made on the eventual supply of water to Virginia. The specific question was as follows:

Can the Minister of Works assure me that the policy will be continued with the object of bringing a departmental water supply to Virginia at the earliest possible time?

The (Minister) Hon. C.D. Hutchens replied:

I can give the honourable member an assurance (similar to the assurance I gave a few months ago) that with any contract or promise given by the previous Government in the nature of work to be done, every endeavour will be made to honour such assurance. It is unfortunate, however, that I have to report that the engineering, water and sewers programme is not running to schedule. A number of big works approved for 1964-65 will not be started during that period.

So, it continues. In August 1965 Mr Hall asked the Minister of Works for a reply to his recent question about the proposed reticulation scheme for the Two Wells/Virginia area. The Hon. C.D. Hutchens reported on the latest developments. There were some extracts from speeches on the Loan Estimates which time does not permit me to go into. I refer to *Hansard* of 3 August 1965 when the Hon. L.R. Hart referred to the previous year's Loan Estimates in relation to an item dealing with the Barossa water district. It outlines the principal elements of the scheme. In part, he states:

This part of the scheme is estimated to cost £90 000 and £1 000 is provided to commence work this year. This is only the beginning of a much more comprehensive scheme to supply Two Wells and surrounding districts. The extent of the scheme will depend upon whether the township and district of Virginia are also supplied with mains water. The need for this scheme is something I need not dwell on; it is well known to the Department. Will the Minister of Labour and Industry seek from his colleague, the Minister of Works, a report stating whether the £1 000 provided for the commencement of the work was spent during the last financial year (when it was supposed to be spent), and to what extent the scheme for the expenditure of the £90 000 has proceeded?

After it was referred back from one House to the other on two occasions, the Hon. A.F. Kneebone gave the following reply:

I have an answer from my colleague, the Minister for Works, and he states that two alternative schemes to supply the Two Wells and Virginia areas and adjacent country lands have been prepared and estimates have been made. An assessment is being made to determine the financial return, and this will be completed as soon as possible.

Either scheme will require reference to the Public Works Committee if found by the Department to be a practical proposition. A prerequisite for any scheme to extend the Barossa water district is the duplication of the Barossa trunk main from the Sandy Creek pressure-reducing tank to the Gawler take-off point, and Cabinet approval has been given for the expenditure of £93 000 to provide a 27 in. mild steel cement lined main and by-pass at the reducing tank. It is expected that delivery of the pipes for the main will commence early in 1966 and, meanwhile, work on the construction of the by-pass is well advanced.

A total amount of £6 873 has been spent up to 31 July 1965 from the allocation for the 27 in. Duplicate Barossa trunk main—£2 459 in 1964-65 and £4 414 in 1965-66. This expenditure has

been incurred on preparatory work and on the construction of the by-pass at Sandy Creek pressure-reducing tank. A tender has been let for the supply of the 27 in mild steel cement-lined pipes.

It really was starting to look very positive. That water was on its way to Virginia and Two Wells, but let us not hold our breath too long. On 1 February 1966 the Hon. L.R. Hart asked the following question:

In the Loan Estimates presented to this Council on 25 August last year there appeared an item of £90 000 for duplicating portion of the existing water main between Sandy Creek and Gawler. This work is the first stage of a scheme to improve water supplies in the Two Wells and Virginia area. The need for an improvement in the water supplies in the area is very urgent indeed. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Works ascertain whether tenders have been called for the work and the stage the work has reached at this time?

Again, after some transfer between the two Houses, we have the following answer from the Hon. A.F. Kneebone:

My colleague the Minister of Works reports that a contract for the supply of the 27 in. pipes for the Sandy Creek/Gawler main has been let, and it is expected that delivery will commence early in March 1966. The by-pass around the Sandy Creek reducing tank has been completed and laying of the 27 in. main will commence as soon as the pipes are received.

Mr Whitten: After all these years of Liberal non-action, the Labor Government has done it for you.

Mr MEIER: That is where the honourable member is wrong, as we have not come to the end of the story yet. On 11 October 1966 the Hon. L.R. Hart asked another question as follows:

For several years now there has been an item on the loan estimates relating to the Barossa water district.

He then goes on with the various details that we have heard on several occasions in previous questions. We then get to the nitty gritty, where he states:

The water supply system in the Two Wells area is already overloaded and several years ago it became necessary to take action to safeguard the supply to existing consumers. The decisions included: no indirect supplies to be granted; no extensions in country lands to be recommended and the size of new services abutting existing mains top be limited to ½ inch. Since that time there have been many applications for indirect services, all of which have been refused. This means that a person who is not abutting a main at present is unable to obtain a water supply which, in effect, means no new houses can be built or any other development carried out in those circumstances.

He then restates the urgency of the matter and asks for something to be done. The last question on this scheme seems to be on 26 October 1966, as follows:

Has the Minister of Labour and Industry, representing the Minister of Works, an answer to my question of 11 October regarding the water supply to the Two Wells district?

The Hon. A.F. Kneebone replied as follows:

Yes. The Minister of Works reports that loan funds likely to be available to the Department are fully committed for several years, and present indications are that funds for a scheme to improve the Two Wells area and supply Virginia could not be made available until 1969-70 at the earliest. Although a preliminary scheme has been prepared, the proposal will have to be referred to the Public Works Committee in due course.

The net result of all that was that that scheme apparently never came through. The protected mains extension seems to have died on 26 October 1966, to be followed in February 1967 with a virtual total ban on further drilling of wells in the area for any purposes. Control over the underground water supply exercised by the use of the Underground Waters Preservation Act proclaimed on the Northern Adelaide Plains in February 1967 increased the demand for a reticulated water supply to the affected areas.

The Engineering and Water Supply Department responded to the increased demand for its services by adopting a policy which prohibited any further development of mains supply in any form to the west of Andrews Road in the Munno Para district. I was informed unofficially that the prohibition placed on the extension of supplies to the area was applied

as a result of the Department's concern that the market gardeners would use mains water for irrigation in the gardens. No consideration was given to those members of the community who were not market gardeners. A further development affecting the Virginia district was the publication in 1962 of the Metropolitan Development Plan.

The planners, whilst addressing themselves to their main task of the control of urban industrial development, took heed of the need to provide land for uses other than housing and industrial purposes. The report on the metropolitan area of Adelaide, chapter 11—primary industries—paragraphs 3 and 4 in part notes that some market gardeners in the metropolitan area have moved further out because of increasing land values, rates and taxes and of difficulties in growing crops in or near built-up areas. Some have ceased production altogether.

Thus the supply of Adelaide's fresh vegetables is likely to become difficult in the future unless other areas can be developed for economic production. New areas for vegetable growing are developing to the north of the urban area along the Port Wakefield Road and adjoining the Little Para and Gawler Rivers, but it is unlikely that these will completely replace the areas being built in the Torrens Valley, due to the nature of the soil and the water supplies.

The planners in their wisdom decided to preserve all the land in the Virginia district for agricultural use, restricting subdivisions to the minimum lot size of 10 acres. Despite the restrictions applied to the use of underground water for irrigation, the gardeners of Virginia have managed to develop their industry to a level where it is accepted as a major supplier of fresh vegetables to the markets of Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and the Northern Territory. I have been given to understand that the present gross annual income for market gardening on the Northern Adelaide Plains is in the vicinity of \$24 million. That figure, of course, is a 1984 approximate, so we are having to consider an area that is vital to the economy of the State, and, as I said earlier, it is so close to the metropolitan area of Adelaide.

During the financial year 1969-70, as a result of some very heavy pressure applied to officers of the E & WS Department, a limited mains supply was constructed to service the Virginia township. We are talking not about the supply on which I went through all the details in *Hansard*, but an alternative scheme was brought into operation. However, the one that Steele Hall fought for and that Mr Hart fought for has not come into operation in Virginia and Two Wells.

The scheme that came in after 1969-70 was considered unsatisfactory by residents who are living there today. It was available only to a limited number of residents living in the centre of the township. Many people living relatively short distances from the main supply were denied access either as a direct supply or as an indirect service at their own expense. Supply was limited by a restriction to half inch meters equipped with a choke to limit the flow rate. The main delivering to the system was inadequate from its inception, resulting in poor pressure during the summer months. Two additional services have been developed in the district since the original mains were laid: one to service a 5-acre subdivision on Penfield Road which terminates one kilometre from the Virginia township, leaving 14 landowners abutting the road without a service. In response to a petition some years ago from these landowners, an offer was made by the E & WS Department to extend the main conditionally on the petitioners contributing \$42 000 to the cost of the work. This sum did not include connection costs. A recent request forwarded by me on behalf of various constituents for the Penfield Road extension that was presented in 1964 has been answered with a demand for \$62 175 before the extension would be considered. This is an increase

of 48 per cent in two years (those other figures were two years earlier).

The second extension serviced the International Adelaide Raceway. Landowners abutting this main were required to pay a surcharge to allow the Department to recover a minimum return on the scheme. Twenty six owners on the old Port Wakefield Road petitioned for a service from the Virginia township to Legoe Road. In this case the Department demanded a payment of approximately \$62 000 at that stage to cover the cost of laying the main. Connection fees were extra. I have not had time in this Supply debate to bring in the other factors of the problems facing so many market gardeners in relation to their underground supplies at present. I know the Minister is well aware of those problems. I have not had time to go into the history, and hopefully an opportunity will arise some time in the future to go into the history of how the Bolivar scheme water could be developed to offset some of the problems these people are experiencing.

The most important problem I think immediately is that these market gardeners, people living in the Virginia and Two Wells area, cannot be forgotten. We have seen a very recent case of the Minister, the Government, agreeing to finance a pipeline into the Dublin area. I can only commend the Minister on that. It is not only going to help the livestock industry there, but I believe it will have a helpful influence with many other people living in that area. It is a positive step forward, but we have to analyse this area so close to Adelaide, a matter of a few kilometres from Adelaide, where water is so scarce. I heard only yesterday that many loads of water have had to be carted by certain people who are helpful in the community to people who have not any water. Their tanks have run dry. They are not connected to the reticulated water scheme, and they just have not got any water for drinking. This is just not on.

The present Government has to address this problem. Previous Governments have not addressed it in the way it should have been addressed, and I say here and now that the residents of Virginia, in association with the residents of Two Wells, are going to fight for an appropriate water supply, and we are going to keep fighting until we get it. I feel that the Government has to make money available in its coming Budget to consider this situation, and of course I realise there are many other water situations in my electorate also, but this one, so close to the city that people virtually regard themselves as part of the metropolitan area, has to be addressed immediately.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN (Davenport): Some months ago now (in fact early last year I think it was) a Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament was established to look specifically at the Parliamentary procedures. The whole purpose of that Select Committee (and I point out to the House I have been a member of it) was to look at how we can smarten up our procedures to have reasonable hours for Parliament, to ensure that we do not sit here and have extremely late nights, night after night, and that, as Parliamentarians, we can live a more civilised life, spending some time with our families, certainly not being out every night of the week and not sitting here in Parliament well into the night and even well into the mornings.

I find it incredible that that Select Committee has not met now for approximately six months, and, as a result of that, this Parliament is still staggering on under the same old procedures. Here we are at 11.30 at night proceeding with a Budget debate on the basis that it is supposed to be through tonight, and if every member of the House exercises his right to speak, I understand we will be going at least until 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. That is ludicrous. It is a farce.

Members of the public say, 'Look, how can we ever expect our politicians to run the State when they cannot even conduct their own affairs in Parliament on a reasonable basis?' No efficient business would ever operate on the basis that this Parliament operates. I find it incredible that the Government is so incapable of, first, organising its own business and putting its business up in Parliament in such a way that we cannot have reasonable hours and, second, why it cannot even—because it is responsible for the Select Committee and calling the meetings—get itself well enough organised to carry out a Select Committee to review the procedures of Parliament so that we can alter those procedures and add some common sense to the way in which this Parliament is run. Tonight I call on the Premier to put pressure on the Chairman of that Select Committee (Hon. Chris Sumner, in another place) to ensure that that Select Committee gets on with its hearings and comes down with some reasonable practices and procedures for the conduct of this Parliament.

The second matter I want to take up is in relation to a function that is to take place tomorrow. I am delighted that the Minister of Transport is here at the moment. Tomorrow he and his Federal colleagues will open the new Emerson Overpass at the intersection of Cross and South Roads. It is well known that in relation to the Emerson crossing there is the old problem of the Friendly Transport Company Proprietary Limited. The Government has neglected to solve this problem, despite promises made several years ago. Due to bureaucratic bungling by the South Australian Government the new overpass at the Emerson crossing will open without the Government having first relocated Friendly Transport, which has become necessary as a result of the construction. I am delighted that the member for Unley is present in the Chamber: he must bear the responsibility for that bungling and delay on this issue by his Government over the past 2½ years.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: You know nothing about it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know everything about it in terms of the problems that it creates. I have been down there and seen the trucks parked in residential streets. The residents know what the problem is.

Mr Mayes: What do you know about it? Absolutely nothing.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I will refer to that in a moment.

Mr Mayes: The honourable member should be very careful what he says because it will go very much against him and his friends opposite.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The member for Unley is using bold words there. He should wait until I refer to statements made by one John Bannon, as Leader of the Opposition, and then as Premier. It was well known that, once the overpass was completed, it would add significantly to the problems of the residents living in Black Forest and those who live adjacent to Friendly Transport. It was well known that the overpass would open in 1985. The Government has had 2½ years to carry out its election promise, but it has failed to do so.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister can make the threat across the House that I should keep my nose out of the matter. However, I do not intend to keep my nose out of it, and I will point out why. The Government has failed to properly represent the people who live in that area, particularly those who live at Black Forest. The Government has failed to do that, but I will go down and help the residents. It has been known for several years that the real crunch in relation to this problem would occur when the overpass was open. As Leader of the Opposition, John Bannon, in a letter of 18 February 1982 to Mr D.A. Webb, Secretary of the Residents Association of Black Forest, stated:

Dear Mr Webb,

I am writing on behalf of our shadow Minister of Transport, Howard O'Neill, who is currently on sick leave, to confirm that it is our view that the current location of Friendly Transport Limited poses a major safety problem for vehicular traffic on South Road and surrounding streets. We are amazed that the present Government has not taken action to ensure that the problem is solved. I confirm that in Government, subject to provisions contained in the Land Acquisition Act and an assessment from the Valuer-General's Department, we would make funds available to compulsorily acquire the property.

Your sincerely, J.C. Bannon, Leader of the Opposition.

Those bold promises and criticisms of the previous Government were made three years ago. Then on 9 August 1983, the Hon. J.C. Bannon, as Premier, in a further letter to Councillor D.A. Webb of Black Forest, stated:

Dear Councillor Webb,

I refer to your letter of 8 June 1983 concerning the relocation of Friendly Transport Company. I have been advised that the Highways Department has served a notice of intention under provisions of the Land Acquisition Act to acquire the whole of the land at 719 South Road, Black Forest. A notice of acquisition has not been served to date as negotiations are proceeding.

That was in August 1983, at which time the Government had not even served a notice of compulsory acquisition. The letter continues:

Negotiations with the company were commenced because the property was affected by the widening of South Road. That widening is now proceeding. It is not, as stated in your letter, required in connection with the construction of the Emerson overpass.

We know that, but we also know that the Emerson overpass will add significantly to problems of residents in surrounding streets. The letter continues:

The Commissioner of Highways is currently investigating other options which will be offered to Friendly Transport in the event that council's consent is ultimately not obtainable by the company through the normal planning procedures. The undertaking given by the Labor Party whilst in Opposition is being honoured, as every endeavour is being made to assist the Friendly Transport Company.

Yours sincerely, J.C. Bannon, Premier of South Australia.

That letter was written on 9 August 1983—a year and a half ago. What has happened in relation to the saga since then? An alternative property was eventually found, the old CMV property on South Road at Mile End. It certainly suited Friendly Transport Company who wished to relocate there as soon as possible. There were problems in relation to the local council, and this move was challenged before the South Australian Planning Commission. It is interesting that in the judgment handed down by Mr Justice Matheson he made it quite clear that it was the lack of commitment by the Highways Department (which had not even carried out the necessary roadworks to allow access to that property) that had held up approval being granted by him.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: One need only look at his judgment to see that. One finds that this is due to the bureaucratic bungling by the Highways Department and the lack of commitment by the Minister of Transport, the Government, and the Premier (Hon. J.C. Bannon) who made all those promises earlier. So what do we find? The Emerson crossing is to open tomorrow and the matter has not been resolved, while for 2½ years the residents of Black Forest have had to put up with the problem.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Do you know what the site was wanted for? It was wanted for the widening of South Road.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that. That has been referred to in a letter that I have already read out. I do not know why the Minister is suddenly pointing that out to the House. The point is that the building of the overpass means that trucks are now using residential streets. Apart from the matter of the overpass and all the promises made by the Hon. J.C. Bannon as Leader of the Opposition and as Premier, we find that the Friendly Transport problem

is still not resolved three years after the original promise was made by the Hon. J.C. Bannon. The Government has done absolutely nothing in effectively getting Friendly Transport relocated.

Mr Mayes: What is your policy?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: If the Government cannot handle the situation it should resign now and let us take over. We will resolve the problem immediately.

Mr Mayes interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is interesting to see the member for Unley interjecting across the House: this matter has really struck a raw nerve in relation to the Black Forest residents. They are sick and tired of the honourable member's promises and words—and there has been nothing but words in relation to the Friendly Transport Company.

Mr Mayes: I've got news for you—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I have met people down there, and they have passed judgment on the member for Unley. They know what they think of him and of the Minister of Transport and the Premier. One has only to refer to a letter published in the *Advertiser* last Monday which was damning of this Government and the Premier and the policies that have been undertaken. I refer to a second matter. I have been making constructive points for the past 12 minutes.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I could refer to the dairy industry. However, I would hate to stop the honourable member's system. I flattered the honourable member in the *Stock Journal*, and I sincerely believe what I said. I told the reporter from the *Stock Journal* that the honourable member (Keith Plunkett) was a straight shooter, a person who talked in a straight and frank manner. We heard that tonight, and I have no doubt that what the honourable member said reflects the views of the majority of the members of the Labor Party. That is why I made that statement and why I sincerely believe that the Labor Party will remove the concessions for primary producers.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: No decision has been made.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister of Transport says that no decision has been made, but he is only hiding behind that statement. He knows what his Party and his Cabinet think.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: No decision has been made.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Mr Plunkett—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The member for Peake—

Mr Trainer interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I prefer to refer to the honourable member by name, because I am talking about what I said to the reporter from the *Stock Journal*. I did not refer to the honourable member by his district because people would not have a clue who the member for Peake was; however, they know who Keith Plunkett is, because he has shorn on many of their properties and he has many friends in those areas. The member for Alexandra asked who are his friends on rural properties because he would like to send those friends a copy of the *Hansard* extract for this evening. I hope that the member for Peake will come forward with that list of his friends on rural properties.

I refer now to the red tape and the additional cost imposed by this Government through its departments, and I refer particularly to the E&WS Department. The Premier claims that this Government maintains a low cost structure for industry, that the tax levels are reasonable and are, in fact, the fourth lowest in Australia, but let us consider what damage he has done as Premier and Treasurer of this State to that reputation. It is his Government that has decided that as from 1 July the cost to a road construction company of hiring a 50 millimetre, or 2 inch, hydrant from the E&WS

Department will increase from \$5 to \$120 a year—a 24-fold increase. I hope that the member for Hartley, who prattled on the other day about charges that were increased under the Liberal Government, takes note of this. The deposit for such a hydrant has increased 10 times—from \$60 to \$600 a year. That is a farce: it is ridiculous. How can anyone believe the speech that was made by the Premier in Sydney last week? He said:

My Government is dedicated to keeping South Australia a low tax State.

This Premier's Government has done more to destroy the low tax reputation which this State has had for many years and which was established by the previous Liberal Government than has any other Premier in recent years. He will have to bear the burden of that. As a result, we find that the cost of roadmaking in this State will increase, but the Government has not only taken away from the Highways Department funds that should legitimately have been spent on road construction (and the sum involved is \$17 million a year) and channelled it into general revenue but is also increasing very substantially the costs for road construction companies. Therefore, fewer roads will be made for the limited dollars being handed out.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We have the best roads in Australia.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I can think of no Minister who has given so little credit to the need for road improvements than has this Minister, and I go back to the Minister's former colleague, Geoffrey Virgo. The Minister has let the State down, and let it down badly. If the Minister or the Labor Party want to be judged, let us consider how much money will be provided over the next triennium for road funding. Let us see how effective the Minister is in arguing with his Federal colleague for an increase in funds, which is so urgent for road construction in this State, and for a better share for this State.

We receive a mere 7.7 per cent of the funds at present, but South Australia has 9 per cent of the Australian population, 12 per cent of Australian roads and about 13 per cent of total area. Let us see how effective the Minister is in getting a bigger share. I was interested to note the other day that even the Premier has come out and put his reputation on the line, saying that he will fight for South Australia and that he will get a better share of road funds for this State. Also, a greater proportion of money will be spent on roads.

Mr Meier: He fights and we lose.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Exactly: the Premier fights for South Australia and South Australia loses every time, without fail. I raise yet another matter that highlights the cost burden imposed by the E&WS Department on private industry in this State. I received a letter from a transport company that was in the process of installing a fire service, which required an extension of the water main to the transport property. The company wrote to the E&WS Department asking it to carry out the installation and inquiring about the cost. A fairly short length of pipe was required. It was a 6 inch fire service connection and the approximate length was 5 metres from the proposed 150 millimetre main, and terminating .3 metres inside the property boundary. The quote was incredible. The full length of the 6 inch main was 157 metres, and the E&WS was asking—

Mr Lewis: I would do it for \$4 000.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The E&WS Department wanted \$2 650 for the original connection and \$2 182.50 every year for the next five to six years as a loading on top of the normal E&WS rates.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes, \$2 650 for the first year and a guaranteed \$2 182.50 for the next five to six years.

Mr Whitten interjecting:

The Hon. D. C. BROWN: It is ridiculous to say that. The water rates for the property work out at \$162 per annum. That is the sort of thing that is killing private industry in this State. That is why private industry is fed up to the teeth with the Bannan Government and the costs and charges that it imposes. If the member for Price has any doubt about that, he should go out and ask some of the companies. I think he would get a rude shock as to what they think about the Government at present. That is a ridiculous burden. I wrote to the Minister, but what did he say? He came back with the same—

An honourable member: I don't think the Parliament can afford the Government's taxes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is it: the Government cannot afford to pay the electricity bill. The rates have gone up by such an enormous amount in the last year or so. I understand that the Treasurer is flicking all the switches off in the basement because he has just looked at the monthly accounts. So, one can see the effect that that sort of cost increase is imposing upon private industry. If one takes that figure of approximately \$2 000 additional each year to be paid on water rates for five years, one sees that it is \$10 000 plus the connection fee of over \$2 000. So, one is looking at a cost of an additional \$12 000 to put in a 6 inch main over 157 metres, which is an absolute farce.

It is time that there was a full investigation of the costs involved in putting in such services through the E & WS Department. I wrote to the Minister asking whether he would allow a private contractor to put the main in because the person involved believed it could be done at about half the cost through a private contractor. The Minister said, 'No'. I suspect it is because of trade union wishes. He said, 'We will not allow any competition with the E & WS Department, even though it is just for laying a 6 inch pipe'. It is not as if that the E & WS is the only authority in the State that can do it, but this Government is so blind in terms of sticking to its policy that it must be done within the Government; no matter what cost burden is passed on to private industry, that is it.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Trades Hall has just determined that it will be E & WS only.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That does not surprise me. No doubt Trades Hall sent a letter or deputation to see the Minister and said, 'Minister, this is it. E & WS labour only; no private contractors.' No doubt the Minister bowed three times and said, 'It shall be done,' and it has been done. Here is the classic response. That is probably the very reason why the Minister in his letter to me of 27 February came back and said that he would not allow private contractors to carry out the work. I quote the exact paragraph:

If such extension were to be constructed by private contractors, difficulties are foreseen in the management of each and in the area of the responsibility of the contracting individuals.

What a load of rubbish! The letter continues:

In addition, the extension of mains to existing allotments involves certain statutory requirements under the Waterworks Act that could not be enforced, for example, maintenance of trenches. Therefore, where extensions of the main are needed to provide a water supply to existing allotments, it is considered more appropriate for the work to be carried out by the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

Either the Minister is saying we have no confidence in private industry and we cannot even allow them to lay a 6 inch water main, let alone carry out any more sophisticated instruction, or the Minister is bowing to some other pressure. We all know where that pressure has come from—Trades Hall.

Finally, I wish to speak on a subject on which I touched earlier. I am disappointed that the Minister of Transport has left the House, because there is an urgent need for the State to put a very strong case for a better deal on road

funding at the Australian Transport Advisory Council, which I understand is due to be held later this month or early next month. It was due to have been held on 8 March, but was cancelled at the last minute from Canberra, probably because Canberra and the Federal Minister have not got their act together as yet.

This State gets a very poor percentage of the national cake—7.7 per cent of national roads funds—when we have 9.4 per cent of motor vehicles, 9 per cent of the population, 13 per cent of total area of Australia and 12.2 per cent of the total roadway. It is also time that the Federal Government made sure that a greater proportion of the moneys taken from motorists were returned to the States for road construction.

In 1983-84 the Federal Government taxed motorists the grand sum of \$6 920 million, largely through import parity and other fuel taxes. However, of that amount, it returned only \$1 195 million to the States for roadworks. In other words, a mere 17 per cent came back to the States for road construction. The rest went into the general coffers of the Federal Government and the Hawke Government had the hide even to come out and tax the ABRD two cents in the dollar and to take what has previously been dedicated money for roadworks and put it into general revenue. I cannot think of a greater abuse of power under the ABRD Act than that. It must cause acute embarrassment to Federal Minister Morris to have to wear the six monthly indexation of that tax going into general revenue.

A recent study has shown that a mere 25 per cent increase in funding for roads over the next seven years would prevent 85 deaths and 1 150 major injuries on Australia's roads each year, would save an estimated 235 million litres of fuel each year, create an extra 50 000 jobs, and slow down the increase in severe urban traffic congestion that we see occurring every day here in Adelaide. Eighty six per cent of our national highways are below acceptable standards, and in country areas 22 per cent of the traffic occurs on roads where driving conditions are described as poor. Over 80 per cent of our local roads are still unsealed, so a great deal of attention will be turned to how successful the Premier of South Australia and the Minister of Transport are in making sure of two things: first, that we get a larger allocation of funds from the Federal Government for road construction for the next three years and, secondly, that this State gets a fairer share of the national cake than it has received previously.

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

Mr MAYES (Unley): I must take up some of the points raised by the member for Davenport in his opening remarks. It should be recorded, for the residents of Black Forest, exactly what the Opposition has given as a commitment to assist them with their problems, as highlighted and outlined by the member for Davenport, who seems to have so adequately poked his nose into this issue. In 1980, this issue came to a head. I do not need to remind the member for Davenport who was Minister in which Government 1980.

The commitment from the then Liberal Government was absolutely nothing. It did nothing: it promised nothing and gave nothing. As the member for Davenport has said tonight, it saw a problem with the overpass, so who is guilty of not committing the Government to perform a proper act in providing safety to the residents of Black Forest when this Government, in my opinion, has done all that is reasonably feasible and possible to provide an adequate safeguard for those residents? The member for Davenport has highlighted what he sees as a problem. It has been known for some time, as he demonstrably thumped the table, but what has he done? Absolutely nothing!

[Midnight]

As the honourable member leaves the Chamber, I might record, for the benefit of the residents of Black Forest, that he has committed nothing further from the Opposition. He has raised the issue purely for a political point scoring exercise, but has done nothing. The Opposition has done nothing during its three years in Government or in its 2½ years in Opposition. It has said or done nothing until tonight, when it raised the issue. As they would say, it is the day before the opening of the overpass.

To put the record straight, the member for Davenport seems to have some difficulty understanding and interpreting the decisions of the courts. He also has some misunderstanding about the efforts made involving the transfer of Friendly Transport to Black Forest. The court did not criticise the Highways Department for its lack of work. In fact, it would have been inappropriate for the court to do that. The court gave a clear guideline to the Highways Department about the sort of undertakings that it thought Friendly Transport and the West Torrens Council should have in regard to transfer—nothing to do with the work done or to be done on the site in connection with Friendly Transport: it concerned what undertakings the Highways Department should give to the West Torrens council.

In addition, we have an extraordinary telex, issued as a press release by the member for Davenport, which highlights a situation where the Highways Department has given a lack of commitment to give previous and suitable access to Friendly Transport on the Richmond site. That is balderdash. The West Torrens council refused the access to Friendly Transport through the private road, so he does not even understand the facts or understand what has happened down there. The West Torrens council has refused to give access and has refused use for the Richmond site.

It is a situation where the Highways Department has undertaken to do the culvert work, to transfer Telecom cables, ETSA pylons and gas mains. It has already performed those tasks. Right of access had nothing to do with any bungling, as the member for Davenport puts it. If we are to have it on the record, let us keep it straight and factual. The member for Davenport has distorted and shown a lack of understanding of the judgment given by Mr Justice Matheson and the Planning Tribunal. It is clear that he is trying to political point score and has not given any undertaking on behalf of the Opposition or as a member of the then Government. For the residents of Black Forest, it is clear that for 5½ years—for three years while in Government and for 2½ years while in Opposition—nothing has come from the member for Davenport.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): It was interesting to hear the contribution made by the member for Unley. He sought to ask what the Opposition would do. He indicated that the member for Davenport had raised the issue for political point scoring and that that was an unusual set of circumstances concerning a member on either side of the House. Obviously, the member for Unley has tried to political point score on the member for Davenport and on the Opposition. I would tell the member for Unley what the Opposition would not have done: it would not have sent a senior public servant to a council area to threaten the council with the loss of its planning authority unless it bowed to the will of the Government. That has happened within the last 24 to 48 hours.

A senior member of a department, under direction from the Ministry, has sought to blackmail a reputable council with a very long history of service to the community into accepting what the council does not believe is in the best interests not only of its residents but of people who use

South, Burbridge and Marion Roads. We also have a rather peculiar situation where the Highways Department has suddenly found the opportunity to spend something in the order of \$260 000 to make a variation to a road when the planning authority, in so far as contemplating alterations to the width of South Road, would have any development relative to that road on the opposite side. This issue can and will unfold, I am quite sure, probably to the highest court of the land. The people of South Australia will be four square behind the West Torrens council in whatever action it takes concerning the actions of a despotic Government which would threaten the continuance of that local government authority. However, that is not the reason that I rose to speak.

In speaking to the Supply Bill, I wish to indicate the importance to South Australia of a more enlightened Government determined to give the community value for money. I have indicated the sort of activity this Government has got into concerning transport. I will outline a number of other areas where there is a wanton waste of funds of this State by a Government served by Ministers who are not fulfilling their responsibility to correctly monitor the expenditure of South Australian taxpayers' funds.

Let me quickly pick up a very emotive issue and one which gives me no real cheer to raise. I refer to Community Employment Programmes projects. What is the situation with those projects under way in South Australia at the present time, overseen by members of this Government in conjunction with Commonwealth support? I have a case in my own electorate where an undertaking to build a facility for a club when partway through was beset by a strike of Community Employment Programmes workers for no particular reason. The 'no particular reason' has been accepted from people on both sides. Subsequently, the organisation, which was putting up some of its own funds along with the Community Employment Programmes funds, was advised to pay those who had been on strike for the period that they were on strike in order to get them back to work.

Further down the line, when the work had concluded and because it was a fortnight before the new statistical period for unemployment recording, the same organisation was told to keep the fellows around the place for another two weeks before putting them off. I am glad that these people had employment, but I do not believe that it is in the best interests of the community of South Australia or of the Commonwealth of Australia that they were being directed to stay on for the purpose of being able to benefit the figures in a statistical period of unemployment. Subsequently, \$6 500 additional expenditure for holding these workers on site after they had concluded their work was returned to the organisation from Community Employment Programme funds. However, the authority responsible for CEP refused to pay to that organisation the amount of over \$1 500 that it needed to spend in order to get people back on the job after they had gone on strike. That is one aspect of the matter.

I refer to quite grave difficulties that occurred at Elizabeth in relation to yet another swimming pool fiasco. The Elizabeth Town Centre swimming pool was granted CEP funding and work had commenced. However, there has been no work done for some weeks. The amount of money that was spent previously has been virtually wasted. I refer to an article published in the Salisbury-Elizabeth-Gawler Messenger newspaper of 30 January 1985. Headed 'Swimming centre costs skyrocket' the article states, in part:

Delays in the redevelopment of the Elizabeth Swimming Centre have caused costs to skyrocket. An alderman of the City Council of Elizabeth said that costs had already increased by \$500 000 and that progress was slow. The project manager said that 30 per

cent of the time had elapsed, 25 per cent of the funds have been spent, and only 15 per cent of the project had been completed. He said that if the trend continued no assurance could be given to the council of the project's final cost.

The article continues and contains other material that members can refer to later. A rather unfortunate situation exists at present in relation to a group of CEP workers who are being transported to Gawler to undertake underground drainage works in an area of Gawler, which, unfortunately, happens to have the highest unemployment rate in the area. Those unemployed people are watching over the fence a group of unemployed people from another town who have been transported in. I am quite happy that the people from Elizabeth are being provided with a job from which, hopefully, they will benefit and perhaps obtain permanent employment, but I ask the Government, together with its Commonwealth friends responsible for this project, where is the compassion and humanity in such a situation?

I shall not shy away from what I am suggesting to honourable members opposite, as well as to honourable members on this side of the House. This is a very awkward situation; it is something that is not understood by the community, and certainly it is not understood by those people who are unemployed and watching from within their own homes other people from another district working outside their front gates. There are grave areas of difficulty associated with the CEP programme at present to which the Government must give urgent consideration for the benefit of the people whom it seeks to serve and for the financial benefit of the State.

I now refer to a housing matter. As the Leader indicated earlier in the day, a very real problem exists in relation to the provision of adequate housing for the public sector. The activities of the Government have escalated the costs of housing. This has occurred as a direct result of the Government's interference in the proper client relationship associated with the housing industry. In yesterday's *Advertiser* the Minister of Housing and Construction indicated that the building unions were set to sign a new peace agreement under terms of understanding, or what is referred to as 'a memorandum of understanding'. What does a memorandum of understanding do? It introduces into the housing industry associated with the Master Builders Association and a group of unions a cost escalation factor in future buildings.

I think that in the next few days we will find that, due to increases in construction costs caused by such ill-conceived and very poorly defined memorandum of understanding, the cost of Housing Trust homes will equal very closely the cost of homes built privately. I am not talking about design and construct, as that is a different kettle of fish. However, Housing Trust costs have escalated to a point where there is now only an infinitesimal difference between Housing Trust costs and private sector costs. Within two years the difference in costs has diminished from about \$5 000 to being almost on a par.

That is a difficulty being faced by the people in this State, and it is playing a significant part in relation to the Government's diminishing ability to provide public housing for the needy. That problem will escalate even further now that the Minister has seen fit to tie up this ill-conceived memorandum of understanding. I suggest the Minister of Housing and Construction has no knowledge at all of the normal subcontractor component which is inherent in the housing industry and which in the past has served that industry well but which is fast turning into an unenviable disaster as a result of the Minister's intrusions.

I want to refer very quickly to one or two aspects of the financial affairs of the State. Members on this side of the House are frequently challenged about preaching doom and

gloom when criticising the financial management of the Government, and particularly that of those in the Ministry. Government members are almost paranoid about members bringing to the attention of the House views of economic experts who serve Australia. Traditionally, economists never seem to come to the same conclusions in relation to any given set of conditions. Economics is not an exact science, but certainly a large number of economists will come to a conclusion with a general thread if a number of different sources give a similarly clear indication of what is happening over a given period of time.

Economists have shown very clearly that the situation in South Australia is not as favourable as it has been in the past or as the talked up attitudes that this Government is seeking to put before the people of South Australia would suggest. It is fragile on the edges. Difficult problems are associated with our longer term economy. I was most interested in a booklet that was distributed in the past few days by the State Bank of South Australia. At page 3 of the document the Chairman, Mr Barrett, and the Managing Director, Mr Marcus Clark, stated:

The continued transfer of funds from lower cost savings accounts to higher yielding accounts is of particular importance to the Bank's home lending programme. In offsetting this trend, the Bank has been very successful in containing operating costs. Further gains will result from the branch merger process.

That is an indication that there is a danger if too many funds are transferred to the higher return areas, suggesting that, by virtue of the State Bank's finesse and the vigour with which it has been pursuing business, it has been able to contain the issue, very clearly pointing out that it recognises that it is on the brink of difficulty. The National Australia Bank in its *Economic Outlook—1985* (and again this is a monthly summary for February 1985) picks up somewhat similar sentiments, but perhaps goes just a little bit further. At page 4 of the publication it is stated:

The rise in interest rates over recent times has been somewhat unexpected. Although levels in early January were no higher than those anticipated for March/April, when financial markets will tighten as the liquidity rundown resulting from payments of corporate and provisional tax gets under way, the higher yields have been reached a few months earlier than expected.

Two major factors appear to have been responsible for this development: First, the current account deficit expanded during the latter part of 1984 and early 1985, requiring higher interest rates to attract the necessary overseas capital to balance the overseas account. Second, the liquidity rundown in the forthcoming June quarter was incorrectly judged by the market to be significantly larger than last year, which appears to have created some uncertainty among money market participants.

The state of monetary conditions and interest rates over the remaining months of 1984-85 will be largely dependent on the strength of our currency and the application of monetary policy. In view of the current state of the nation's balance of payments and its relative competitive position, bearing in mind the normal seasonal rundown in liquidity, we do not anticipate interest rates in money markets easing significantly before mid-year.

From a position of not expecting a rise in interest rates at all, having had a rise ahead of the expected schedule and a clear indication that they will not go down at least until mid-year, if they go down (and the bank is not prepared to predict) quite obviously there will be further problems for South Australia.

If we were to presume that the mouthings of the Premier in recent days about the possible loss of \$50 million to this State as a result of a reorganised Commonwealth agreement were to come to fruition for the 1985-86 financial year, very clearly South Australia at a time of increased interest, which will mean increased interest for the outstanding funds that we have to service plus a loss of \$50 million as a direct grant available from the Commonwealth, will suffer severe strictures.

I am cynical enough to believe that the Prime Minister has already let the Premier know that he will not lose his

\$50 million in an election year. I am cynical enough to believe that a fair degree of posturing is taking place at present, even though the Premier knows that his friend in Canberra will look after his immediate needs for the purpose of political gain, or so he would hope. I warn the people of this State and members opposite that, if they are complacent in the knowledge or in the expectation of what the Commonwealth will provide for them in 1985-86, it is high time they took stock of what will happen when the reality of the present Commonwealth attitude to the equality factor for South Australia comes into being, even be it 12 months later than originally expected. It is right that the Opposition, economists and people who have knowledge of what is taking place in the real world draw to the attention of the Government and the community at large the danger signs that they perceive without being dubbed gloom and doom merchants, without it being suggested that they are cynical, shortsighted and not prepared to give credit where credit is due.

I will give credit where it is due, whether to a Liberal or a Labor Government, and I will also very clearly give brickbats to a Government of either persuasion if it fails the people it seeks to represent by not monitoring its funds, by not ensuring that money is expended to the best benefit of the people of the State and so that it does not place the public in a position where it continually has to fork out more and more cash.

The Minister of Local Government and the Minister of Transport attended a meeting at Kimba, on Eyre Peninsula, last Monday week. We were all present, and we learnt very quickly from the people there what they thought about a 165 per cent increase, about which they had just been notified, in respect of the minimum rate for electricity. From about \$8, the minimum rate for a quarterly electricity bill has increased to \$20—a 165 per cent increase, as the Ministers and I were frequently advised. But what was so galling to those people was that, because they suffer a 10 per cent imposition in the cost of electricity, they also have to suffer an additional 10 per cent imposition in respect of the minimum fee. They find themselves paying not \$20 a quarter but \$22 a quarter. There are many people in South Australia who would love to have a quarterly account of less than \$20 or \$22. In a household situation, electricity bills do not get down so low.

The problem that affects so many people and is starting to affect not only the farming and town communities, but also the pensioner group, is that a number of them for many years have had at the seaside at Arno Bay, Tumby Bay, Coffin Bay or somewhere else, a shack which they use for their recreation and which they might attend at least during the middle period of the year on one or two occasions in a six month period, yet suddenly they find themselves paying a \$20 minimum quarterly fee on their electricity. Even in summertime, because of the extended period of daylight, they rarely get to the stage of a high electricity charge. So, we are taxing the recreation of so many of these people.

The person who has electricity attached to a bore as a standby for periods of drought, or to a shearing shed that is used but twice a year for shearing and crutching, will move from something less than \$35 per annum to \$80 per annum, just for the benefit of having that access to electricity. Those sorts of price increases are seriously affecting the wellbeing of people of South Australia at present. No matter where one goes, this is causing people to highlight their disenchantment with a high taxing Government which is taxing high to allow for its extravagances.

We heard about those extravagances today in relation to cost overrun with projects not being monitored properly by Ministers who are incompetent. We know of the cost overrun

in a number of CEP projects in which there is enforced employment of people beyond the term of useful employment on a particular project so that unemployment figures at the end of a statistical period can be manipulated.

We are concerned about the manner in which the Government has failed to contain expenses in home building—the increases running into thousands of dollars. The artificiality, as the Leader pointed out today, in land prices was revealed, for example, at the Golden Grove Select Committee which has reported to this House. Artificially high prices were created in the Tea Tree Gully area because other blocks were not brought on to the market early enough. All of those problems are having a very disastrous result on the wellbeing of the people of this State and they are reacting against it, as are all the age pensioners who, when I meet them around the streets say, 'It's a terrible thing, the Government's eating away at my savings by its FID tax.'

Mr BAKER (Mitcham): It is appropriate that whilst we have a Bill before us to provide Supply for the State to the end of June so that we can discuss some of the background of the State's finances. We have the Supply Bill rather early in the session, and it is obvious to anyone in this Chamber that the Government is aiming for a very shortened session. Normally, we should flow through until late May or early June, but in fact we will probably struggle to last until the end of April. The Government does not want to sit for various reasons: it is obvious that it performs abysmally in Parliament.

As days go by we see the cracks in the seams—the disgraceful performances of some of the Ministers, not only in Parliament but in operating their portfolios. We had an adequate demonstration of this today, and this is part and parcel of the way in which this Government conducts itself.

I now address my old theme, since we are dealing with Supply (money and Budgets), that perhaps I will be pushing hopefully for the next 13 to 20 years, a bit like Bert Kelly, with his reduction of tariffs: the creation of wealth. Recently, I was fortunate in being able to visit Singapore and Hong Kong which, as most people understand, have very high growth rates. Singapore has averaged a 10 per cent real growth rate over the past eight to 10 years: Hong Kong was a little behind that, but nevertheless had an admirable rate of 7 per cent average over the same period. When we are talking about standards of living, should we address ourselves to the central theme of real productivity in the economy? From my visits to a number of countries around the world some obvious themes have emerged as to measures needed to maintain an increasing standard of living.

In Australia we are spending far beyond our means. A classic example is the current Federal Budget. Australia has had one of the most propitious times for many years. It had a real growth rate of some 3 per cent—6 per cent in the previous year—and it is expected to be some 3 per cent this year. The Budget estimate for the 1984-85 year in the Federal sphere was some \$5.5 billion deficit over some \$60 billion-worth of expenditure.

However, despite increased tax collections and the better times, we are now told that the Budget deficit will be in the order of some \$9 billion, which will be the worst recorded Budget deficit of an Australian Government in the history of Australia. My concern is that during the good times when we should be creating Budget surpluses, we are creating massive deficits. If we have less than a propitious year in 1985-86, as all the economists have predicted will occur, we will not have an extremely large Budget deficit of \$9 million, but it will certainly go into a two figure sum. I am concerned that Labor Governments throughout Australia cannot keep their hands off the public purse and cannot resist the temptation to spend more than they earn.

We are building up these deficits and placing enormous pressures on our financial institutions. In some ways, we are very fortunate that pressure in the market has not led to increased interest rates, but now even short term interest rates are on the move. When one spends more than one produces, one eventually has to pay the price. That is the price all Australians will pay, particularly South Australians, because our economic performance compared to that of other States has not been particularly auspicious. There is no secret that South Australia suffers some difficulties: it has to rely on water other than from natural rain; it has had a restricted industry base, about which Dunstan should have done something in 1970 but he was too busy playing around in his pink shorts and with his artistic flair. We did not do anything at that time and the opportunity to change the direction of the economic base of South Australia was lost. In a competitive environment one must be first off the rank: certainly, South Australia was not.

Because of South Australia's individual circumstances, it will always face an uphill battle. I am sure that most people in this Parliament understand and realise that. Yet, we can still get in front of the other States if we take the right direction today. I hope that South Australians will come to the party on a number of issues and, instead of seeing the morass of Bills that we see before the Parliament, that we will address some of the basic difficulties we face and the means by which we will overcome them. That is perhaps a fitting point at which to refer to Singapore and Hong Kong.

Over the last 12 years Singapore has had three deficit Budgets, but they are only deficit Budgets when one includes capital and recurrent expenditure. They do not count their deficit according to the receipts as against recurrent expenditure: they include capital expenditure in the total expenditure item. Out of the last 12 years Singapore has had three years of deficit. That is an incredible performance. Why is it so good? It is because they have some very basic principles on which to operate. First, they do not believe in Budget deficits; secondly, they believe they have to be competitive in the world; thirdly, they have a sense of the direction in which they want to go; and, fourthly, they know that taxation is an important ingredient of economic growth and they have set their taxation levels to achieve certain ends.

It is interesting to look at certain elements of their taxation system. For example, on imported motor cars there is a 200 per cent duty, because they wish to restrict motor cars in Singapore, for obvious reasons. On the income tax scale, the maximum rate is 45 per cent, and that is when one is earning one million Singapore dollars, which equates to some \$600 000 Australian. They have a whole tax structure that is aimed specifically at encouraging growth. They have set themselves a plan of becoming the technological capital of Asia, and, I am sure that within the time span they have set themselves (10 years from 1980 to 1990) they will achieve that aim.

We have no aims here. The only aim that I can see in the Labor Party is to spend everybody's money. It has no compunction about putting up taxes or attempting redistribution of incomes which results in hurting the poor more than it does the rich. Labor has little concept of productivity and believes that, if someone is productive, it should take off the surplus from that enterprise in order to crush it in the same way that it has crushed everything else. The Labor Party has no morality about the way in which it restricts people's rights. I will not say that Singapore or Hong Kong has a mortgage on the means whereby we can all go ahead in the world. I am saying that there are certain ingredients for economic growth, and one of them is not high taxation, lack of effort, or the encouragement of laziness, or industrial disputation.

I am sure members the House realise that Singapore has not had a strike for 10 years. Yet, here in Australia—one of the resource rich countries in the world—we will finish in 10, 20 or 30 years being the poor white trash of Asia, that is, if the Asian community will even recognise us as being in the region. It is simple why this will happen: we are spending more than we produce, we have no sense of direction and we make no attempt to encourage initiative. This Government merely tends to screw the poor people of the State in the same way that the Federal Government does. If we wish to become a nation in this world (and we are not just an island, separate from all other influences), we must change completely the way in which we operate. If we put in the right effort we can achieve that change, but the right effort will not come from Federal or State Governments with their ideological problems and difficulties in understanding some of the most basic premises.

A number of other things struck me about Singapore and Hong Kong. They have an enormous work effort and have a national spirit. They believe in themselves and in what they are doing. In Australia, we tear down anything that looks promising, and we destroy anything that may be productive through industrial disputation, Government taxation and pure negligence, because we never attempt to understand the dynamics of economic growth. Nobody on the other side of the House can tell me that our growth record over the past 20 years has been anything but abysmal. Everyone in this House can recognise that. The 47 members of the South Australian Parliament would recognise that our effort has been quite disgraceful, yet how many people are willing to face up to the fact that we must change direction?

In a few months—perhaps six or nine months—we will have a new direction, because we will have a new Government which is determined to help South Australia. It is probably worth reiterating some of the things that can come from strong economic growth. For example, in Singapore they have a dictate that all disabled people shall be employed. They have a right to be employed, and one will find, on walking into shops or offices, a number of disabled people performing worthwhile tasks. They are worthwhile human beings. One of the reasons is that the unemployment rate in Singapore is minus 5 per cent. They have to import workers from Malaysia. With a strong economic profile they have created wealth. They have created it through effort, through their taxation system and through their sense of destiny. They have a plan of where they are going and how they are going to get there.

We wander along in our aimless fashion, wondering when the axe will fall and hope that it will not fall too quickly. It is important to realise that, if we do have a strong growth profile, all those people on the dole at the moment will not be on the dole, and all those who desire and demand work will become employed. All those who are in some way disadvantaged will have a chance of becoming worthwhile human beings and performing in the workforce. Migrants will have a chance of having their hopes fulfilled. All these people who become divided through economic circumstances will combine and be at one with everybody.

I hear members opposite continually tell me about the malaise of unemployment, which I am sure I understand. I am sure too, that we all have a basic feeling for those people who are unable to get jobs, but want to do so, and even for those who do not want to get jobs. Quite simply, if the country performs adequately, we will not have that division. Most people in this House can well remember the days up until the early 1970s when the rise in standard of living from World War II was probably a record in Australian history.

Admittedly, all the nations of the world shared in that growth. Australia has some very unique advantages and, until we take up the challenge, we will continue to be a second-class nation, then a third-class nation and finally a fourth-class nation. One important ingredient that we should address tonight is taxation. Countries that have what I call progressive taxation systems—not progressive in the sense that their rates escalate to 60 per cent or 90 per cent as in Sweden, but progressive in terms that they progress the economy and reward effort—still take sufficient from those who have the money and redistribute it for the benefit of all. That money is used for housing and all works such as sewerage and water, and one finishes up with a population that has a very strong and viable standard of living.

That is somewhat different to what we have here today in Australia. The Bannon Government has led the way with its taxation measures. It has deliberately set out to increase its tax base to the detriment of South Australians. This House does not need reminding that a very large part of that taxation is to pay the Bills for the Government's own incompetence. South Australia does not create enough wealth, but there are adequate means of taking away from those who can least afford it. This has happened in a number of areas.

The Minister of Health is notorious for his inability to manage a budget. He has a fine track record of being unable to control his hospitals and abusing hospital administrators and professionals in the field. I will talk not about his personality but about his performance, which is disgraceful. At a time when it is important to maintain the minimum tax that we can afford to enable us to generate growth and differentiate us from other States, and perhaps later from the rest of the world, we come up with new schemes that we cannot afford.

We know that the Minister of Health, who has a very poor track record in management, has now come up with a scheme to provide dental care for secondary students. I can probably, in the space of about two minutes, list 20 or 30 areas that are in need. We could spend the whole \$2 billion of the State Budget on health, education or on transport systems such as those in Singapore and Hong Kong. Yet, we must know what we can afford. The Minister of Health has great difficulty in understanding that one plus one makes two in dollar terms. For the Government to say that we will extend our care to provide dental treatment to secondary students and increase specialised health care centres and a number of other support units in the Adelaide environs makes me wonder about its priorities.

As I stated previously, I could easily spend the whole budget on one portfolio, which means that everyone else will get nothing. But, somewhere along the line there has to be some economic responsibility and somebody saying, 'Enough is enough. We have to be able to see what we can afford.' If one continues to spend more than one earns the indebtedness will get to the stage where it has to be rolled over every year and the interest rates become exorbitant. Already, the interest bill for capital works exceeds \$250 million a year, which has to continually be paid. Yet, we have all these marvellous schemes coming from the Government on how to spend more money, and it says that we cannot do without these things. If we cannot do without these schemes, we had better find something else that we can do without. If something is a priority, other schemes on the list need to be changed.

Another marvellous innovation of the Minister of Health was in relation to the Flinders Medical Centre, about which I know a little. He said that the Government would provide more surgical beds but changed only one ward from day beds to surgical beds. This process reduced the capacity of the Flinders Medical Centre to take short-term patients.

This is what the wise Minister of Health did. He is not only foolish but also an idiot in the way in which he administers his portfolio. Perhaps the Minister of Health does not want people to have emergency care available for people to have one night's stay in hospital as a result of an accident that is not quite serious enough to keep them there for some days. I do not know what the Minister wants, but I know that there are enough examples of his incompetence to suggest that he does not understand, or attempt to understand, the priorities in his portfolio.

We have heard on the radio of the marvellous peace agreement that was orchestrated by that man of dubious qualities, the Minister of Housing and Construction. He said, 'If you are in the union and have a problem with a contractor, we will do a special deal for you; you will get a higher price for your work than everybody else.' He said that it does not matter whether or not it has any merit but that it will be sorted out so that we will not have industrial disputation. Everyone knows that there is very little industrial disputation in the public housing arena, and whatever does occur is a result of the nefarious activities of the Australian construction and building workers. Our friend, Mr Hemmings, has contributed to one of the most enormous increases in public housing costs during the past 20 years.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: There is worse to come.

Mr BAKER: Yes, there is worse to come. Mr Hemmings effectively did a deal with the unions and increased the price of housing to make it less available to those in need. What else has the Government done on the housing front? It has reaped an enormous reward from stamp duty so that people who, two years ago, could afford a house for \$35 000 now have to pay about \$70 000. In some areas there has been a 100 per cent increase. Of course, the Government reaped an enormous bonanza.

What else has the Government done? It has used Loan funds to pay for its public housing. It is using subsidised money when other areas are having to pay market rates for the money. Yet, the Minister has exercised no control over finances and costs. He does not even demand that where people can pay a reasonable rent they do so. And we call this economic responsibility! It is about time that some of these Ministers started to perform and determine that they will have to reduce costs in those areas and become economically efficient because, as I said, we continue to spend more than we earn. We have the spectre of the Minister of Mines and Energy who is doing a Nero on us and playing his harp, as the coal burns. He has done a magnificent job in ensuring that South Australia has no energy options.

The Premier has signed an agreement with the Victorians, although I am not sure what it will do for South Australia, whether supplies will be guaranteed, whether there will be a reduction in supplies, what the infra-structure costs of this reduction will be, or the extent to which we will supply an alternative. All I know is that we are paying most of the cost. Out of an estimated \$200 million we will be paying \$170 million. Of course we are told that this will be of major benefit to South Australia, but we do not really know how it will be of benefit to South Australia, although we know that we will pay most of the cost. We know that the Premier is very generous, and that the Government loves handing out money while taking away from people who can ill afford to pay.

In relation to electricity tariffs I have received representations from the CFS. People involved in that organisation have to spend a lot of time running around conducting chook raffles and other forms of fundraising so that they can pay their electricity bills. They are charged for their electricity at commercial rates, which are higher than the domestic rate. Where is the justice in the system? These people who put their lives on the line working for other

people have to do extra work just to extract sufficient money from the community to pay their electricity bill.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

Mr BAKER: The Premier is probably in the best position to answer that question. Perhaps there will be a revelation to the House, like that which we had today. A number of constituents in the area that I represent are in the 'asset rich, income poor' situation and they are really struggling to pay their electricity bills. Further, there are organisations like Meals on Wheels and others, which are finding it very difficult to pay higher electricity charges. We are all in the same situation. South Australia had relatively cheap electricity and it now comes as an enormous shock that we are paying the Australian average rate. The procrastination and inability of the Government to grapple with this situation are beyond my comprehension. In the 1970s as well as the 1980s enormous opportunities were available to be taken on board.

It was known that the long term situation was fairly fluid, yet today we are facing a crisis. Although we may be paying the large amount of \$170 million we might not be granted electricity supplies, because the Victorians and the New South Welshmen are notorious for the way that they cut the electricity supplies. I think I could probably go through every portfolio and explain in terms of dollars and cents why the Government has been unable to serve the people of South Australia properly.

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I do not intend to take all the time that I have at my disposal tonight. I want to make one or two brief comments in this debate on a Bill in which the Premier sets out to spend up to \$440 million. This gives me an opportunity to raise one or two matters of concern to me and to people in my electorate. First, I want to refer to the nonsense that was peddled in the House this evening by the member for Peake. I do not know whether the member for Peake has ever studied the reasons why primary producer concessions are made available. However, they are not made available to people with one vehicle but to people who have numerous vehicles but who spend very little of their time on recognised roads.

Many of the vehicles involved would travel only a few thousand kilometres, if not only a couple of hundred kilometres, a year. For the honourable member to talk about subsidising millionaires (and he could not even get right the name of one of the people whom he criticised) was another example of his going off on his usual tangent, clearly displaying to all and sundry that he has a considerable dislike for the rural community, particularly for farmers and graziers. Why the honourable member carries on in this illogical fashion, I do not know.

Perhaps the only complimentary thing that one can say about the honourable gentleman's speeches is that he does add a little colour to the House; but as far as fact is concerned, one could write the factual content of his speeches on a postage stamp. He took umbrage at the compliments that the member for Davenport paid to him. I do not know why, but in my judgment it was a quite factual account of what the honourable member had to say. I point out to the honourable member that if he listens to the regional news services in the northern and western regions of the State he will hear some more criticism. I think perhaps that I have dealt with that matter.

Another matter that concerns me was raised in this House at the beginning of this Parliamentary session by the Deputy Leader, and by one or two other members. I refer to a telephone conversation that I had with the Director of the Country Fire Services. I want to put on record the facts as I recall them.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Do you think he will be the Director for much longer?

Mr GUNN: If I were a person who laid wagers, I would not be prepared to put a wager on that. However, I do not want to go into that matter. I want to clearly put on the record the facts as I recall them so that there can be no misunderstanding. I want to say from the outset that, although I may have been a little naive, never in my time as a member of Parliament have I thought that a telephone call made to a constituent for the purposes of relaying information and trying to be helpful would be recorded. It was bad enough having a telephone conversation recorded, but a public servant had the audacity and effrontery to then pass that on to allow other people to hear it, without even advising the member concerned. That information was then passed on to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the NPWS was party to then allowing that information to be passed on, officially or otherwise, to a Parliamentary Select Committee. I would like to know who was responsible for passing on the information to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Who was present when the tape was played? Who invited them to hear it? Who authorised Mr Caldicott to circulate the document? Who gave Mr Caldicott access to it?

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood: You are talking about the minutes?

Mr GUNN: No, I am talking about the tape. Who authorised Mr Johns to call in those people to hear the tape, as I understand it was played? Who authorised that, and who authorised the information to be given to the National Parks and Wildlife Service? Officers there must have had access to it and to some of the material in order to come to the conclusions that they did in their minute. I am trying to consider this matter reasonably, but in my judgment I believe that they came to a quite unfair conclusion, having been given the opportunity, due to the courtesy of the Minister, to view and study carefully the transcript. If one reads the transcript fairly I do not believe that one could come to those conclusions. I tried to be helpful.

I have not always agreed with the Director of the Country Fire Services. On this occasion I was contacted by the Federal member for Wakefield, Mr Andrews, who had been contacted by a constituent of both of us. He said that he had rung the constituent who was most concerned about the situation. I then attempted to contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service, but I could not do so, and at that time I had to go to the Subordinate Legislation Committee. When I returned from that meeting my secretary said that Mr Johns had been in contact and that he would ring me back at 1 o'clock. My secretary said that I should treat him very carefully because he seemed to be agitated and concerned. Bearing in mind what took place, that was good advice. To my knowledge only two of us have the transcript. I know of no one else. I do not intend to give it to anyone else as I do not think that that would be proper, and I do not intend to keep it much longer myself.

I had a reasonable conversation with him. All I want is to see the problem rectified. The last thing I want is to have the problem remain. I wanted to talk to the Director, make suggestions and hope that that was the last I heard about it. I believe that I am entitled to an apology from the Director. If any public servant acts in that manner and thinks he can get away with it, the Parliament will have no alternative but to take action. I want to know whether any other Public Service organisation or statutory authorities in this State besides the Police Department have installed recording equipment and, if so, on whose recommendation. I also want to know whether other telephone conversations are recorded. I believe that in a free and democratic society people are entitled to security when using telephones, so I

would be interested to receive that assurance from the Minister.

My confidence in that gentleman has been somewhat shattered and I am most concerned that unsuspecting members of the public have had telephone conversations recorded. When I received advice on this matter from a solicitor, he suddenly came to the conclusion that, as he was making telephone calls to the Country Fire Service on behalf of clients, his conversations would have been recorded. He wondered where they might have ended up. I do not wish to say more about that matter at this stage. In view of the fact that we will authorise the Government to spend \$440 million of taxpayers' money, I would like some assurance from the Minister that my constituents in isolated communities will get some consideration.

Again, I refer the House to the problems surrounding the uneconomic water schemes. I do not believe that we can accept excuses any longer. If the Government cannot extend the pipeline from Ceduna to Denial Bay, something must be done. Ceduna is a growing town; it is like a dormitory area. The law states that people must have septic tanks, but if there is no reticulated water there is a problem. There is no underground water supply, and there is a limited ability in relation to reasonable underground catchments. It is deplorable that people in those areas are denied what everyone else takes for granted.

Further, at Smoky Bay there are problems in raising revenue to replace the existing main, which is completely overtaxed and is in poor condition. I refer the House to the quality of water at Hawker and to the problems experienced at Terowie, and I could refer to other areas. I sincerely hope that this matter is redressed in the near future, because people just cannot understand how Governments can find millions of dollars for performing arts centres and so on. Such a centre has been opened at Whyalla. In my opinion, the people of Eyre Peninsula, given a choice, would rather see the money spent on roads and water supply. That project will run at a loss, and I make no apology for saying that. People see money handed out willy nilly all over the place—like someone firing a shotgun in the air. I cannot understand why Governments do not act a little more responsibly in these matters.

I could go on and explain to the House the urgent need to extend the electricity supply in the Flinders Ranges and in other areas, but I will not do that tonight. I could also refer to roads: the member for Davenport talked about that subject at length, and the member for Light mentioned it.

I highlight again the urgent need to make available finance to local government so that it can complete some of the projects that are crying out for money. The number of years it has taken to seal a road to Wilmington is amazing when one considers that we can find \$100 million for the O-Bahn bus service and \$30 million or \$40 million for the Torrens River linear park. That is no trouble at all: the money can be found. But to find \$500 000 for that road is almost impossible: one would think we are asking for the impossible. I could refer to the road between Hawker and Orroroo, which is a very important road. Most of the traffic to the gasfields travels on that road. To get a few hundred thousand dollars from each council for that road is like finding hens' teeth. And so I could go on.

This Government has a record of increasing taxes that is unheralded in the history of this State. I sincerely hope that the people judge the Government accordingly. A few moments ago I was reading the promises that the Premier made when he was Leader of the Opposition at the last State election. It is difficult to believe that it is the same person. When one reads the list of promises and compares it with the list of increased taxes and charges—

Mr Meier: What were some of the promises?

Mr GUNN: He said that there would be no new taxes, that charges would not be used as backdoor taxation, and so it went on. The cost of electricity is absolutely out of this world and, as the member for Light rightly said, people on Eyre Peninsula and in other local government areas charged by district councils are unfortunate enough to have to pay a 10 per cent surcharge. Why in this day and age that occurs I do not know.

Last night vegetation clearance and miscellaneous leases were debated. Some of these funds will go to administering that programme. I am of the firm view that common sense should prevail. The more I see of this exercise, the clearer it becomes to me that, if the public and the Government want to set aside areas of South Australia in which natural vegetation is not cleared, someone must pay for it. Cases that have been brought to my attention in recent times indicate that this matter has not been thought through properly. I sincerely hope that when the legislation expires in May the Government will address itself to the matter in a proper and effective manner. I sincerely hope that the people who hold miscellaneous leases will be given the opportunity to retain and develop them to a reasonable level.

At almost 1.20 a.m. I do not believe that I will be doing anything of great merit if I continue for the 16 minutes that is available to me, because I really think that we all ought to be home in bed and this nonsense should be brought to an end for the night. It is deplorable that the Parliament is sitting to this stage. I do not object to sitting until midnight, but it is stupid for us to be sitting here after midnight. There is no purpose in that; we are achieving nothing. We are merely filling up pages of *Hansard*. We could all talk for 30 minutes, but members who have been in this place for any time get the gist of what will be said.

Mr Mathwin: You should read the speeches.

Mr GUNN: That is no credit to them; it is ludicrous, particularly if members have appointments early in the morning. They certainly cannot perform to the best of their ability. I will not delay the House further. I strongly—

Mr Meier: Move for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr GUNN: That will only waste more time, so I will not do that. I strongly concur with the views expressed by my Leader, and I am sure that at the first opportunity, when he becomes Premier, he will redress the matters that he drew to the attention of the House.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): Some time ago the Minister of Lands established a working party on animal welfare. Basically, the draft legislation that this body has brought forward for comment in the community is reasonably sound and sensible. However, one section of the legislation is causing a great deal of concern to some 250 000 people in South Australia.—I refer to the recreation and fishing interests in this State. Clause 6 provides:

This Act does not apply to fish or crustacea which are not in captivity.

Other parts of the legislation refer to fish and crustacea. The moment that they are captured, netted or anything else, fish or crustacea are in captivity and thus come under this legislation. As it stands, this section has been poorly drafted. However, at this stage the Government, the Minister of Lands and Minister of Fisheries have done virtually nothing to allay the fears of the 250 000 recreational fishing people in the community.

I am amazed that the Government is prepared to let this situation continue. This is borne out by a letter I received from the South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council recently in which its Chairman stated:

South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council has received a copy of the proposed Bill which would have the effect

of prohibiting virtually all forms of commercial and recreational fishing in South Australia . . . South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council sees these proposals as likely to eliminate fishing as a recreation and as an industry in this State. If that seems over dramatic, we can only refer you to the Bill as drafted. We would be unwilling to accept any assurances along the lines of 'This just establishes general powers and they will not really wipe out fishing' because we can see no other reasons for including fish and crustacea in the definitions. . . . We seek your personal support for the amendments that we have proposed.

Obviously, any Government that was going to support or introduce legislation that would effectively wipe out professional and recreational fishing in this State would be quite out of its mind. The professional fishing industry is worth something like \$80 million a year or more to South Australia, and the recreational fishing industry is worth something like \$120 million to \$130 million.

The concern is very real. Since the South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council is a body set up by Government and with key persons involved in recreational fishing interests in South Australia, all highly regarded, one has to take seriously the comments it makes. One needs only to refer to an article that appeared in the *Sunday Mail* of 10 March headed 'Draft Bill to make fishing illegal', attributed to a Mr Robinson, in which it was stated:

Yesterday, the Environment Minister (Dr Hopgood) said 'fishermen' may well be right about the proposed new legislation.

So, the Minister himself has no qualms in admitting that the proposed legislation as drafted could very well have the effect of wiping out recreational and professional fishing in South Australia.

It is quite absurd of the Government to let this situation drag on in South Australia without clear statements from both the Minister of Lands, who is responsible for the drafting of this legislation, and the Minister of Fisheries, clearly indicating that in no way would the Government be prepared to introduce legislation of that nature. We would certainly oppose the measures contained in the legislation as it stands at the moment that would have this effect. In no way would we be prepared to support legislation that would ban recreational or professional fishing in this State.

I turn now to another matter. A week or so ago I attended a seminar organised by the Murray Valley League, at which Professor Sewell, an eminent authority on water resources, was speaking. Professor Sewell is a world authority who is called on by United Nations and the World Bank for advice on water resources, rivers and salinity generally. He said at that seminar that if appropriate action was not taken during the next 10 years the Murray-Darling system would have virtually reached a crisis point.

The Minister of Water Resources would well appreciate the long lead time that is required in relation to any capital works undertaken so far as water resources are concerned: Work carried out today to divert known salt inflows and investigate other reasons for salt inflows into the river will not show an appreciable benefit for some five or six years.

It is totally irresponsible of this or any Government to turn its back on its responsibility for this matter. Because of the nature of the problem, we must consider the long lead time and the fact that we have a responsibility not only to the people to whom we supply water today but certainly to future generations. Looking at the cost of salinity in South Australia, one can talk about the total effect of salinity, but if one is talking about water without any salt content at all, then the damage done annually in loss of production and to internal plumbing within households and industry could be put in the vicinity of \$40 million.

On a realistic basis, knowing that one cannot have a water supply of nil salinity content, the present cost in South Australia is in the vicinity of probably \$4 million. However, it is interesting to note that the deterioration in the quality

of water has a very direct corresponding effect on the cost to industry, commerce and irrigation in South Australia. I have seen a direct calculation, undertaken by engineers in the United States, which clearly indicates that at the moment in 1982 dollars it costs them something like \$113 million annually because of the effects of salinity in the Colorado River Valley. They are quite convinced in their own minds that if the salinity mitigation programme that is under way at this stage was to be cancelled at this point they would be looking by about the year 2010 at an increase from \$113 million to about \$268 million in 1982 dollars, so it is a massive increase. Professor Sewell has supported and vindicated statements we have been making on this subject during the past 10 years.

It is also interesting to note that the Minister of Water Resources' Director-General supported the claim made by Professor Sewell. He said, speaking as the South Australian Commissioner on the River Murray Commission, that, without any capital works programme so far as salt mitigation works were concerned, the water quality in South Australia would continue to deteriorate at the rate of six EC units per year. At Morgan we are looking at a salinity content of between 800 to 1 000 EC units, and the World Health Organisation regards 830 EC units as the maximum salinity level acceptable for human consumption. We are right on the borderline at this stage. The Minister's Director is virtually saying that, with no programme in place at this time, we will have an increase on average of a further 60 EC units over the next 10 years. That is totally unacceptable and irresponsible when we consider that we are already 70 per cent of the time in excess of World Health Organisation standards.

The Government has deferred or put on ice a key project considered by the Executive Engineer of the River Murray Commission (the one to which I refer is the Lock 2/Lock 3 groundwater interception scheme), as the most cost benefit project as far as salinity control is concerned anywhere, whether it be in Victoria, New South Wales or South Australia. That one does have the highest priority. The South Australian Government has effectively deferred the project by claiming that it requires a further four years of preliminary investigation before the project will get to the point of letting contracts to have the interception scheme put into place. If that programme is the one we will have to live with, we will be well into the 1990s before we will see any effect whatsoever from that proposal. That is not on, it is totally irresponsible and it is high time that the Government accepted its responsibilities in that area.

I am well aware of why the Government is not prepared to forge ahead with this project; any of the salinity control projects are long term projects and the \$17 million to \$18 million required to implement them now will mean that the benefits will not be seen for four or five years. By the same token, for every year that the delay continues the situation deteriorates that much further. We are talking about the interception of some 60 000 to 80 000 tonnes of

salt in South Australia, which will have a marked effect on the improvement of the quality of water at Morgan.

Most of the potable water being taken from the Murray River in South Australia is taken off from points below the Woolpunda area and most of the potable area is taken from Morgan, Swan Reach, Mannum and Murray Bridge. I totally support the comments made at that seminar by Professor Sewell and the Director-General in South Australia as well as the South Australian River Murray Commissioner, Mr Lewis.

The other point I make in relation to the Engineering and Water Supply Department, as the Minister of Water Resources is here, is that a week or so ago I raised the issue in the House of the present condition of the water and sewer mains in the metropolitan area. I asked that the Minister table the report prepared within the Engineering and Water Supply Department on this problem. The Minister indicated that he had nothing to hide, that the report did exist and that he would consider tabling it in this Parliament. To date we have seen no sign of that report, so one can only believe that the comments I made at that time in relation to the status of the sewer and water mains in metropolitan Adelaide were perfectly correct. We have not seen that report to date nor any denial of the comments I made.

If that is the case, the State will be confronted in the very near future with a massive capital input that will be needed to bring the sewers and water mains in the metropolitan area up to an acceptable level. That being so, once again it is high time the Government came clean and made representations to the Federal Government, because obviously we are not talking about small sums of money, and it is not the sort of rehabilitation that we will be able to achieve from water rates. If the Government intends to undertake the rehabilitation from water rates, the assessment made (and I believe it is contained in the report) would be that we would see a doubling of water rates in South Australia if that work is to be undertaken. At this stage the Minister obviously is still considering whether or not to release the report: to date it has not been tabled in the House.

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

CARRICK HILL TRUST BILL

The Legislative Council intimated that it had disagreed to the House of Assembly's amendment to the Legislative Council's amendment No. 1.

ADJOURNMENT

At 1.28 a.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 14 March at 2 p.m.