

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 12 March 1987

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.P. Trainer)** took the Chair at 11 a.m. and read prayers.

HIGH TECHNOLOGY

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): I move:

That this House regrets the actions of the Government in reducing the support given to high technology in this State by downgrading the status of the South Australian Council on Technological Change and burying the Technology Advisory Unit within the Department of State Development with no direct reporting power to the Minister, and calls on the Minister to rectify this situation.

I am pleased that a statement on this matter has now come from the Minister, because for some time a shadow has been hanging over the Technology Advisory Unit and the South Australian Council on Technological Change. It is fair to say that some people are getting a little disenchanted about the Government's lack of commitment to technology in this State. I am not in any way criticising the Minister as he is not only a capable Minister but also has the determination to put his best efforts into whatever area he tackles. However, I am saying that the change that has taken place is somewhat misguided.

It is probably best encapsulated by a letter which has landed on our desks (the Minister would know the source of it) and which states:

I do not want to excessively go over old ground, in order to justify this position. You know the arguments well. I do not believe there has been sufficient changes to render this point of view irrelevant. I believe that the proposed arrangement would be perceived by most people outside Government as a significant downgrading of the technology responsibility within Government. I am sure you would not want this conclusion to be drawn, but I am fairly certain that it will be drawn. Further, it will be perceived that technology policy is being made a sub-set of industrial development policy and that other technology related issues including the relationship with education, and skilling and with industrial relations, will not receive the emphasis which I believe the Government will continue to demand. In addition to that, the Department of State Development is perceived by the trade union movement as somewhat hostile to its interests, while the Ministry of Technology has carefully nurtured an independent tripartite status with regard to industrial relations, technological change and work force skilling. This will be lost if Mintech is lowered to branch status and buried inside a State Development "corporate culture".

I think that that adequately sums up the impression that I have drawn over some time. The Minister would well remember that I canvassed this issue during the Estimates Committees back in September.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: I can give the Minister references as to where I did, if he wants to get hold of the estimates, because he was there and answered the questions. I expressed reservations at that time. If the Minister looks back to the record of that occasion he will find comments about the fact that there would no longer be a practical focus. If the Minister, in responding, would like to read that information to the House, I would be delighted.

It is a fact that the technological advancement of this State has bipartisan support. It should not become a political issue, or political football: the fact is that South Australia has to be able to compete, not only with our interstate counterparts but with the rest of the world. I do not criticise the change from the Department of Labour to the Department of State Development because, as I have said, the Minister is quite capable.

However, the future of the South Australian Council on Technological Change was in doubt until the Minister's statement, and the major issue now outstanding is the extent to which the new arrangement is downgrading the focus on technology in this State. I maintain that technology, in relation to its advancement by the State Government, has taken a severe backstep since the change has taken place.

I do not have time to debate this motion fully, as other people have equally important motions on the Notice Paper. However, this topic could engross the minds of members of Parliament for some weeks. We cannot deal with it in five, 10 or 15 minutes. Nevertheless, I will put on record some observations I made during my overseas travels and in my relationship with the business community in this State.

It is fair to say that technological change has taken place at a pace which is far greater than has ever been seen before on this planet. We see it in almost all endeavours of life: even in the medical area with *in vitro* fertilisation, the law and the understanding of people who are having great difficulty catching up with the changes taking place in technology. The great difficulty of the situation we are facing today is that well over 50 per cent of the work force has no understanding, grasp or appreciation of the benefits of new methods of production and communication.

Most members of this House did not know what a computer was when they were born. In fact, I would say that no member of this House saw a computer when they were very young. We did not have the advantage that children and students have today in that part of the curriculum involves sitting down with an electronic device with a capacity to interpret and machine data. We did not have the marvellous electronic functions that are today available through the communications system. As far as our environment was concerned, we did not understand and, indeed, many people in industry fear the change, and that is a natural phenomenon.

There is an enormous need to bridge that gap. The Minister and the member for Briggs have spent some time extolling the virtues of Technology Park, and I support their points of view on that. I have a list of the various participants located there and the areas that they are involved in. I cannot understand the technology involved in those areas, although I have been given a briefing on each area. It is beyond the capacity of any member of this House to be able to understand the technical applications involved. Therefore, we need a bridging between the technocrats and the bureaucrats, and between the technocrats and the managers.

In my overseas study tour I spent some time with various Governments discussing this problem. I do not have the time now to indicate the changes that are taking place out there. Suffice to say that every Western Government is putting more resources into this area, with greater focus on technological change. Everyone is discovering that technological change is enveloping us and that we are not managing it. At an exposition last night by the Commission for the Future there was a demonstration on communications and it is obvious that we are not managing change at all, but that we are just trying to cope with it. To be able to be competitive in the future South Australia and Australia will have to manage change in a way that people can understand and appreciate. There is much misunderstanding in the community today. In responding to this motion, it is no good for members opposite to trot out tired old examples of things that are occurring in this State.

I learn something new each day about what is happening in this State. I know that members opposite were present

when they opened Technis, the company that produces printed circuits here in South Australia. I have heard about improvements in genetics and I have an invitation to look at CD-ROM systems—and the long list goes on. Many things are happening in industry and at Technology Park because certain individuals have the foresight and endeavour to make them happen. However, they are not getting the necessary assistance from Government. I am talking about bridging the knowledge gap of those people who have never had any association with intelligent machines or with the capacity of the media who need some education so that they can grapple with the issues involved.

There is no practical focus in the Department of State Development specifically on the question of managing technological change. As the Minister pointed out, we have a practical focus in terms of expertise but that is only like a rat nibbling at a piece of cheese, because the question is far wider than that. The people of this State need a specific focus to which they can direct themselves, and that has been taken away by the Minister. The Minister said that the newly formed technology unit can actually report directly to him on specific issues or issues on which they are aggrieved. I say to the Minister, very kindly, that the doors of head Ministers around the world are more open to people involved in promoting technology than they are to those involved in any other issue. That is the message that I wish to give today.

As I said, this topic cannot be canvassed adequately in the time available. I would like to make the point that, if indeed the technology advisory unit or Mintech was in place some months ago and people perceived that there was a commitment within government and outside, we would not have had the debacle that we had with the Vision Systems. If people who had been skilled in evaluation had performed their task we would not have had the ludicrous tender situation that we had with the Mobilong gaol security system.

Dean Brown planted the seeds in South Australia, and they are growing slowly. The pay-offs in the long term will be 10 or 15 years down the track in terms of industries that will be set up in this State as a result of the Technology Park experiment. There is as great a need for people who are involved in the metal trades industries and other manufacturing industries; there is just as great a need in the realm of office technology; and there is just as great a need across the board, even in relation to educating people as to what should or should not be accepted in the home.

I recall well the exercise that was done on the impact of scanning in supermarkets, which had nothing to do with the Department of State Development. That exercise proved to be very profitable in terms not only of educating shopkeepers on the way in which they could improve their performance but also of overcoming some of the concerns of consumers. Consumers did not want scanning devices to be accompanied by a lack of pricing labels. Once those concerns were aired, it was made quite clear that something could be done about it. The changeover to scanning devices was managed without the slightest hiccup, which was a credit to the unit involved. There have been a number of other exercises where industry has been more than thankful for the assistance that has been given by that unit.

The Minister calls himself the Minister of Technology. He has now said that the Technology Advisory Unit shall be reporting through the Director of Industry and Technology. So, he is obviously saying that the only thing that matters is State development, but underlying that assumption the Minister is forgetting that we should be looking at existing industry. Enormous efforts have been made in the

past by the Department of State Development to attract industry to the State. That has happened irrespective of whether a Liberal or Labor Government has been in power: we all want more industry and jobs. That is generally where the focus of the Department of State Development has been.

There has been liaison with existing industry. Certainly, some assistance and advice has been given to local industry. However, the general thrust of the department is on development. The greatest development that can happen is to get existing industries up to the mark and get them to understand that they must adopt new techniques and that, otherwise, within five years, they will no longer be with us as the vagaries of competition will remove them from the market.

I am not critical of the Minister, although I believe that he has taken a step backwards in this debate. The Minister would be mindful of the fact that, in terms of research and development, the leading edge, we in South Australia are woeful at 4 per cent of the national average. That figure was supplied by the Federal Government. That leaves aside defence establishments, which are a locality issue rather than representing a State commitment. It is only 4 per cent of R and D in South Australia, and what are we doing about it? I have not seen one endeavour by the Government to promote the proposition that R and D really is the future.

Perhaps the Minister has talked to people about R and D, but I have not seen evidence of that nor of the Minister's endeavours in that regard. There are so many impediments in the system today that must be taken away, and they can be taken away only if we become more intelligent about the way in which we operate. They can be taken away only if some of the misunderstandings that exist in the system or the lack of knowledge is swept away. I am referring to today—in five years it will be too late.

In conclusion, at the next election the Liberal Party will put up a blueprint on technology. It will address some of the major issues that ought to be addressed and it will take account of the underlying needs of the industry and people in this State as well as the industrial implications. It may not win votes or gain an inch of space in the newspapers, because the press releases that I have put out on the subject of technology have not excited the media. Perhaps that is the fault of the quality of the press release, but I believe it is probably a lack of understanding. Perhaps that gap has to be bridged also, because the future of this State really depends on our ability to adapt and innovate. In South Australia we have some marvellous resources. I have no doubt that the Minister will quote some in his response. I do not have time to do so.

We have some extraordinarily innovative people in this State asking, 'How can I get the best for the State?' A deathly silence prevails because they do not know where to go. Other countries have addressed the question in a more flexible productive fashion. It is no good putting up a sign saying, 'I am the Minister of Technology'. It is no good saying, 'I have a technology unit'. It is no good saying, 'We believe that people must adopt new techniques,' unless we have the facility to bridge the communication gap and the facility to educate people.

I commend the motion to the House in the belief that the Minister does have a commitment in this area, in the belief that he has been misguided in the way that this change has taken place. The Minister must devote more resources and get the best people available for this area. I know that the unit has lost a tremendous amount of capacity. Let us think about new ways of getting more capacity. Let us think about ways of getting people who are capable. There are still good resources there, but more resources have to be

put to this question. Until we bridge the gap we remain in the same difficult situation that has existed for the past 10 years: manufacturing industry is going backwards and people out there simply do not understand that technology is dominating our lives when we should be managing it.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of State Development and Technology): The Government will oppose this motion. In indicating why we will oppose it, let me say first that I am pleased to hear at least the honourable member say that he supports a bipartisan approach. I say that because, when the issue blew up in the press last week (fermented by activities of the Leader of the Opposition and, to an extent, by the member for Mitcham, when they were starting to make some outrageous statements), I thought that at long last we had seen the end of what had generally been a bipartisan approach to technology over the past six years. I am pleased to see that now the member for Mitcham is dissociating himself from the kind of politicising comments made by the Leader of the Opposition.

This motion has four key elements. The first is to do with what is alleged to be the reduction in support given by the Government to high technology. The second is the alleged downgrading of status of the South Australian Council on Technological Change. The third is the alleged burying of the Technology Advisory Unit within the Department of State Development, and the fourth relates to the third, that the unit will have no direct reporting power to the Minister.

I will detail in a minute some facts in response to the points made by the member for Mitcham, but I want to give these quick answers to the four points contained in the motion. First, the Government has not reduced support given to high technology, and I will detail evidence of that in a moment. Secondly, we have not downgraded the status of the South Australian Council on Technological Change, and I will detail that also in a minute. Thirdly, the Technology Advisory Unit has been relocated within the Department of State Development and Technology, but I contest the term 'bury'.

Fourthly, with respect to no direct reporting power by the advisory unit to the Minister, it has never had such direct reporting power to the Minister. The unit has always reported previously to the Director of Mintech and it now reports through the director of Industry and Technology and the Director of State Development. That is a line management issue that is essentially no different from before. Let me come to give some evidence on each one of the points. For someone to make a statement like 'reducing the support given to high technology' is to allege that in fact the Government is giving less to high technology than the previous Liberal Government did, and it may also be to allege that this Government is giving less now to high technology than it did in the first years of power of this Government. Both of those statements are not supported by the facts. In fact, one has to acknowledge or recognise that support for high technology is not just simply the money that is allocated by the Government to pay the salaries of people in a technology unit. It includes a number of other aspects of State Government resource commitment. For example, it includes the money that goes under the State Development Fund, much of which is technology oriented, particularly such things as the Technology and Innovation Program and the money going to structured readjustment in industry. It also includes the money going to industrial development in the Department of State Development, already, through the Industry and Technology Directorate.

It also includes the money going to Technology Park. It also includes the effort in all the other Government depart-

ments that have a technology thrust. Yesterday in this House I tabled the Technology Action Program for 1986-87 and, as I did last year when I tabled the previous program, I will circulate it to all members of both Houses so that they will get to see what is going on in the various Government departments. It is an impressive catalogue of what is being done to support high technology in South Australia.

I ask the member for Mitcham and other members, who may believe that the Government is reducing its support, to read this document, as it is quite clear that that support is not being reduced. Let us look at some specific areas of allocation. The facts are that in 1984-85 the Ministry of Technology budget (if one just takes that area) was \$874 000, including \$98 000 for the Education Technology Task Force. The 1985-86 budget was \$1.009 million, including \$175 000 for the Edtech Task Force. It is true that in 1986-87 the figure of \$1.012 million would seem a reduction on 1985-86, but in fact no Edtech Task Force allocation is included in that amount—so, it is a real increase.

In relation to Technology Park, to which the previous Government allocated \$200 000 worth of operating costs, as well as \$4.8 million of land servicing development, two points should be made. First, the Government has amortised the interest debt that came on the purchase of Technology Park, and that has been an investment of Government resource. Also, significantly, the following amounts have been put into the Technology Park Corporation budget by the State Government: in 1984-85, operation costs of \$1.079 million, with no borrowing; in 1985-86 operating costs of \$1.7 million, with borrowings of \$3.99 million; and in 1986-87 operating costs of \$1.49 million with borrowings for building of \$2.46 million. That amounts to some \$10.5 million that has gone to Technology Park in the last three budgets.

Even in the area of the South Australian Council on Technological Change, of which the honourable member speaks so well, and I certainly endorse the value of the work that it has done over the years, the fact is that more money has come from this Government than from the previous Government. Considering the three budgets from 1980-81 to 1982-83, the then Liberal Government gave \$352 000 to the Council on Technological Change, whereas for the three budgets from 1983-84 to 1985-86, this Government gave \$750 000 to the council and the work that it did. There are many other things that I could mention that simply did not exist under the previous Government. The Technology and Innovation Program, which is—

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Mitcham says that before Dean Brown nothing existed. I have a feeling that the Book of Genesis tells us in the first chapter that some creation took place. The point is that under the previous Liberal Government there was no Technology and Innovation Program, yet it has been a very useful program for industry in this State in terms of technology. It accounts for an allocation of some \$0.5 million a year, and a significant amount of State Development Fund goes on technology related matters. If one excludes the payments for payroll exemptions for country industries, that fund provides between \$6 million and \$7 million. That is a very significant investment.

Further, State Government money has gone into such things as the Micro-electronics Application Centre, the Adelaide Innovation Centre (which is regarded as the most successful innovation centre of its kind in Australia), and other areas such as the Biotechnology Promotion Committee, the Aerospace Technology Promotion Committee, and the Interactive Laser Video and Authoring Promotions

Committee, as well as other money going into bodies such as Luminis to promote research that can be applied in the commercial arena. That is just some of them, and I again ask members to read this document to identify all the others that exist. I think that quite satisfactorily dispels the rumour that this Government has reduced support given to high technology.

Not only have we done those sorts of things, but it is worthwhile noting that the Government has supported industry and business by export promotion. Last October I went to Hong Kong with a delegation of South Australian high technology companies, which had State Government moneys and private sector money in it. I may say that all the firms that took part in that were very happy at their participation, and so successful was it in terms of agency agreements, sales contracts, and the like, that this year we are taking another one of other high technology companies in South Australia and we will also be going to other parts of South-East Asia in the same context.

As to the matter of downgrading the status of the South Australian Council on Technological Change, that, clearly, has simply not happened. What does the word 'downgrading' mean? Does it mean that there will in fact be a removal of reporting to the Minister? No, there will not be. It will maintain the position of reporting directly to the Minister. Does it mean that there will be a reduction in the amount of work that they will do? No, it does not mean that, and indeed the Cabinet decision on the amalgamation of Mintech and the Department of State Development provides that there will be a resource statement, committing resource levels to the Council on Technological Change, and that resource statement is presently being prepared. That will be a statement of resources committed to the council. Then there is the matter that the council has provided significant advice to the Government in different forms.

It may be that the member for Mitcham was implying that the Government has downgraded support for the council because, for example, we no longer have some of those technology reports on matters such as scanning in supermarkets, electronic funds transfer and petrol selling. The nature of the reporting that is required from the Technology Change Council has been changed. However, the council still performs fundamental work of advice to the Government, albeit that the reports are not now published in those glossy brochures as was previously the case. I identify the important reports of the council on technology and the disabled, on technology and the aged, and on the massive changes in the bread baking industry. I could point to other reports that the council has produced. The council has not cut down on the volume of its inquiry and work. It is true that the former method of presentation of the reports has changed but that does not mean that the work is not being done or received by the Government.

The next matter concerns the burying of the Technology Advisory Unit in the Department of State Development. It must be noted that the title of the Department of State Development has been changed to the Department of State Development and Technology. After a lengthy period of consultation, the unit is being transferred from Mintech into the Department of State Development and Technology. In this House on 28 August (page 763 of *Hansard*), the Premier said that this activity would take place. It has taken so long because we knew it would take about nine to 12 months to work out the most productive way of achieving it and to ensure that the perception and reality of Government support for technology was not undermined.

The member for Mitcham tries to say that he told us so, having dealt with the matter in the Estimates Committee

of 2 October. The section of the Estimates Committee dealing with the Office of the Ministry of Technology appears on pages 185 to 190 of *Hansard*. It may be that my copy of *Hansard* does not have all the pages it should have; but I can tell the House that the only area of concern directly raised by the member for Mitcham with respect to amalgamations and changed functions or responsibilities appears on page 186, where he endorsed the comments of the Deputy Leader, who had queried the Government's move to shift the Data Processing Board out of my ministry into the responsibility of the Government Management Board and, hence, under the Premier. It may be that the honourable member can interpret the question he asked on page 187 as somehow having something to do with the amalgamation, although the words 'amalgamation' or 'reorganisation' never appear. In answering that question I tried to bring in and talked about the amalgamation and identified the issue of the development thrust and the social impact of technology, but that point was not picked up by the honourable member who, in his next opportunity to question in the Estimates Committee, changed to another subject altogether. That clearly indicates—

Mr S.J. Baker: The question says, 'The program entitled 'Technology Policy Development Implementation' covers the operation of the Technology Advisory Unit and, on looking at the programs, I had the misgiving...'

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not the Committee stage of a Bill where questions are directed to the Minister. The Chair is cognisant of the fact that the member for Mitcham may be trying to be helpful; nevertheless, he is out of order.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I pick up the point in *Hansard*, where the honourable member goes on to say:

... I had the misgiving that we were spending an enormous amount on the thinking and much less on the doing. The Minister can check the 1985-86 and 1986-87 targets. One of the values of the unit in the past has been its ability to look at an industry, determine the change that has taken place and take advice from elsewhere, including overseas research studies.

In this way, a fairly broad brush picture can be painted of the challenges in the industry and how industry has to adapt to change. In the long list of challenges it is becoming very much a policy development area rather than involving the sort of Technology Advisory Unit that has performed such a valuable role in the past. I note also that considerable resources were expended on developing the technology strategy for South Australia, and those have been taken off.

I emphasise that the words 'amalgamation' and 'reorganisation' or anything about concern for the new administrative structure are not expressed in those comments. The point I make is that, in a number of other areas, this Government has done significant work and will continue to do so. The Technology Park Adelaide Corporation, through legislation supported by both major Parties in this House, has a wide coverage. Quite clearly, that corporation will continue its work. In addition, the Directorate of Industry and Technology has been established in the Department of State Development, and that has had a technology focus amongst some of its work. Mintech, the Technology Advisory Unit and the South Australian Council on Technological Change have been established. We believe that, in relation to those four bodies, we could undertake rationalisation of effort to ensure the best use from the available resources and talent, and that is precisely what we are doing.

I am pleased to note that a reporter writing for the Australian *Financial Review* has endorsed our actions and has commented that there have been too many areas and that perhaps some re-examination of procedures was required. In fact, that newspaper has supported what we are doing. I have agreed that I will not talk for longer in this debate than the member for Mitcham talked, so I will have to wind up fairly soon, but I wish to indicate the real

outcome in terms of changes in the economy for which this Government can take credit for having supported.

In 1982 the CADCAM Bureau came to South Australia at the request of the former Liberal Government to establish a CADCAM consultancy service for industry. CADCAM was given to understand that it would be supported by the former Government but, after being here for some months, it found that it was not getting the support it had been led to expect. It also found that industry in South Australia was too conservative to want to use CADCAM services. In 1982 less than 7 per cent of the money that went into CADCAM sales around Australia was being spent by South Australian purchasers.

When we came to power in November that year we realised that this consultancy service was about to pack up and go. CADCAM believed it had been led down a dead end street and wanted to go. We examined the issue and realised that there were important things to be done. As a result, we gave CADCAM financial support to stay here, because we knew that South Australian industry needed that kind of service. We also realised there had to be money to help firms which purchased CADCAM to implement it, to train their staff and the like, so we dedicated money to that purpose.

We also realised that the importance of the technology had to be promoted amongst industry, so we established a CADCAM Promotion Committee. That, combined with the extra training effort (and the member for Mitcham referred to the need for training and new technologies, and quite correctly so), was picked up automatically by Regency Park and the work done there. Now the college is a centre of excellence of CADCAM training throughout Australia and, indeed, is watched internationally as well. The result of that kind of active Government support involving a number of areas—promotion, financial support for firms and retraining, and training opportunities—and linking in that CADCAM facility with the training institution has meant that in 1985-86 more than half the CADCAM hardware sold in Australia was sold to South Australian purchasers. Clearly, that example proves that the activities of this Government have worked.

I could refer to many other examples and perhaps it would be appropriate for a more extensive technology debate to take place on another occasion—that is for the managers of the House to determine. I emphasise the points I have made and I could continue in greater detail. The motion of the member for Mitcham is quite inaccurate and should not be supported. I call on members to oppose it.

Mr OSWALD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ANTI-FAMILY POLICIES

Mr TYLER (Fisher): I move:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Leader of the Opposition stands condemned for his failure to state clearly where he stands on the anti-family policies of the Queensland Premier; further this House recognises that these policies would devastate the lifestyles of young families and communities.

These policies if implemented, would mean that the important infrastructure needs of education, health, welfare, transport, road programs and children's services would vanish, which is of vital importance to my electorate. I will address this motion in three parts. First, I will look at the rhetoric of the Queensland Premier and what his flat tax and policies of cutting community services would mean to young families. Secondly, I will refer to the real facts in Queensland and just what the Queensland Premier has done

in that State. This will show that he is a hypocrite. Thirdly, I will look at the Leader of the Opposition in this State and what he has been saying about the whole debacle, the chaos in which the Federal Coalition finds itself.

Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen would have us believe that he is the economic guru of Australia and that his flat tax policy of 25 per cent will be the saviour of this country. Let us look at exactly what it means. It means that 80 per cent of people in this country would be worse off. The scheme that he preaches would mean that the single rate of tax of 25 per cent would be applied to all income earners. It would benefit only those people earning more than \$27 500 per year and would leave a budget shortfall of up to \$9 billion.

What is the Queensland Premier going to do with a shortfall of \$9 billion? Sir Joh says, 'Don't you worry about it. I'm going to cut Government spending, I am going to cut Government services, I'm going to rip a hole through the Federal bureaucracy, and we will be able to do away with all those fat cats and penpushers.' Anyone who knows anything about fiscal policy would know that it just does not add up. It is not just Labor politicians who have been saying that; it is noted economists and watchers of the political scene. Surprising as it may seem, even the Federal Leader of the Liberal Party has said it.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr TYLER: If the member for Alexandra would like to resume his seat and listen, I will tell him what his Federal Leader has been saying about Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. I refer him to the *Australian* of 7 February 1987 which states:

Eighty per cent of Australians would be worse off under a single rate tax proposed by the Premier of Queensland, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, the Leader of the [Federal] Opposition, Mr Howard said in Brisbane yesterday. Mr Howard said Sir Joh had as yet failed to reveal the details of his single rate tax which he has proposed would be levied at a rate of 25 per cent or slightly less. 'We don't know how he's going to compensate for the changes,' Mr Howard said. 'I can't believe Sir Joh and the National Party and his supporters would support a proposition that would make 80 per cent of people worse off.'

There you have it. Even Mr Howard is prepared to condemn the statements made by the Queensland Premier and his stupid flat tax option. We need questions answered rather than assurances given that things will be all right. We need details of Sir Joh's policy and just what he proposes.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr TYLER: If the member for Mitcham listens, I will get to what his Leader had to say about the whole thing.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Sir. So far, we have not heard anything about the anti-family policies of the Queensland Premier as contained in this motion. We have heard about a whole lot of other matters that the Queensland Premier may or may not have said, but nothing about anti-family policies or the reasons why we should condemn the Leader of the Opposition, which is the substantive part of this motion. I ask you, Sir, to rule that the debate should be upon those matters. I submit that anything which the Queensland Premier may have otherwise said is not relevant, because it is not contained in the substantive terms of the motion before the House.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

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

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The motion put forward by the honourable member for Fisher does refer to anti-family policies, but it would appear to me that that would be a fairly broad subject and that it is up to the member for Fisher to develop his particular approach to that subject. I am sure that if the honourable member for Murray-Mallee

continues to pay attention, the honourable member for Fisher will develop his approach along the appropriate line.

Mr TYLER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Obviously the member for Mallee has not listened to what I have had to say so far. I have talked about the flat tax of the Queensland Premier and how that is an anti-family policy. Even the honourable member's Federal Leader has said that 80 per cent of people in this country would be worse off. Honestly, I really do not understand the member for Mallee. He really does come into this House at times and just does not listen to what goes on. He goes off half cocked most of the time. If he listens, I will develop that argument even further and even bring it down to how the policy is anti-family as it relates to my electorate.

Mr Lewis: Do you know which electorate I represent?

Mr TYLER: I certainly do know which electorate you represent. In actual fact, the policies of the Queensland Premier would devastate people in the honourable member's electorate, and I will develop that argument a bit further as well.

Mr Lewis: What is the name of my electorate?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Murray-Mallee does not have the role in here of putting questions by way of a geography test. His interjections are out of order. The honourable member for Fisher.

Mr TYLER: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr TYLER: He is going again; he continues to pipe up and interject. He is one of the rudest members we have in this Parliament. It is about time he listened to what goes on. I am unashamedly a person who supports and believes that Governments have a responsibility to help young families by providing infrastructure and human service needs. The tragedy is that, if Sir Joh's policies were implemented, young families would be devastated. It would drastically alter the lifestyles of many of these young communities, like my electorate.

For example, the Happy Valley council area, which makes up about 80 per cent of my electorate, is one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Yet, with Sir Joh's policies of cutting community services, the important infrastructure needs such as education, health, welfare, road programs and child-care would vanish. We simply would not have any of the money to pay for these vital services. These services in my electorate are already under severe pressure from a population growth that is bursting at its seams. For example, one-third of the Happy Valley council residents are under the age of 14. This is in an age group which should be nurtured with the help of Federal, State and local governments. Sir Joh cannot wipe out these concerns with a simple, 'Don't you worry about that.' His policies would devastate the young and the needy. His policies are designed purely for the selfish and the greedy.

Let us look at why this man from Queensland is such a hypocrite. His rhetoric does not weigh up to the facts. He claims that he is a supporter of the finest traditions of the Westminster system and that he continues to uphold the democratic benefits for all Queenslanders. What rubbish! To start with, Sir Joh is elected on 40 per cent of the vote—

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Thirty-nine per cent.

Mr TYLER: Well, the Minister of Recreation and Sport says 39 per cent—I stand corrected. Sixty per cent of the people of Queensland do not vote for him. He has a majority of seats in the Parliament but a minority of the people in Queensland vote for him. What he has up there is a Gilbert and Sullivan Parliament: a Parliament that is irrelevant. In Queensland there are no parliamentary committees such as public accounts or public works, nor do they

have any standing committees. *Hansard* is edited and therefore is not a verbatim record of what is said in the Parliament. There is no ministerial accountability or responsibility. The Public Service in Queensland is a political puppet. The Government chooses which departmental estimates will be debated in any given year and there is complete disregard for the need for public accountability. Further, of course, the Opposition is denied proper facilities.

To top it off, Sir Joh's Government has been a high spending and high taxing Government. According to Commonwealth statistics, Queensland taxation increased by 21.5 per cent between July/October 1984 and July/October 1986. In addition, the Queensland Government is very lucky. It has relied heavily on coal export royalties and returns from the coal rail freights to prop up its revenues, with the resource sector providing almost a third of its receipts. This is a hidden tax and does not show up in the ABS figures. I am not criticising the royalties; I say good luck to them.

Contrary to the Queensland Premier's claim that he supports small government, the size of his State's Public Service increased by 11.1 per cent between 1983 and 1986 compared to a 4.5 per cent increase in New South Wales, 10.2 per cent in Victoria and 4.1 per cent in South Australia. At the same time, Government charges in Queensland increased by 30.1 per cent. We can see from that that the Queensland Premier is simply a phoney, just like the Leader of the Opposition in South Australia. To emphasise this case, I refer members to an article in last Thursday's *Advertiser* headed, 'Life's not so sweet in the Banana State', as follows:

The microscope has been put on the Banana State over the past few weeks with Sir Joh beginning his highly controversial campaign to grab political power in Canberra.

That is exactly what it is: just a grab at and a lust for power. The report continues:

Queensland's economic performance is being assessed as a good indicator of Sir Joh's capabilities as the nation's political leader.

Not surprisingly, more than a few flaws have been exposed in the picture of the 'perfect State' and there is more to Queensland than warm sea breezes and swaying palm trees.

In comparison with other States, the Banana State is not all it is cracked up to be. In fact, its economic performance in many key areas means its citizens enjoy a lower standard of living than their counterparts in other States.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that Queensland has the highest unemployment rate of any mainland State.

Queensland's January unemployment rate was 10.3 per cent, compared with an Australian average of 8.9 per cent.

Queensland also recorded the highest youth unemployment rate of any mainland State in the 12 months to January 1987. The growth rate in the number of people aged 15 to 19 looking for full-time work grew 13.8 per cent over the 12-month period. . . . In Victoria, the growth rate was only 4.3 per cent and the national figure actually fell 1.7 per cent.

Queensland also falls far behind the national average in terms of wages. The State's male average wage last August was \$413.50 and the female \$259.90. This compares to the Australian average of \$437.20 for men and \$282.00 for women.

For the September quarter in 1986 Queensland had the highest fall in the number of residential buildings commenced, with a drop of [a staggering] 38.5 per cent over the same quarter the previous year. Queensland also has the dubious title of the country's fastest-growing Public Service.

Since the beginning of the Bjelke-Petersen Government, the Queensland Public Service has had the highest rate of increase in the country. State and local government employment grew more than 24 per cent in the six years to 1985, nearly twice the national average.

Queensland also recorded the highest increase in State and local government charges over the past three years. The increase in Brisbane was 30.1 per cent. . . .

Now what does the Leader of the Opposition here in South Australia have to say about the debacle of the Federal coalition? And who does he support: is it Joh, John or Andrew?

An article in the *News* recently, headed 'Olsen dodges Leader question' states:

The South Australian Opposition Leader, Mr Olsen, has refused to say if he believes the Federal Leader, Mr Howard, would make a better Prime Minister than Queensland's Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Mr Olsen dodged questions about the Federal coalition crisis on the grounds that he was concerned with State issues.

Asked at the end of the article whether he supported a consumption tax, Mr Olsen said that it was a matter to be determined by the Federal Party. The Leader of the Opposition was not frightened to introduce Federal issues and matters concerning the Federal Government into the last State election campaign. In fact, that was the only issue that he had in his whole campaign—interest rates, which is a Federal matter.

Mr Olsen has been exposed because what he said in the *News* article is not what he has said at other times about Federal issues and a consumption tax. In fact, I have a press release before me dated 4 June 1984 which states:

The Liberal Leader John Olsen said he strongly supported the introduction of a broadly based consumption tax.

The press release further states:

I have constantly supported this as an essential basis of tax reform at the national level. Mr Olsen said.

Well, there you have it. The Leader of the Opposition is shown up once again as a phoney. No wonder he is taking lessons in sincerity. He is obviously backing away from the consumption tax despite the fact that the member for Coles in this Parliament just a fortnight ago stated that the Opposition has reaffirmed its support for a consumption tax. The member for Coles has blown the lid on her Leader's support for a consumption tax, about which for weeks he has dodged and weaved, not knowing whether to support John Howard's consumption tax or Sir Joh's flat tax. He is obviously terrified of becoming embroiled in the Federal coalition leadership and taxation fight.

The Leader of the Opposition has not even got the guts to come into this Parliament and debate issues of public importance, like the Federal coalition's leadership and taxation fight. Instead, a fortnight ago he made the member for Coles come in and take the heat. Unfortunately, she dopped in her Leader by revealing his renewed support for the tax and for John Howard. The introduction of a Howard style consumption tax which would not be discounted from wages would also fuel inflation and wipe out any chance of long-term recovery. Small business would be the first to suffer.

Members interjecting:

Mr TYLER: Members opposite might say that this is boring, but I happen to believe in small business, which will be the first to tell members that it will suffer. They will not get any gains from a shift from income tax to a consumption tax. Small business quite clearly does not want it, it does not want a bar of it.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr TYLER: Even members of the Liberal Party's rural committee last month—

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr TYLER: The member Eyre keeps interjecting. I will point out to him what members of his committee were saying to his Party just last month: they expressed concern about the prospects of a consumer tax, because many farmers on low taxable incomes may have to pay that tax without greatly benefiting from the tax cuts being offered in exchange. I wish that the member for Eyre would acknowledge that point. It is clear cut: members of his own Party have been telling him that. However, the Opposition in this State and the Federal Opposition keep ignoring what their rank and file keep telling them.

This also would apply to the flat tax. Most farmers are well under the \$27 500 a year mark, so they would be severely disadvantaged under that scheme as well. I challenge members opposite who represent country constituencies to acknowledge this fact and to support this motion. It was a crying shame that only last week we saw Ian Sinclair in this State trying to convince people such as the member for Flinders but, no, they completely snubbed him. The member for Flinders supports the flat tax and Sir Joh, and disregards his whole constituency. He knows that the majority of his people are really struggling. Indeed, he comes into this House and tells us that, yet he turns around and supports policies that would disadvantage them. I am surprised about that. He should get the message about that loud and clear at the next election.

I also challenge the Leader of the Opposition to answer the questions that were asked of him by the member for Briggs late last month. So far we have not heard even a whimper. The member for Briggs asked the Leader whether he would support the consumption tax proposed by the Federal Leader of the Opposition (Mr Howard); he asked him whether he would support the flat tax proposal of Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen; he asked him whether he would support Sir Joh or Ian Sinclair to lead the National Party; he asked him whether he would support Andrew Peacock or John Howard to lead the Liberal Party; and he asked him whether he thought that Sir Joh would lead the Federal coalition. Where are the answers?

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr TYLER: The member for Murray-Mallee keeps interjecting during my contribution. To show what sort of man he is, I will refer to an article which appeared in the *South Eastern Times* of Monday 6 May in which he is reported as lending full support to that extreme right wing political commentator Katharine West. It reports Peter Lewis as saying:

I think Mrs West is absolutely right.

He is right there: she is very right wing. He continued:

She has accurately identified what Sir Joh is doing. All politicians must now face up to the reality of what is happening in this country. We must resolve whether it is us or the union leaders who are running this country.

What absolute nonsense! What garbage the member for Murray-Mallee comes out with! Obviously, he feeds the same sort of rubbish to his constituents that he feeds to us in this House. I now return to my comments of the Leader of the Opposition. He does not have the courage to address the real concerns we have in this country. Leadership is about guts, and that is something we do not have in the Opposition in this Parliament. The Liberal Party is in crisis right around the country. We have the Federal Liberal Party Leader (Mr Howard), who is a disgraceful former Treasurer of the Fraser Government. Most of the massive problems of the Hawke Government have been inherited because of this one man, who has solely destroyed the economy and lifestyles of people in this country.

We also have Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. When asked some vital questions about his foreign policy, he said:

Well, I am not going to answer trick questions like that.

What a joke! He would even be funny if this whole sad situation was not so serious. I urge members to support my motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Daventry was first to his feet.

Mr LEWIS: Crap.

The SPEAKER: I demand an instant withdrawal of that remark from the honourable member for Murray-Mallee or he will be named forthwith.

Mr LEWIS: I withdraw, Mr Speaker, but I remind you that I was standing as the member for Fisher was sitting.

The SPEAKER: The Chair was clearly under the impression that the honourable member for Davenport was first to his feet, and the Chair will abide by that decision. The honourable member for Davenport.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I oppose the motion. This is the first clear example I have had—and I say this as a member sitting on the back bench—that the Labor Party in this State is running scared. This is the first indication that the Labor Party has started sorting out individuals for personal attack. This is the first clear indication, and I have been in this place long enough to know, that the tide is turning in relation to the statistics that the Labor Party is getting back from polls, particularly when it uses backbenchers, who are at the end of the line held up by a pillar (the same as I am) such as the member for Briggs to ask the Leader of the Opposition to respond to some questions he asks as nothing more than a backbencher. Any Leader of the Opposition who ventured into that sort of exchange in the House would be a fool. The Labor Party is desperate and is not prepared to use a frontbencher.

Mr TYLER: I rise on a point of order. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to rule on the relevance of backbenchers asking questions of the Leader of the Opposition; that is what the honourable member is addressing himself to now and not to the motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will not accept the point of order on this occasion and will listen to what the member for Davenport has to say further on this matter.

Mr S.G. EVANS: During recent times—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr S.G. EVANS:—I heard the back bench member for Briggs during a speech—and I will not say where—call on the Leader of the Opposition to answer certain questions.

Mr Tyler: Why shouldn't he? He is entitled to do that as a member.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I was referring to that. The member for Fisher raised the matter in his speech, and that is what I was replying to. I would like to know where the point of order comes from. Mr Speaker, for the Labor Party to put a motion referring to Queensland before this House, when this State is in the position it is, indicates that Mr Hawke or someone else in the Federal scene has passed a message to the State Government to start attacking Sir Joh because he is causing some trouble. That is the reason; ALP members are concerned that they are losing ground throughout Australia.

I return to the member for Fisher's comments about the people in this State. Let the member for Fisher ask the Premier (who is also not here) whether he is prepared to stand up and support the Hawke high interest rate, which is harming many of his constituents in Aberfoyle Park and Sheidow Park who cannot meet their mortgage commitments while Hawke and Keating float around spending \$1 million per year on renting shrubs and plants for ministerial offices. People are going out of business. The high bankruptcy rate in this State is due partly to the Commonwealth Government's attitude and more particularly to the Labor Party's high charges for electricity, gas, and registration.

They are the sorts of matters that the member for Fisher should be telling his constituents about—that his Party is ripping them off and putting them out of business. Let the member for Fisher go out and tell the farmers and the small businessmen that there is no problem with interest rates! Will he make the false claim that interest rates are not

pulling the country on to its knees and forcing people into bankruptcy? Let him do that! John Olsen cannot do anything about that, but the Government wants to introduce a red herring by picking on individuals because it is worried.

I can understand why the member for Fisher made the speech, and that is because he hopes to have it reported in the local paper; he hopes to protect himself because his seat is the most vulnerable of all. His constituents are saying that the Labor Party has to go because of the high taxes and charges across the State and because the Federal Government is responsible for the interest rates which are killing the average home owner. The Government is trying to blame Sir Joh and the Leader of the Opposition in this House for that, but it is not their fault. The member for Fisher should have the courage to put in his local paper: 'The Premier and his Cabinet are ripping you off. They are bad news. Get rid of them.' Then he might save his own neck in a political fight.

The member for Fisher's motion is nothing more than a sham to try and introduce a red herring because the ALP is in trouble in Australia and particularly South Australia; this is indicated by the speeches of the member for Fisher and the member for Briggs. When the member for Fisher says it is a matter of public importance that the Leader of the Opposition should talk about Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, or Mr Howard, Mr Peacock, Mr Hawke or Mr Keating, that has nothing to do with us here—that is the Federal field. Let us talk about the problems we have with alcohol, drugs, interest rates, the cost of fuel and electricity, water rates, sewerage rates, land tax and lack of good public transport in this State. They are the issues that concern the honourable member's constituents and they are the issues that are putting his constituents out of their homes, jobs, small businesses and farms. He is supporting a Government that has done that. I oppose the motion in the strongest terms as nothing but a red herring to take the community's interest away from the real problem—that is, socialism through the ALP.

Mr LEWIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

BRIDGEWATER RAIL SERVICE

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I move:

That this House condemns the Government which through lack of positive action has condoned the deterioration of the Bridgewater rail service and associated amenities and calls on the Minister of Transport to take immediate action to significantly upgrade the service amenities to provide an incentive for the public to use the service as a viable alternative to private transport and as an attractive tourist asset.

I looked at the possibility of amending my motion because the day after I gave notice that I would move in this way it was made public that the Chairman of the STA, Mr Rump, was to put before the Government a proposition that the Bridgewater rail service be closed. I recognise now that it is not just a matter of upgrading the service but a matter of fighting to retain the service at all costs. I suggest that an urgent need exists for the Minister of Transport to come clean and say exactly what he has in mind in regard to transport services in the Hills. I am not referring simply to the retention of the Bridgewater rail service but also to some of the services currently provided by STA buses in certain sections of the Hills and, in particular, those serving Heathfield, Upper Sturt and Bradbury. I do not want to dwell on that, as it is a different matter, but it is something on which the Minister needs to come clean.

The fight to try to upgrade and retain the Bridgewater rail service has gone on for a long time. It is not just a fight

to keep it open but in fact to have the service upgraded, including an improved timetable and reliable rolling stock so that more people will be encouraged and an incentive provided for people to use the service for commuting purposes thus improving the viability of the service. In recent years the Government has refused to cooperate and, despite many promises to do so, has done absolutely nothing to promote tourism opportunities associated with that service.

I am pleased that the Minister of Lands is present and representing the Government because it was he, as Minister of Transport back in 1985, who made a commitment that the Bridgewater rail service would be retained. That was the last attempt we saw, when the STA recommendation at that time was that it be closed. To his credit, the then Minister of Transport stood out against that recommendation and ensured that the service would be retained.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: There was a bit more money around at that time.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: That is not the point. I would hope that the Minister would have more foresight to recognise the advantages to be gained in retaining the service.

Mr Gregory interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: In a moment, I will get on to the matter of making it viable. If the Government was serious, the service would be as viable as any other STA service provided in this State currently. The then Minister of Transport went on to say that at that stage there had never been an intention of the Government to terminate the Belair-Bridgewater service. I am positive that the Belair-Bridgewater service would have been terminated at that time if there had not been such an uproar on the part of commuters, the public generally and those who envisage viability as a result of more people using the service and its being used extensively for tourism purposes as well.

That will also be the case on this occasion because there is enormous concern within the Hills population generally and with those who recognise far more than the Government does the potential that that service has. I recall asking specific Questions on Notice of the Minister of Tourism at the time (and it is rather strange that the Minister of Transport is now the Minister who was the then Minister of Tourism) about what he would do to improve the tourism potential of that rail service.

The Minister gave me some information. There was not much that was positive, but he certainly gave an assurance that, as Minister of Transport, in conjunction with the then Minister of Tourism, he was considering the advantages to tourism in retaining the train. Of course, much has happened since then. Many people have spoken out about the need to retain the service, and I just want to refer to some of them. Indeed, I was interested to read a report by Tony Baker in the *News* not long ago under the heading 'STA on the wrong track'. I would like the House to just listen to what Mr Baker had to say. He confesses right from the start by declaring an interest, that he and his wife live close to the service and both use it. He states:

... whenever the time table permits I travel by train. Likewise [my wife] ... prefers the ease of a rail ride to the hassle of traffic and then finding and paying for parking.

He goes on to say:

Take one of the express trains to and from Blackwood and the journey is faster than by car. Add the bonus of being able to read a journal as fascinating and informative as the *News* ...

He then goes on with a bit of propoganda for the *News* and then comes back to the point by saying that it is still a very pleasant way of travelling and one that should be promoted. He goes onto say:

Yet today we learn the State Transport Authority is again thinking of closing this service. Then the STA is an ass. Upset

railway workers are threatening a strike in consequence. I think that would be foolish. But they have my sympathy nonetheless and we certainly share the same goal. For pity's sake when is somebody in public enterprise going to be capable of creative thought?

He then states:

If a business is losing money, does the sensible owner try to improve the service, get new custom or does he declare bankruptcy. The Adelaide Hills are crammed with potential train travellers. The level of home building there is such that there is a potential expanding market.

He goes on:

It is a rapidly expanding tourist area with new facilities such as the Bridgewater Mill, about which Premier Bannon has waxed so lyrical.

There is every reason to do so. Mr Baker continues:

Enterprising local businessmen run weekend tourist trains to Goolwa using this section of track, stopping in the Hills. Will Mr Bannon, the ultimate head of the STA, then allow the regular train service to be closed? Besides, how much will really be saved? The line will remain for it is the line to Melbourne and elsewhere. Closure is the way of the small-minded. Don't close it, make it better, irresistible.

I support that stand strongly. I am pleased to see that Mr Baker has attracted some support through that article. It is a matter of giving the problem some thought and being positive about the situation. It is a matter of promoting the service as a positive tourist incentive and also of encouraging people to use it by providing a faster service and improved rolling stock. We were told in 1985 that new trains were to be provided for use on that service; we were told the STA was upgrading the service generally. Many innovations could be introduced at little cost. I have had it said to me by Government members, 'Why would we not close that line if we found it necessary to close the Victor Harbor Line?' It is a totally different situation. That line must be maintained: it is the main line to the Eastern States, and it does not require any extra maintenance to retain the Bridgewater service.

Mr Gregory interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The member for Florey is jumping up and down; if he will only listen for a little while I will explain the matter to him. I have attempted to point out that, if the service was made more viable and if people were given more encouragement to use it, it would be easier for the Government to maintain. I now refer to an editorial that was published in my local paper, the *Courier*. Under the headline 'STA off the rails?', the following points were made about the possible closure of the Bridgewater service:

Harassed teachers have occasionally been heard to mutter that schools would be fine if it weren't for the children, likewise hospitals and patients—and apparently the State Transport Authority views passengers the same way.

Think how much better it would be if buses and trains didn't have to stop at inconvenient places to pick people up or set them down—if there were no passengers to make the vehicles untidy, and buses didn't have to use busy roads in peak hour traffic!

The way the STA is going, particularly as far as rail is concerned, its prayers will soon be answered and it will be able to 'play trains' in the Hills without a single passenger to worry about. It puts the oldest, dirtiest, most dilapidated trains on the Hills route, allows them to break down or run late, then takes away manpower and services.

The not surprising result is that except at peak times patronage is diminishing. The STA is then able to argue that as passenger numbers are delining, the service is uneconomical, and must be axed.

That is exactly the argument that the STA is using. The editorial continues:

The word 'service' is itself something of a misnomer, as disgruntled users will attest. With no Hills stations manned, facilities such as parcel delivery are very much in the lap of the gods.

Despite assurances to the contrary, it is now reported that the head of STA is recommending the closure of the Belair Bridgewater service. If this eventuates, passengers will have no alter-

native but to travel by bus or private car, adding a considerable burden to the already congested Hills and city roads.

Looked at logically, it seems incredibly stupid for thousands of people to drive into a congested city every day, leave their cars standing from 9 to 5 in expensive parking lots, then drive home again—among all the other commuters cluttering up the roads.

The trouble is, we like the comfort and convenience of our own cars and we're willing to pay in terms of running and maintenance costs, also driver stress. Public transport is seen as inconvenient and uncomfortable, to be avoided wherever possible.

However, if it were made more attractive, with reliable locomotives running on time, clean carriages, unslashed seats, decent facilities and services, train travel could be a welcome alternative for many people.

Of course the STA would need to mount a massive promotional campaign to convince people it was now providing a real service and that they could go to their destination faster and cheaper by train—which at this stage would require a certain amount of imagination!

The STA appears unable to think beyond well-travelled narrow lines. But as a Government instrumentality, it should be looking at the most efficient means of transporting people in the direction they wish to go. While it can't offer a door-to-door taxi service all over the State, surely it has a responsibility to provide a reasonable service to as many people as possible.

The Government, through various policies, has actively encouraged people to live in the Hills—and Mt Barker is one of the fastest growing regions in the State—yet the Hills public transport service is far from adequate.

Provision could be made for linking systems between STA buses and trains, also the private bus services, to create an effective public transport network. But this would also require visionary, imaginative thinking, distinctly lacking in Government circles.

It has been shown, both overseas and in other parts of Australia, that people will use public transport if it is reliable, quick, clean and pleasant. If it does not meet these basic standards, people will avoid it.

How about it, STA, why not get back on the right track, or have we come to the end of the line?

I suggest that both the articles that have appeared in the media recently hit the nail right on the head. The amount of comment arising from those articles from people who would otherwise use the service if it was made more attractive is quite staggering. I have received a number of letters from constituents who have all made strong points. One letter that I received very recently is from a Mr Dyster of Aldgate, who is well recognised in the district and who has carried out a study in regard to many aspects of former life in the Hills and recognising the advantages of the service that have pertained over a long period of time. He has made the point to me (and I have passed it on to the Minister of Transport) that there are still people who rely very much indeed on the service.

He said that a number of elderly citizens had told him that they prefer the roominess of the trains and appreciate the shelter which is provided at railway stations but which does not exist at bus stops. They feel greater security in travelling by train. Others who rely on the service include schoolchildren travelling to Heathfield and other high schools, and that is of particular import. Some children have very limited access to the schools in the Hills, and many children use the service. I have received a number of letters from parents of children who have stated quite clearly that they have built in certain areas and made a decision to send their children to schools such as Heathfield High School because of the train service.

This particular constituent goes on to say that the service is used by parties of children, often up to 50 or more in number, who travel to and from city schools to the Arbury Park Outdoor Education School for which they detrain at the Carapook station. In view of that and the fact, as pointed out by the State Secretary of the AFULE, that the closure of the Hills line would reduce STA's deficit by less than .05 per cent, I question whether it would not be viable to retain at least a skeleton service on the line so as to

permit one journey at least to and from the city each morning, afternoon and evening. In this connection my constituent appended a suggested reduced timetable.

I am pleased that the Minister of Education has just entered the Chamber. I suggest that he may have enough foresight to realise that, if the service was made attractive (at present it is anything but: it has been allowed to run down to such an extent that people will not use it)—

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: Like everything else.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Yes, like so many other Government services. If they thought about it and decided to upgrade the service, they would get a lot more people using it, and that would make it more viable. You only have to travel down some of the routes serving the marginal seats held by the Government in this State to recognise where the services are going. You travel down some of the roads and see the extensive services that are provided to marginal Labor held seats and compare those with the type of services that are provided, for example, in the Hills: there is absolutely no comparison and, as far as I am concerned, the decision to wind down the service through lack of activity so that it can be closed down totally is very much a Government plot, and it is just not on.

In closing, I make the point that I have prepared a petition, which has been circulated widely, stating that the residents of the Hills are deeply concerned by a proposal that the State Government may discontinue the train service to the areas between Bridgewater and Belair and surrounding towns, and that this discontinuation will seriously disadvantage commuters who work in the city; students, including those attending Heathfield High School; shoppers; and others who regularly use the service; and that it will also be very detrimental to the Adelaide Hills tourist industry.

Today I will have the opportunity of tabling the first of the signatures on that petition, which has been very well received. There is an enormous amount of hostility in the Hills region in regard to the continuation of this line, and I urge members to support the motion not only to upgrade the service but also to ensure that the service is retained between Belair and Bridgewater.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): In seconding the motion. I wish to speak briefly. I support the motion in the strongest terms, and at a later date I will add to my comments. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MEMBER'S REMARKS

Mr GREGORY (Florey): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr GREGORY: I claim to have been misrepresented by the member for Heysen who, in his address to this Chamber, claimed that I was jumping up and down. In fact, I was not: I was seated. I request that the honourable member withdraw that remark.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: How pathetic!

HOUSING LOAN INTEREST RATES

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Becker:

That this House condemn the Federal Government for its incompetence in failing to take appropriate action to reduce housing loan interest rates.

(Continued from 19 February. Page 2985.)

Mr DUIGAN (Adelaide): Everyone is concerned about access to housing, whether it be public or private housing or whether for purchase or for rent. But the motion as framed, in my opinion, completely misrepresents the position that has been taken by the Federal Government in respect of housing loan interest rates. The main point that occurs to me from this motion is the audacity of the honourable member and the hypocrisy that is involved. The Federal Government, particularly over the past 18 months, has taken many steps to ensure that those people who are subject to housing loan interest rates are not overly burdened by increasing monthly housing repayments that would force them out of their home.

Some 12 months ago the Commonwealth Government intervened in the market and took what I believe was appropriate action to ensure that those people who were then on a 13.5 per cent housing interest rate loan were able to continue with it.

The details of the position that was reached by the Federal Government, in association with the banks, had a number of significant features. There was an intervention in the market place and an intervention in the area of home loan interest rates to ensure that people could continue with their existing loans and also to ensure that people could continue to enter the home purchase market. There were five main elements of that Commonwealth Government intervention in the market. The first was that those people who were on the 13.5 per cent interest rate level would stay there and that the Federal Government would intervene with a subsidy of more than \$180 million to the various banks (the Commonwealth, Westpac, ANZ and the National) to offset the consequences of keeping the interest rate low at that time.

The second feature of the intervention by the Federal Government one year ago was to ensure that what ended up as a 15.5 per cent rate was imposed on new interest rate levels for people who were entering the housing market for the first time. In addition, and as part of that package, the banks agreed to improve the availability of low start loans to low income borrowers. The third feature of that agreement was that funds available under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement would be increased during 1986-87, despite the fact that that would have a substantial effect on the overall Commonwealth budget, because it was believed by the banks and the Commonwealth that it was important to maintain funds through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement so that a whole variety of particularly public housing programs and public sector housing support programs could be continued.

The fourth element of the agreement reached one year ago was that the Commonwealth should continue to agree that States could use 60 per cent of their State Loan Council borrowings for 1986-87 and in most States that ended up being a significant contribution to the housing industry and led to the development of an adequate and affordable housing stock. In South Australia the impact was not quite as substantial. For the four years that the Bannon Labor Government has been in office, 100 per cent of the funds available under the State Loan Council borrowing program have been used for public housing purposes, so in effect this was a reduction in this State where there was a substantial commitment to the public housing program. Nonetheless, it indicated a commitment on the part of the Commonwealth.

The fifth and final element of the agreement entered into at the time between the banks and the Commonwealth was that, through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, the Commonwealth would continue to examine the provi-

sion of further assistance to be offered to the State Governments for on-lending through the existing State lending authorities. They were the actions taken by the Commonwealth one year ago and that agreement between the banks and the Commonwealth is up for renegotiation, because it expires at the end of March this year. There has been some extensive debate between the banks and the Government as to what the agreement ought to look like next year. Indeed, if one reads the *Australian* of today, one would find that the Federal Government has rejected a plea by the savings banks for an increase to \$200 million in the assistance to the banks by way of subsidy for a renegotiated new housing agreement.

This time the main reason for the Federal Government rejecting the appeal by the banks to be subsidised in continuing the 13.5 per cent home interest rate level is that there has been a substantial growth in home lending over this past year.

When the agreement was reached between the Commonwealth and the banks in April last year, home lending was running at about \$3 billion to \$4 billion. In this last year, we have seen the extraordinary growth in home lending rise to more than double that. This year, home lending will be about \$9 billion, which was more than what was planned at this time last year. So, the banks are already involved in a substantial lending program in which they were not involved last year and which was a singularly important aspect of their plea for a subsidy.

The second aspect of their plea for a subsidy related to the amount of savings that people were depositing with banks. Again, that has significantly changed this year. The Federal Treasurer (Mr Keating) has noted that savings bank deposit figures for January show an annual growth over this last year of some 15 per cent, which is a substantial increase on the position adopted last year. So, it is no wonder that the Federal Government at this stage is rejecting appeals for a continuation of the subsidy level to the private banking institutions on the grounds that the two main thrusts of their argument do not stand up to close financial scrutiny at this time and that in fact they have no basis.

Nonetheless, the Commonwealth remains committed to a continuation of the 13.5 per cent. It remains committed to maintaining the current level of 15.5 per cent for new home borrowers, and it remains committed to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, which is perhaps more than can be said of the Federal Liberal Party whose attitude to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is at best ambiguous and at worst destructive. In May of last year—

Mr Becker interjecting:

Mr DUIGAN: You may well ask your Federal people what their housing policies are. I would very much like to know what the Federal Liberal Party's housing policy is. Let me quote from a news release of May of last year which quotes one of the most radical policies of the Federal Liberal Party, if it came to power, in this housing area. It involved a scrapping of the First Home Owners Scheme and the privatisation of housing loans insurance policies. It included no reference whatsoever to ceilings on home interest rates and implied the abolition of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement under which thousands of people in this State are able to get into home ownership, whether through the public or private sector, and stay in home ownership as a result of subsidies on mortgages and on rents. If that Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement was abolished, then at least 14 000 people who were helped in this State last year would not be able to get into home ownership at all. That is approximately 4 500 families a year.

It is not just in the housing policy that we have to look at this whole area of the Liberal Party's attitude towards housing and people's access to accommodation: it is also in its taxation and revenue policies. I read with interest a statement by Mr Sinclair when he was giving the coalition's policy on revenue raising—on tax. In that policy he indicated that the Commonwealth would be withdrawing from a whole range of areas of community financing and community responsibilities and would allocate to the States the responsibility for collecting extra funds.

If these Liberal housing and taxation policies were implemented, there would be a dismantling of the various public housing funding programs that operate in South Australia; the First Home Owners Scheme would be abolished; and a large number of South Australian families would be deprived of home purchase assistance. It would spell the end of the State Government's home ownership made easier program, which is run by the State Bank; it would mean that the rental purchase program offered by the Housing Trust would have to be abolished; and it would also mean the end of public housing as an alternative for those who cannot afford to buy their own homes.

The member for Hanson is obviously interested in the fact that over the past four years the State Government has provided about 12 000 low interest housing loans to low income families and has housed record numbers of people in Housing Trust accommodation. In 1985-86 over 2 500 South Australian families received assistance under the First Home Owners Scheme. The abolition of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement would see the First Home Owners Scheme absolutely demolished and finished. It seems to me that it is important to clarify exactly what the Opposition spokesman on housing wants to see in respect of home interest rates. Does he want greater regulation and greater intervention in the market, or does he want less regulation and less intervention in the market?

On a number of occasions this Government and other State Labor Governments have reaffirmed their support for the 13.5 per cent interest rate level that has prevailed. An extensive range of support has been provided by the Labor Governments of New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria to ensure that people have access to affordable accommodation. The State Labor Governments continue to push their demands for housing for all Australians who need to be housed; they continue to argue for adequate mortgage insurance to increase the borrowing capacity of low income earners; they want to ensure that there is an additional flow of funds for home buyers by issuing Commonwealth backed capital indexed bonds for on-lending by the States; they wish to provide an additional \$300 million for public housing over and above the \$700 million which has been allocated through the Federal Government for 1986-87; and they want to continue to be able to nominate as much as they wish of Loan Council borrowings for public housing.

As I said earlier, since 1982 and the election of this Government South Australia has allocated 100 per cent of those funds to public housing, and we want to maintain that level. The Commonwealth Government's attitude—by intervening in the housing market, by guaranteeing access for a large range of people in the housing market—supported and extended by this State in a whole range of programs like the community association housing cooperatives, rent relief, mortgage support programs, and so on, constitutes intervention in the market and an attempt (in the words of the motion) to take appropriate action to ensure that people are able to address themselves and get into the home ownership which they believe is so important.

So, there is intervention in the market. At the moment we see a deregulated approach by the Liberal Party. If there was complete deregulation of interest rates, including home interest rates, there is no doubt (as the banks have indicated during the current round of talks with the Federal Government) that all housing interest rates would rise. In fact, they would rise significantly above the present 15.5 per cent level. It is all very well for the member for Hanson to suggest that the Federal Government is not taking appropriate action—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the honourable member wishes to move an amendment. I remind him that he has only four minutes left.

Mr DUIGAN: There has been an active intervention by the Federal Government in the market. If the member for Hanson wants more intervention, let him reaffirm and let his Federal Party reaffirm their support for the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement. Let them reaffirm that there is in fact a ceiling on those 13.5 per cent interest rates. At the moment, all we know is that they have a deregulation policy in respect of all interest rates which would send them above the board. Therefore, in order to allow the member for Hanson an opportunity to indicate exactly where he stands on deregulation of the housing interest market, I move an amendment to the motion as follows:

Leave out all words after 'the House' and insert 'supports the Federal Government's moves to maintain the 13.5 per cent bank housing interest rate level for existing loans; supports the maintenance of a 15.5 per cent ceiling on new housing loans; and supports the continuation of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and the First Home Owners Scheme; and condemns all attempts to completely deregulate the market interest rate.'

Mr BECKER (Hanson): We have again witnessed the disgraceful exhibition of a junior backbencher replying to a motion put forward by the Opposition when the Minister traditionally has been the person to reply to such motions. Obviously, the Minister is neither competent nor capable of doing so. We have seen a whole range of legislative moves by the Opposition about which Ministers have yet to show their face or to respond. Of course, we have become accustomed to the Trades Hall tactics used in this House and there are a few of us who are not frightened to accommodate the people opposite.

I remind the member for Adelaide that since his Government came to office federally housing loan interest rates have increased by 52 per cent from 11.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent: the National Australia Bank is charging 17.5 per cent interest. As members of the Bannockburn State Government, which supports the Federal Government, members opposite have a lot to answer for to their constituents when they talk of interest rates and what they have done, because they have done very little: all they have done is put a lot of people to the wall. One has only to read an article which appeared in the *Advertiser* this morning which related to the Central Mission and which confirms what I have said over the past few months, that people in South Australia are struggling, that some of them are unfortunately going bankrupt because they cannot afford to remain in their own homes.

Mr S.G. Evans: Socialist policies.

Mr BECKER: Yes, the member is dead right: socialist policies have broken the country. Only a few moments ago the Liberal and National Party released its housing and construction policy. I will read it for the benefit of the member for Adelaide:

Housing objectives: The Liberal/National Parties regard the provision of secure and comfortable housing for all Australians as a matter of national importance. Accordingly, the creation of an economic environment which will enable Australians either to

own their own homes or to rent from private investors is a major priority.

The private sector provides dwellings for the home owner and home rental market. To enable the private sector to perform this function more effectively, the next Liberal/National Party Government, in addition to providing the necessary economic framework, will:

- maintain the interest rate ceiling for home loans entered into before 2 April 1986;

Ms Gayler: Are you prepared to table this?

Mr BECKER: The policy continues:

- encourage the housing industry to meet the changing needs of Australian society;

Mr S.G. Evans: You have been asked whether you are prepared to table it.

Mr BECKER: Of course I am prepared to table it: I will even autograph it for the member, or put it in braille and then she might be able to understand it. The policy continues:

- increase the availability of housing funds by, among other methods, facilitating the development of a secondary mortgage market, as recommended by the Campbell committee;
- cooperate with the private lending institutions on the capacity of home owners to meet mortgage repayments to ensure a smooth and efficient flow of funds to home borrowers, particularly with the use of flexible loan packages;
- implement monetary policies that ensure an adequate supply of housing funds at reasonable interest rates;
- maintain and support the current system of use of contractors and subcontractors, recognising that they have contributed significantly as small businesses to the efficiency and flexibility of the industry; their role and rights will be protected from trade union coercion and Government interference;
- facilitate the training of skilled workers and encourage the employment of apprentices by encouraging the removal of restrictive ratios between the number of tradesmen and the number of apprentices who may be employed.

The policy further states that the next Liberal/National Party Government will:

- maintain the current First Home Owners Scheme with particular emphasis on families;
- honour existing entitlements to the First Home Owners Scheme.

The Liberal/National Parties will ensure effective consultation between all Federal departments having housing responsibilities to achieve better coordination on housing matters and to avoid unnecessary duplication or activities.

That is only part of the housing policy. All we have to do is remember the gaffe made by Senator Ryan. It was not a gaffe: Senator Ryan told the truth and paid the price. The *Australian* of Thursday 26 February 1987 stated:

A confidential briefing paper that pointedly disagrees with the Prime Minister's claim that interest rates will fall this year was tabled in the Senate yesterday by the Federal Minister for Education, Senator Ryan, deeply embarrassing the Government. Senator Ryan tabled the paper in response to a question on housing interest rates from Opposition frontbencher Senator Brian Archer. The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, last night carpeted Senator Ryan and some of her senior staff for the lapse, which had damaged the Government's strategy of arguing that interest rates will be on the way down towards the end of this election year.

What a tragedy when someone has the courage to tell the truth and we then find that they are treated in that manner by the Prime Minister of this country. So much for their care of the young people and young families of this State and nation! Let us go back to an article that appeared in the *Advertiser* of 30 September 1986 under the heading 'Sharp drop in home approvals' which points to the crisis that is occurring and has occurred in the housing industry. At the end of the article the South Australian Minister of Housing and Construction made a comment—the first time he has made one. He usually gets a spokesman to do it. The article states:

He also predicted a drop in interest rates later this year or early next year and said this would encourage people to buy their own homes.

The South Australian Minister of Housing and Construction made that statement some six months ago. One gets some idea from this of the nonsense that has been peddled around by the current State Government. It has done nothing. It is not helping the average family to retain their home. It has done nothing in relation to the interest rate market except put a ceiling on home loans of 13.5 per cent.

I remind the member for Adelaide that the banks want the ceiling of 13.5 per cent lifted, and most of us would not support that. The Australian banks will introduce a service fee, mark my words. They tried to do it some 12 to 15 months ago and I complained to a couple of them, and they dropped it. They will get around this issue. It is up to the Federal Government to exercise proper economic restraint so that interest rates can be forced down. I could go on for quite some time. There has been a most pathetic response to the motion. I will not support the amendment, and I am prepared to put it to the vote. I urge members to oppose the amendment and support the motion.

Ms GAYLER: I ask that the House grant leave to the member for Hanson to table the policy document.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot accept that as a proposition.

The House divided on the amendment:

Ayes (22)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs Bannon, Blevins, Crafter, De Laine, Duigan (teller), M.J. Evans, and Ferguson, Ms Gayler, Messrs Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne, Rann, Robertson, and Tyler.

Noes (17)—Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, Becker (teller), and Blacker, Ms Cashmore, Messrs Chapman, Eastick, S.G. Evans, Goldsworthy, Ingerson, Lewis, Meier, Olsen, Oswald, and Wotton.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

The House divided on the motion as amended:

Ayes (22)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs Bannon, Blevins, Crafter, De Laine, Duigan (teller), M.J. Evans, and Ferguson, Ms Gayler, Messrs Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne, Rann, Robertson, and Tyler.

Noes (17)—Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, Becker (teller), and Blacker, Ms Cashmore, Messrs Chapman, Eastick, S.G. Evans, Goldsworthy, Ingerson, Lewis, Meier, Olsen, Oswald, and Wotton.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Motion as amended thus carried.

[Sitting suspended from 1.6 to 2 p.m.]

QUESTION TIME

The SPEAKER: Before calling on questions, I advise that the Minister of Labour will answer questions for the Minister of Housing and Construction in his absence.

ETSA ASSETS

Mr OLSEN: Will the Premier reveal who now owns the Torrens Island power station and other major ETSA assets worth in total almost \$1 billion: why, in particular, the Torrens Island power station was sold for \$150 million when it is valued at almost \$750 million; and what specific

advantages will flow to power consumers from these secret financial deals in the long as well as the short term?

I refer to these deals as 'secret' because they have not been the subject of any public announcement by the Government. However, the latest issue of the publication *Australian Property News*, which is accepted in Government and business circles as a reliable and authoritative source of information on property transactions, reveals that the Torrens Island power station was sold privately last month for a figure understood to be about \$150 million, that the Northfield substation has been sold privately for about \$15 million, and the Dry Creek, Snuggery and Mintaro substations have been sold for more than \$65 million. While the sale price of the substations is the same as the Auditor-General's valuation of them, the \$150 million paid for the Torrens Island power station compares with an Auditor-General's valuation of \$742 million.

The secrecy of these deals has prompted widespread public concern and questioning about who owns these assets of vital importance to South Australians and precisely what benefits there are to power consumers in the long as well as short term from arrangements which transfer these assets to private overseas ownership, something which in fact the Premier condemned before the last election. Whilst these arrangements produce a cash flow for the Electricity Trust in the short term, this must be offset against the longer-term bottom line cost of the lease payments themselves.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: First, no secret arrangements have been entered into. The arrangements have been fully reported and disclosed, as they must be, both in the ETSA reports and accounts and in the Auditor-General's reports. The details, to the extent that commercial confidentiality is preserved, are available. Secondly, we are talking about financial transactions which are aimed at providing very tangible long-term benefits to electricity consumers in South Australia, because they are going to reduce the need for ETSA to service borrowings at high rates well into the future. They run into some millions of dollars. In other words, ETSA gets immediate up-front benefits from these transactions, and the long-term benefits will be shown in electricity tariffs in this State.

Let me outline the arrangements: three arrangements have been undertaken in relation to Leigh Creek, involving coal supplies, turbo generators and boilers. All three arrangements were the subject of inquiry and discussion by the parliamentary Select Committee on Energy Needs in South Australia. It explored those issues fully and reported upon them publicly in ETSA's 1986 annual report, and further transactions will be reported on in subsequent reports. The Auditor-General also must have regard to this. In relation to the Leigh Creek coal supplies—

Mr Olsen: I didn't ask about Leigh Creek—

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It might be worth outlining that—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: —because exactly the same transaction is taking place in all cases; therefore, it would be a good idea to understand the nature of these transactions which are providing millions of dollars in benefits with no loss of sovereignty or control of our assets. They are extremely useful financial arrangements, which the people of South Australia will be applauding. The leasing arrangement in relation to Leigh Creek (and this is a good example of the way in which these transactions operate) is for a 25 year term. It involves the leasing out of the northern power station to an investor, with ETSA providing management of the power station, supply of Leigh Creek coal, and pur-

chase by ETSA of electricity generated at the power station. ETSA receives certain payments on deposit and although that deposit, over \$200 million, is applied immediately against the proceeds from the sale of coal that ETSA supplies during the first five years, ETSA's liability involves half-year payments over the term of the agreement.

That means getting money up-front, which provides immediate benefits to ETSA's current financing and the repayments over time and the reduction in the requirement for borrowings at high interest rates by the trust provide long term tangible benefits also. It is a financial arrangement which simply means that in a high interest rate regimen ETSA is able to get its funds at a lower cost than other borrowing alternatives. If there were other ways of doing it we would find them. It involves a sale and lease-back arrangement, the precise details of which cannot be made available without breaching commercial confidentiality.

But let me say this in relation to them: they have been undertaken under the aegis of the Loan Council within the global balance limits set for this State's borrowings; they have resulted in substantial savings, compared with conventional borrowing costs, and it is simply a means of borrowing; they are not off balance sheet to the extent that liabilities have been assumed by other parties; they have been reported at non-current liabilities of ETSA, and any indemnities given to investors are already cleared in the tax authorities. That is the arrangement that has been entered into with the Torrens Island power station as well.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I would like to quote to the House from a document that has been prepared by the trust. I think this is important. I am sorry to take so long during Question Time, but it is important that these transactions be understood. I quote from a document prepared by the trust:

Any transfer of title to plant, either through the sale of plant or an interest in the plant by way of lease to the trust is directed towards the trust achieving financial benefits.

It is a paper financial transaction, and nothing to do with the control of the assets themselves. The document continues:

There is no interference with the trust's rights or abilities to properly operate and maintain the assets involved, in accordance with its normal requirements and in the interests of its customers . . . It uses its normal resources, including its own employees, to operate and maintain the assets. The trust will regain title at the end of the term of the financing arrangements, while preserving its financial benefits.

That is one of the chief features: it is not giving away title for all time. It continues:

Only those arrangements which are financially beneficial to the trust's customers are considered, that is, arrangements which produce monetary benefits to the trust, that allow a lower tariff than otherwise would be possible. Any such arrangements are made in conjunction with the State Treasury and Financing Authority. All legal documentation is under the advice of proper legal authorities, including Crown Law. It is understood—

and this is the key to the transactions, Mr Speaker, and this is the thing that members opposite do not understand, I think—

that overseas investors are interested in being party to such financing arrangements because they receive certain financial benefits by way of taxation arrangements in their own countries. It is from these overseas taxation benefits (for example in Japan) that the trust receives, through the overseas investors, financial benefits.

That is how we reduce the cost to ETSA of its borrowings, which then feed through into lower electricity charges. The document continues:

The trust assumes no foreign exchange risks under these financing arrangements. Where the leasing arrangements result in addi-

tional levels of borrowing to be subsequently repaid, they are part of the normal Loan Council allocation.

Finally, as I have already said, the existence and financial effects of those arrangements are made in the annual reports of ETSA and the Auditor-General. They are fully accounted for. We are looking in all the areas that we can to lower the cost of our capital program, to try to get the best interest rates, and financial transactions that will achieve that will be entered into.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Briggs.

POLICE RESOURCES

Mr RANN: Is the Minister of Emergency Services satisfied that the Government is providing sufficient resources to the South Australian Police Department to cope with what at least one section of the media has today characterised as 'a wave of violence'? Today's issue of the *News* features on the front and subsequent inside pages stories that argue that detectives are being seconded from regional CIB offices to cope with the wave of violence which is stretching South Australian police resources to the limit. The report describes an apparent police manpower crisis, with the headline 'Shock report—Adelaide crime city'.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Again we are faced with hysterical headlines in this area, and again I think I have to warn people against the use of statistics in this sort of situation. It is very questionable; it is open to incorrect interpretation, if not distortion, and, in particular, statistics which are applied over a brief period are very questionable as to the source of any conclusions that can be drawn.

It is far more appropriate to examine trends over five to 10 years to see what is happening in this area. Naturally, when there is something of a blip in the statistics, as I concede we have seen in the past few weeks, people raise questions about the level of resources of the police. The police in this State are in a better position, in terms of resources, than are their counterparts in other States. As I have indicated in the House previously, we have a higher ratio of police to population than in any other State and our police are better equipped than any of their counterparts to be able to provide the services that we require from them. There is little doubt about that.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I have some figures, and I will detain the House slightly so that I can satisfy the member for Light and those others of his colleagues who may be inclined to be somewhat sceptical. In passing, however, I point out that we have a higher rate of crime reporting in this State because of the confidence with which the South Australian Police Force is held by the citizens generally. Also, our police are in a better position to be able to detect crime because of the resources available to them. It is worth recalling that the 1982-83 budget provided for \$121 million for the police and in this year's budget we will provide an estimated \$162 million. That is a \$40 million increase over that period under this Government. Similarly, expenditure on equipment and vehicles has increased from \$5.059 million in 1982-83 to \$11.226 million this year, not counting the RBT additions, red light cameras and the transit squad. Some of those figures have yet to be completely finalised.

During this period an additional 48 positions have been created together with associated equipment, vehicles and accommodation for the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and the State Emergency Services. We have spent about \$1

million on new computer hardware for a highly sophisticated criminal intelligence system to support the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, and further acquisitions in that area are in sight. There has been a total upgrading of metropolitan and country communications at a cost of \$20 million at 1983-84 prices over eight years. A new aircraft was purchased at a cost of \$700 000 and we have expanded building equipment and provided new complexes at Holden Hill, Woodside, Beachport, Balaklava and Norwood. About \$800 000 will be spent on an office and hangars for the air wing at Adelaide Airport. Equipment has been purchased far in excess of the replacement program and \$293 000 has been provided in 1986-87 for personal communication equipment, handcuffs and handguns. An additional seven investigators were approved in 1985-86 under organised crime, an additional six prosecution positions were approved, five Aboriginal aides were recruited and six transit squad members were appointed at a cost of about \$180 000 a year.

A \$5 million communications and emergency operations centre in Angas Street will proceed, the cost to this State of the national automated fingerprint network will be about \$1 million, and the community policing program, has resulted in additional police in the field, an increase from eight to 16 in the number of 24-hour police stations, and additional accommodation, vehicles and equipment. The introduction of the community policing program has seen the rapid expansion of crime prevention programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, the safety house scheme and the school involvement program. In 1986-87 in real terms there were reductions in all Government areas except policing, where there were no cutbacks. There were additional resources for the transit squad, random breath testing, equipment and accommodation. One murder is too many. Nonetheless, this Government has shown that it has a sense of responsibility in ensuring that the resources are available for the police to do the job.

ETSA ASSETS

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Will the Premier say what are the names of the Japanese or Austrian companies or investors who now own South Australian power stations and ETSA assets, which investors own which assets, and why Torrens Island was sold for \$130 million when it is valued at \$780 million?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I think that the question asked by the Deputy Leader indicates his ignorance of the whole nature of this transaction, which is essentially a financial transaction with a number of quite complex attributes to it aimed at achieving a particular financial result. For reasons of commercial confidentiality I cannot provide the House with the names of those companies.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Premier will resume his seat for one moment. It is common knowledge that the Chair does show some degree of tolerance towards interjections. That tolerance cannot be extended when they become discourteous, distracting or, worst of all, disorderly.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I will undertake to consult with our legal and commercial advisers and provide what information is appropriate for reasons of commerciality. I repeat again that these financial transactions do not in any way alienate Government resources. On the contrary, they allow for electricity to be provided at cheaper prices to all South Australian consumers.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Fisher.

Members interjecting:

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

HAPPY VALLEY LAND

Mr TYLER: Can the Minister of Water Resources say whether he will agree to release E&WS land adjacent to the Happy Valley Primary School on Education Road for use as a car park and drop-off zone for people attending the school? Members will recall that during—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The honourable member for Fisher should be heard in relative silence.

Mr TYLER: Members will recall that during the second half of 1986 I presented a petition to the House on behalf of parents, teachers and other citizens involved with the Happy Valley Primary School urging that this land be released for the purpose that I have already stated. The problem of traffic congestion on Education Road has existed for some time. The Chairperson of the school council and many parents of students attending the school and the nearby kindergarten approached me last year about the problem and expressed the view that the hazard was exacerbated by the lack of parking facilities and areas to collect and drop off children with safety and convenience.

Parents have been supported in their request by the Principal of the school, who has also expressed his concern to me, as well as to Education Department officials. I understand from the Principal and parent representatives that the situation had worsened recently because the school has experienced an enrolment increase of 150 to 200 children.

Parents have also expressed the view that, with increased building activity in the area, the situation has worsened, and this means that traffic is no longer restricted to local residents and people going to and from the school. I am told also that there has been an increase in the amount of heavy traffic using the road in recent months. My constituents also believe that as building activity is usual in that area this latter problem is likely to be long term. Therefore, I urge the Minister to release this land as a matter of urgency.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I think I can say that the honourable member is able to reap some rewards for persistence in this matter, because I indicate to him that .4 of a hectare of land owned by the E&WS Department has been identified as being appropriate for such a development and that that will be transferred immediately for this purpose. I cannot speak for my colleague, the Minister of Education, as to when resources will be available for the development of the area of the land so transferred as a park. I understand in any event that it would not be possible for the land to be developed for use before the beginning of the third semester this year, which is 20 July, but I suggest that the member for Fisher take up the matter with the Minister of Education in order to establish how soon those resources can be made available. We will transfer the land immediately.

GOVERNMENT CHARGES

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Will the Premier give a guarantee that any rises in electricity tariffs, public transport fares, water rates and other major Government charges will be kept below the CPI next financial year to encourage continuing wage restraint? In the national wage case decision this week, the Full Bench of the Arbitration Commis-

sion singled out public sector taxes and charges as a cause of Australia's high inflation rate. This is particularly the case in South Australia, where the latest quarterly figures show that the contribution of Government charges to Adelaide's CPI is running at almost three times the national average.

Any continuation of this trend will increase demands for wage increases following widespread union dissatisfaction with the national wage case decision. The Victorian Premier has recognised this possibility by announcing that his Government would put a 6 per cent ceiling on a range of Government charges including electricity, rents, motor charges and public transport fares, all items which in South Australia have been increased by more than the CPI over the last 12 months and therefore have further eroded disposable incomes.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I can at this stage give no such guarantee, because there are so many other factors that must be taken into account. Obviously, it will be the Government's intention to keep such increases at the absolute lowest level. If that can be less than the CPI figure, then indeed that is what it will be. I point out that, in relation to a number of our charges, we have done very well over the past two or three years: we had a general freeze in 1985-86; in the case of electricity we had a 2 per cent reduction in tariffs at the end of 1985 and a 6.8 per cent increase at the end of 1986, which was about three points lower than inflation and an overall real decrease of the order of 12 per cent or 13 per cent. In the case of water rates this year the increase was of the order of 6.5 per cent—again less than inflation. Therefore, we have certainly paid close attention to the need to try to keep those costs down.

I would like to pick up and dispute one point that the honourable member made in relation to the impact of Government charges on the CPI figure. In fact, it is true that, if one looks at the last quarter, there is an effect which comes about from the counting in by the ABS in that quarter's figures—and they do this only once a year in our case—of certain increases that have taken place. However, if the honourable member likes to look at the earlier CPI figures during the year he will see that, in fact, there has been a nil effect of Government charges on at least two of those quarters and that in the two quarters when there was some impact it was below the national average. So, in fact, the overall effect of Government charges in this State on the CPI has been way below the national average and way below most other States.

We have a very good record on which to build. If the honourable member is interested, I will provide him with those figures, which will illustrate what I say. Secondly, in relation to the Victorian proposal, I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that they are talking of a 6 per cent average over what they call a 'Government basket of charges'.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: No, I am just saying that what the Victorians are proposing is an average increase of 6 per cent, and I do not see them as saying that each and every charge listed in that basket of charges will, in fact, be kept at 6 per cent. Let me refer to one example in South Australia, that of compulsory third party insurance. The compulsory third party fund in some other States (and most notably Victoria) got into an extremely parlous situation, and so did ours, but we had nowhere near the problems that they have had in other States. As this House knows, we have passed legislation to try to ensure that we can restrict the increase in CTP, but if we intervene against the recommendations of our Third Party Premiums Committee,

and interfere in any major way by preventing increases in this area, we will be putting the fund in jeopardy and, in fact, foisting that burden onto taxpayers in the future.

We may get some short-term credit, but the long-term implications are very grave indeed. My Government will not allow our fund to get into the situation in which other funds have found themselves. Indeed, that is one area where I can make no guarantees, because it is in the hands of our Third Party Premiums Committee. It will recommend on the basis of what the fund needs in terms of payments, and that will have to be the decision on which the Government acts.

DIAL-A-DEBATE

Mr FERGUSON: Can you, Mr Speaker, inform the House whether you have ever considered introducing dial-a-debate for the House of Assembly? You, Sir, would be aware that on both sides of the House there has been much discussion regarding the way to improve public access to the affairs of Parliament. Recently a private member's Bill was introduced to try to give the public more notice of debates so that members of the general public could be forewarned and make themselves available to hear the debates. This proposal has its difficulties.

While there is no doubt that many media outlets now provide wide and indirect coverage of the main issues, it has been put to me that there is a need for the introduction of a dial-a-debate service. It has also been put to me that such a service could be introduced to provide a simple and cost effective way of ensuring that all South Australians have easy access to what is happening in their Parliament.

The SPEAKER: The proposal put forward by the member for Henley Beach is an interesting one. No doubt, it will be encouraging to members in their endeavours if the honourable member proved to be correct in his belief that there would be widespread interest in such a service. However, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association newsletter recently reported that 'live British House of Commons debates may soon join recorded pop music, cricket scores and children's stories as services offered on the country's telephone system', whereby customers 'would pay 38 pence a minute to dial into live or recorded sessions relayed direct from the floor of the House'.

I understand that a similar service could be provided by Telecom to telephone subscribers for a more modest fee of \$1.50 an hour. For members of the public with interest in a particular Bill, this could be a more immediate method of monitoring specific debates than subscribing for a year to *Hansard*. Radio broadcasts of State Parliament, along the lines of the service produced by the ABC for Federal Parliament, are unlikely ever to be introduced, but the proposal of the member for Henley Beach might possibly provide an alternative means of access to debate for persons who are unable to personally be present in the public gallery of our Chamber.

In relation to the House of Commons experiment referred to, two significant aspects are worthy of note: first, that the Mother of Parliaments, the House of Commons, does not allow the television coverage that our Parliament has pioneered in Australia and permits only very limited radio coverage. Secondly, I understand that the House of Commons does not have a microphone and loudspeaker system like that which we have to carry debates from the Chamber into other rooms in the building, such as members' parliamentary offices, press rooms, meeting rooms, and so on. I suspect that the proposed dial-a-debate system in Britain

seems to be aimed primarily at remedying those two deficiencies. However, I will inquire into the proposal of the member for Henley Beach as to whether it could be implemented here.

As a footnote, I would add that I am certainly in favour of a less ambitious recorded telephone service which could be updated twice a day to inform members of the public which Bills are listed on the Notice Paper each day, as this is a service, as the members for Henley Beach and Chaffey pointed out last year, which is not and cannot effectively be provided through the newspapers, because our daily agenda is in such a constant state of change.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I apologise to the member for Heysen. It was the member for Heysen who brought this matter to our attention last year.

NATIONAL WAGE CASE

Mr S.J. BAKER: As the State's largest single employer, how does the Government intend to implement this week's national wage case decision for State public sector employees and what impact will the decision have on the State's budgetary position? The Arbitration Commission's decision gives employers two choices—to agree with unions on the timing of the 4 per cent rise in the second tier and the 3 per cent superannuation benefit or to go to arbitration on the matter. The \$10 a week rise being implemented immediately will cost the budget an extra \$40 million a year, and the further rises and superannuation benefit in the second tier will cost at least another \$90 million—an all-up annual cost of \$130 million.

These extra costs will place further pressure on the State budget and increase the likelihood of more rises in taxes and charges. Just how much this will affect the 1987-88 budget will depend on precisely when these increases are implemented, that is, what happens to the second tier. All other employers in South Australia are also waiting for the Government's reaction, as any concession by the Government to unrealistic or unreasonable union demands following this week's decision will put pressure on them as well as on all taxpayers.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Government has not yet established a position on the 4 per cent, and for very good reasons. Until the commission's complex decision is analysed in detail and there has been a flow-on of that decision through the South Australian Industrial Commission, we cannot say clearly what negotiations will take place with the trade union movement. I assume that the member for Mitcham does not suggest that State Government employees should be disadvantaged compared to private sector employees, so there will be negotiations at some stage with the unions. As I understand the decision, any agreement reached between the parties must be endorsed by the commission, and the commission's guidelines, as I understand at this stage, are very tight indeed. So, it may well be that in the public sector the increases may not be granted to public sector employees at the same speed as they are to private sector employees.

The requirement to demonstrate improvements in efficiency and changes in work practices which the commission has stated in its decision must clearly accompany any second tier wage increase will take much negotiation with the public sector unions to establish. However, as soon as the flow-on has taken place and the decision has been analysed, the State Government will certainly come to a position. We will also be influenced to some degree by what happens in

the other States and in the Commonwealth, because it is unlikely that the South Australian Government will be a leader in the field. Our record is that South Australian public sector employees have always been around the middle of the ladder in the marketplace. Generally speaking, we are not leaders in the wage and salary stakes, nor are we the lowest. I believe that, after working through this decision, that position will again prevail.

BIRDSVILLE HOTEL

Ms LENEHAN: Does the Minister of Transport, as Acting Minister of Tourism, agree with a Liberal Senator that the Birdsville Hotel has no connection with the promotion and development of South Australian tourism? Over the radio earlier today it was reported that South Australian Senator Amanda Vanstone had criticised the South Australian Tourism Minister (Hon. Barbara Wiese), who is at present in Berlin promoting South Australia, for putting her signature to the summary of the South Australian Tourism Plan (1987-89), because, as Senator Vanstone said, that document included a photograph of the Birdsville Hotel. The apparent basis for the Senator's attack was that the hotel was in Queensland.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for her question because I, too, heard Senator Vanstone's statement over the radio this morning. It occurred to me that it was somewhat strange that the female Liberal members of Parliament seem to have a problem with our Minister of Tourism whereas, on the other hand, the male Liberal members seem to be amenable to her. I will leave it for the House to judge why that is occurring.

I appreciate the honourable member's reference to the fact that the Minister of Tourism is now at Tourism Borsche, the major tourism exhibition fair in the world. It may be of interest to members of the House, particularly the member for Coles, to note that on page 3, no less, of the *Berliner Bild*—the major newspaper in Berlin—is a magnificent photograph of the South Australian Minister of Tourism: page 3 of the *Berliner Bild*. Even the tourism fraternity in Berlin acknowledges the tourism benefits of photographing the South Australian Minister of Tourism and so giving our State a very high profile indeed. I could not imagine why anybody would cavil at that.

I thought it was interesting to hear Senator Vanstone's criticisms of the Minister in regard to an excellent document—'Tourism in South Australia, a summary of the South Australian tourism plan'. What Senator Vanstone did not say was that the plan was also signed by the Chairman of the South Australian Tourism Industry Council (Wendy Chapman), the Chairman of the South Australian Association of Regional Tourist Organisations (Martin Stanley) and, of course, the Chairman of the Tourism Development Board (Graham Inns). One wonders why Senator Vanstone wanted to focus her criticism on the Minister of Tourism when these other significant leading people in the industry joined with her in signing the document.

As to the specific complaint itself, I am sure my friend the member for Eyre would agree with me that both the Strzelecki and Birdsville tracks are very important parts of the South Australian tourism industry. I know what he will say about the condition of the highway, but the Birdsville and Strzelecki tracks are very important parts of our South Australian tourism package; how better could we promote the Birdsville Track in one simple photograph than through the aegis of the Birdsville Hotel, which is 19 kilometres across the border into Queensland. However, overwhelm-

ingly the hotel is related to tourism in South Australia. It is a brilliant promotion opportunity in this publication to include the Birdsville Hotel.

It would be appropriate, I believe, to include Ayers Rock, where so many tens of thousands of people commute through South Australia, spending money at restaurants, service stations, motels and so on, on their way to Ayers Rock, which makes a major contribution to South Australia's tourism industry. The emphasis of this Government is to work in cooperation with other States in promoting the very special tourism product we have here. If that means that we work with the Northern Territory and Queensland, we will do so. Senator Vanstone's criticisms are ill-based and motivated by the same sort of reasons that other criticisms seem to be directed to the Minister of Tourism. One can only suspect that it is tinged with a touch of envy because she happens to be young.

NATIONAL WAGE CASE

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: My question is directed to the Premier. In view of today's disastrous job figures, which highlight the need for continuing wage restraint, will the Government ask the State Industrial Commission to issue an order preventing a flow-on of the national wage case decision to members of unions working under State awards who take industrial action over the decision? Today's labour market figures show that unemployment in South Australia has increased by 7 500 over the last 12 months—one in 10 South Australians looking for work cannot find a job—and our rate of employment growth is the lowest of any State.

While the major hope for a reversal of these trends lies in an export led diversification of the State economy, our export performance has also nosedived, despite the devaluation of the dollar, with the total value of our exports so far this year down more than 20 per cent in real terms—which is the worst result in Australia. In these circumstances, excessive wage demands and industrial action in support of them are the last thing the State economy can withstand. However, building industry unions have already used this week's national wage decision as an excuse to step up their long campaign of industrial blackmail on major construction sites. The Trades and Labor Council has also condemned the decision, raising the possibility of more widespread industrial action in South Australia. The alarming deterioration in the State economy demands positive action by the State Government—

The SPEAKER: Order! Quite clearly the honourable member is making a speech on this subject and is not giving a brief, factual explanation to her question. If she continues in that line I will be obliged to withdraw leave.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Mr Speaker, I assure you that the information is factual, in view of the fact that 64 700 South Australians are now on the dole queue. As the State Government has to make a submission to the State Industrial Commission for a flow-on of the national wage case decision to workers under State awards, it has the opportunity to show that it is not prepared to tolerate—

The SPEAKER: Order! Leave is withdrawn. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: First, the employment figures are not disastrous. I know that it has become the practice of the Opposition to refer to the economy in this way with, notably, someone in the other place saying that our economy was in the gutter. That is a nice interpretation of South Australia and its prospects. In saying that, I am not sug-

gesting that the position is good. I am simply saying that we should have some perspective about it, because, if we do not, South Australia is in for a very sorry fate. In fact, the unemployment figures show that Queensland—the great home of, presumably, wage restraint, attacks on unions, and all these other things that the Opposition praises—has an unemployment rate of 11 per cent, the highest in Australia. Tasmania, the other State under conservative rulers, has an unemployment rate of 10 per cent—the second highest in Australia. Ours, at 9.8 per cent, is the third highest, but I point out that the figure for New South Wales is 9.7 per cent, only .1 per cent below us. So, the situation must be put into perspective: it is not good, but it certainly is not disastrous.

Secondly, we have seen a considerable increase in employment and overtime at greater than the national average. What we have also seen as a result of the confidence that that engenders is an increase in our participation rate. Anyone who knows anything about the labour market understands that if more people, encouraged to find jobs, come on to the labour market then, certainly in a transition period, the unemployment rate will be inflated. I point out that our increase in the participation rate is much higher than in any other State. I suggest that what is happening in the other States is that a lot of people are simply dropping out of the labour market; they are vanishing from sight, because they have given up. At least in South Australia they are offering for work.

To point the finger at wages as being the employment problem in this country at the moment is laughable. Wages have been rising at less than the CPI. There has been a prices and wages (mainly wages) accord in operation for some time, and in employer and economic terms that has resulted in the most favourable wages result probably since the Great Depression. So, it is outrageous to blame wages and the workers for the economic problems that we have at the moment.

They have done their bit, and the Arbitration Commission has made a ruling. I believe it would be quite wrong and indeed it would be totally counterproductive, because we would simply put more people on the dole queue if the wage rise that was granted legitimately was denied to workers in South Australia under State awards. Remember, we are talking about 45 per cent of the work force. We would be discriminating against those workers operating under purely State awards: they would be getting less than those who work under Federal awards even though the work, and the ambit of their work, might be the same. All that would happen in practical terms is that those workers under State awards (and I am glad there are some, because we have a very good Industrial Relations Commission and a superb record) would transfer to Federal jurisdiction. They would create an interstate dispute and we would find that they would avoid the implications.

The ignorance of the honourable member about the industrial relations system and wage fixation is extraordinary. I reject the approach that the honourable member is suggesting as a solution to our problems. They are much more basic than that. She flaunts export figures very selectively, as does her colleague in another place. It is odd that members of the Liberal Party who claim to represent country electorates forget the very great importance to our export position of grain, particularly barley and wheat. Surely, in decrying what has happened to exports, they are ignoring, apparently, the way in which the value of exports of those important products has crashed. Particularly in the case of barley, that has created an undue effect here in South Australia. So, if they want to point the finger at the farmers or

the rural sector, that is well and good. We do not see it that way.

For those areas where our exports have reduced there are also a number of other areas where exports have increased, and we should ensure that we take a positive posture in this area and do not become overwhelmed by the problems. I totally reject suggestions that our economy is in the gutter. They are nice words indeed from members opposite, and typical of their attitude to South Australia!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition should be aware that it is highly disorderly to continue interjecting when the House has been called to order. I call on the member for Albert Park.

MEDIAN STRIPS

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister of Transport provide my constituents with details of the program to install raised median strips along the following roads within my district: Findon Road, Tapleys Hill Road, Trimmer Parade and West Lakes Boulevard? On 23 April 1981 I wrote to the then Minister of Transport and asked to be provided with details about whether there were plans to erect a median strip along Findon Road and also Crittenden Road and Findon Road to Port Road. I received correspondence from the Hon. Michael Wilson on 12 May 1981 saying that there was no intention to proceed with such a project for at least three years.

I waited for three years and on 5 January I received correspondence from the Hon. Roy Abbott pointing out that the City of Woodville had agreed in principle to the installation of the said raised median strip. I will not detail the whole of my file to the House: suffice to say that in 1985 the member for Spence, the member for Henley Beach and I were strongly criticised in the local press for taking no action to protect our local constituents.

The SPEAKER: Order! At this stage the honourable member seems to be making debating points rather than explaining his question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That is for the Chair to determine.

Mr HAMILTON: With respect, I am stating the facts to the best of my ability. In the *Weekly Times* of 11 March, which was yesterday, the question of the installation of median strips on Findon Road was raised once again by the person who has actively criticised me for not protecting my constituents. I ask the Minister to outline the program for the installation of these median strips.

The SPEAKER: Order! Before calling on the Minister, I again remind members that it is not necessary—in fact, it is completely redundant—for a question to be put twice, once at the beginning and once at the end of the explanation.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question. For the information of members opposite, I have loads of answers here, but the pity is that they do not seem to ask the questions. So, if one of my colleagues raises a matter, I am only too happy to provide that honourable member with an appropriate reply. I cannot give the honourable member a detailed report on all the median strips to which he referred, but I will certainly obtain that information for him.

In regard to the Findon Road/Port Road/Crittenden Road median strips, the Highways Department has almost completed the design plans and resources are in hand to be able to commence that work hopefully in April or May 1987. I

am glad that the member for Albert Park did not read his complete file on the correspondence that has passed between him and my office about this and a number of other matters, because he has been quite diligent, as has his colleague the member for Henley Beach, in requesting information from the department and from the Minister as to the implementation of the median strip policy.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Median—I can spell it for the honourable member if he has some problem with it. The policy of building median strips on all of the major urban arterials that are wide enough to take a 2.9 metre strip has been determined by the Government on my advice, because it is a very significant road safety program. It is one program which can be put into place very readily and one which has quite demonstrable benefits. In fact, the money spent on a median strip will be repaid in community benefits within 12 months, and often closer to six months. It will reduce the casualty accidents and property accidents by up to 33 per cent. However, there is a problem in trying to get the community to accept median strips. Local members, and particularly councils, have always been under considerable pressure from their communities, who, by and large, are opposed to them if in fact the median strips are to be placed in front of their houses.

I decided (and my colleagues agreed) that, because this is a sensitive area involving a significant road safety matter, the Government should take the initiative and adopt the implementation of median strips on Highways Department or Government arterials as a matter of policy. I have done that and, by and large, it has been accepted. I am aware of the criticism alluded to by the member for Albert Park, and it comes from Mr Joseph Rossi. His name has appeared once or twice before. If I am not mistaken, he stood against either the member for Albert Park or the member for Henley Beach. I do not know whether or not his comments are totally unbiased. They may have another base to them altogether, but they ignore the real facts of road safety. The Government must provide as much road space for those people who use our roads as it is possible to achieve, and the median strips will do that. So, I will not be diverted from that policy. They will be introduced as soon as possible and, the sooner the Government can do that, the less flak backbenchers will have from their constituents and throughout the metropolitan area generally. We will install the median strips on Findon Road as quickly as possible, hopefully by April or May. I will obtain a report on the other roads mentioned by the member for Albert Park.

CROP PLANTING SCHEME

Mr BLACKER: Will the Minister of Agriculture give further consideration to the introduction of a crop planting scheme for South Australia? The Minister would be aware that in May and June last year I sought an opportunity to discuss with him the feasibility of a crop planting scheme for South Australia. I had in mind a scheme similar to that operating in Victoria and Western Australia. At that time I was refused an opportunity to speak with the Minister. In view of the increase in the severity of the rural crisis, the need for such a scheme is now all the more important.

The crop planting scheme provided for funds to be made available under the security of a crop lien for the purchase of fuel and super to sow the current season's crop. The scheme is designed to ensure three things:

1. That productive land is producing, irrespective of who is the beneficiary of the net return, either the farmer, the financial institution, or the Government.

2. To ensure that small businesses in local communities are supported with the result of cash flows during the seeding period.

3. To ensure that the farmer, if moving out of the industry, is assisted to do so with some dignity.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Yes, we are considering such a scheme. At the moment the department is investigating the possibility and viability of such a crop planting scheme. As the honourable member has advised the House, such a scheme was established in Victoria and operated last season and perhaps the season before. There are a couple of problems with it about which the department has expressed concern; that is, the potential for people being assessed by the banks as non-viable.

This comes back to discussions that we had with the banks on Monday. I think that we are already seeing a more sympathetic approach from the banks with regard to those farm units. I can assure the honourable member that we are looking at this issue at the moment. I hope that, following tomorrow's discussions in Melbourne with the Federal Minister and other Ministers, we will be better placed to make a decision in the next few weeks regarding this matter. I realise that time is running out, and that we must make a decision very shortly with regard to this program.

BAGGAGE STORAGE

Mr DUIGAN: Can the Minister of Transport, representing the Minister of Tourism in another place, say whether there are any opportunities for providing a short-term baggage claim facility at the South Australian Tourist Bureau in King William Street, particularly for young people? Over the holiday period and particularly during the summer, a large number of young people visit Adelaide as part of a trip around Australia. They are usually back-packing and use youth hostels and other cheap forms of accommodation such as caravan parks, or provide their own accommodation in the form of one or two-person tents. These people are often seen walking around the city, lugging their heavy back-packs with them, to get an idea of the layout of the city and of the sites that are to be seen as part of inner Adelaide.

Recently, two such young people (a male and a female) sought to leave their back-packs at the South Australian Tourist Bureau while they toured the inner city area before heading off on the next part of their journey. They were advised that it was not possible to leave their packs there, even for a couple of hours. Unlike hotel patrons, who are able to use the facilities of a hotel, and unlike people travelling by air who are able to use the baggage claim facilities of airline offices, these people are travelling on shoe-string budgets and do not have such a facility available to them. Such a facility in the inner city area would cater for that part of the tourist market that is not being catered for at the moment.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question and for giving my colleague the Minister of Tourism notice of it. The Minister has gone to Berlin to speak at the SKAL convention, but has provided me with a reply to this question. She thanks the honourable member for raising this matter, as she shares his concern. I am pleased to advise that an organisation known as Travellers Aid operates a luggage facility at the Adelaide Railway Station and that access can be gained whenever the station is open.

There are 28 lockers available in various sizes, some of which are capable of taking a back-pack. The lockers are coin operated, the user inserting \$1 into the slot and taking

a key. With the current upgrading of the station, a further 20 lockers will soon be available. In addition, interstate bus companies have limited luggage facilities and will hold luggage for passengers on the day of travel. Inquiries indicate that youth organisations such as Service to Youth Council do not have facilities available to hold luggage.

The Minister has advised that it is not seen as desirable for the Travel Centre to provide storage for luggage, as these facilities should continue to be located at departure and arrival locations such as bus and railway stations. Neither is it considered appropriate that the South Australian Government Travel Centre assume responsibility for passenger luggage. Problems such as security and recognition of the owner of luggage could arise.

The matter raised by the honourable member is a very important one indeed. A major component of the world tourism market involves the ability of young people to travel freely and easily with a backpack, and it is a major concern for them to have adequate and appropriate luggage space and protection available to them.

So, the honourable member raises an important concern and one which is shared by my colleague the Minister of Tourism. There is additional provision to be provided at the Adelaide Railway Station, and we will be encouraging the arrival and departure depots to increase their facility of such luggage space.

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

POTATO INDUSTRY TRUST FUND COMMITTEE BILL

The Hon. M.K. MAYES (Minister of Agriculture) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to establish the Potato Industry Trust Fund Committee; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

The Potato Industry Trust Fund Committee Bill establishes a committee to advise the Minister on the administration and application of the Potato Industry Trust Fund established under section 26 of the Potato Marketing Act 1948. The committee is to be called the Potato Industry Trust Fund Committee. The committee will consist of seven persons, of whom three will be growers chosen after applications have been called by the Minister for the grower positions on the committee. The other members of the committee will be:

- a senior Government officer with experience in financial management;
- an officer from the Department of Agriculture with experience in either research or marketing;
- a person with experience in management or administration;
- a member representing broad community interests.

All committee members will be appointed by the Minister, and one will be appointed to preside at meetings. It is intended that members other than grower members will be appointed annually. All members will be eligible for reap-

pointment. To maintain some continuity of membership on the committee, in the first instance two of the grower members will be appointed for two years; the third grower member will be appointed for one year. Thereafter, all grower members will be appointed to office for two years. The procedure of the committee will be such as is determined by the committee. There is provision for the Governor to make regulations under the Act. The costs of establishing and operating the committee will be met from the trust fund. I commend the Bill to the House.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides definitions of terms used in the Bill. Clause 3 establishes the Potato Industry Trust Fund Committee. Clause 4 sets out the advisory function of the committee. Clause 5 provides for the costs of establishing and operating the committee to be met from the fund. Clause 6 is a regulation making power.

Mr GUNN secured the adjournment of the debate.

UNCLAIMED GOODS BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 February. Page 3146.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): It is a pleasure to handle one of the Attorney-General's Bills in this House. I believe he is right to send legal Bills down into this House to start them on their way. This Bill is quite simple: it deals with unclaimed goods. There has been a continual dilemma as to how people who have quite unwanted goods thrust on their doorsteps dispose of those goods. The Bill canvasses the issue fairly comprehensively and provides that, as regards goods below the value of \$100, if the expense incurred in connection with those goods exceeds that amount they can be disposed of at will.

If the goods are valued at between \$100 and \$500, the bailee can sell either by public auction or pursuant to a court authorised sale. If the value exceeds \$500, the court authorised sale is the only means by which the bailee may dispose of the goods. The Bill sets down the jurisdictions which will handle those matters. In each of the latter two cases the appropriate publicity and proper notices have to be given about the bailee's intentions. Obviously, if an agreement has already been reached between the owner of the goods and the bailee, that agreement has the force of the law, so I presume that it is only in those cases where agreement has not been reached or has lapsed that this provision will be applied.

The Bill also provides that proceeds of the sale are to be applied as follows: first, against the reasonable costs of sale and of proceeding under the Bill (namely, the costs associated with that action); secondly, the reasonable costs of storing and maintaining the goods; thirdly, to satisfy the amount of lien over the goods where there are encumbrances; and, fourthly, the balance is to be paid to the Treasurer. The various bodies have been canvassed, and there is general agreement on the Bill. There is, however, some discussion as to the period that should elapse between the provision of a public notice and the stage at which the owner is deemed to have failed to provide the money owed on the goods.

The Legal Services Commission believes that there should be a lapse of 60 days rather than 28 days, because 28 days is insufficient for a person to react to a notice in the press or to settle an account. An amendment, which affects clauses 5 and 7, has been drafted by the Opposition as a compromise on this matter. Apart from that consideration, the

Opposition feels comfortable with the Bill, which tidies up an irksome matter affecting a number of people, and it therefore supports the Bill.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): Without taking the time of the House, I merely indicate that, as a member of the Attorney-General's Legislative Committee, I am aware of the history of this legislation. I suppose that it should really be entitled the 'Walsh Legacy', because it results from a problem that arose in your district, Mr Speaker, when one of your constituents, playing darts in a hotel bar one day, was approached by a person and asked whether he would mind that person's 24ft. boat being placed in your constituent's backyard. Your constituent consented and, although that was about three years ago, the boat is still there and the committee has been following the legislation through.

The Bill draws to one's attention, if it needs drawing to one's attention, the length of time that the Legislature takes to solve such problems. I understand the reason for the introduction of the Bill and I support it. It will solve many small problems that arise where people deposit goods in the backyards of other people, because up to the present the people left in possession of the goods could not dispose of them legally and this Bill will enable them to do so. I therefore support the Bill.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I, too, support the Bill. All members are aware of such problems as apparently you, Mr Speaker, have experienced in your district and it is good that someone has floated this idea whether it concerns a boat in your district or this Bill. Recently, the member for Fisher referred to a person who had left a trailer load of television sets and other appliances in someone else's yard and there was the problem that I now wish to refer to the Minister representing the Attorney-General.

Someone may leave goods on another person's property and not claim those goods within a reasonable time. Under the Bill, when it becomes law, the legal title to those goods will go to the person acquiring the goods. In this regard, I have one fear: someone may have stolen those goods, asked a person such as I to store them in my back yard, and subsequently not returned to claim those goods. In those circumstances, I would take the action available to me under this Bill and the legal title to the goods would pass to the purchaser. The Minister in charge of the Bill is a lawyer and I am not, but I am worried that a complicating factor may not have been considered: that is, that the legal owner of such stolen goods may lose the right to the goods because of the processes provided under this Bill.

If I am wrong in my assumption, I shall be thrilled to be corrected by the Minister but, if I am correct, the circumstances to which I have referred must be considered. Indeed, I do not believe that anyone has as yet considered this aspect. Surely, if the goods are stolen and even if they go through the process provided in the Bill, they must be returned to the owner from whom they were stolen. In this regard, an insurance company may have a claim on the goods.

A simple example of an item that is easy to steal these days is that of a chainsaw or lawnmower. Someone may come along and ask me to look after such a good for two months. That good may be stolen property and that person does not return to claim it. The person in possession of that good, not knowing that it was stolen, goes through the process outlined in the Bill and sells it. Under this Bill, the purchaser would have legal title to the good and the person from whom the good was stolen originally would seem to have lost his title. That is my first concern.

My second concern is that the title contains no definition of 'good', so I wish to broaden it. I have already referred this matter to the Minister, so he may have had time to consider it. If this aspect is not covered by the Bill and cannot be covered by it, the Minister may indicate whether he has taken up the matter with the Minister concerned to try to cover it in another way. I take 'goods' to include articles of a certain type: for example, a dead horse. Someone may have placed the horse on another person's property for agistment in return for payment. Under this Bill, that is a legal agreement that continues and action may be taken through the normal processes. The horse dies, the owner does not come back to take possession of it and, consequently, a big cost is involved in disposing of it unless the dead horse is disposed of quickly and given to someone for dog's meat.

In these circumstances, the person in possession of the horse does not own it and cannot give it away because it belongs to someone else. Unless this Bill covers a dead horse or a dead cow, is that dead animal a 'good'? This is a difficult situation. I ask that question and take the matter a step further.

Hundreds of cases a year occur (and the Department of Agriculture knows this) where a person, having left stock on another person's property, does not pay the agistment bill and the owners of the property cannot do anything with that stock. They cannot turn it out on to the road because that is illegal. In these days many farmers are turning to agistment instead of trying to make a living by cultivating their small holding. So, they earn an income from agistment rights on that property and go out and get a job. They may be faced with having unclaimed stock on their property and sometimes cannot find the owner. This eventuality is not covered by the sort of provision that I believe is in the Pound Act, under which such stock may be impounded.

In other words, a person cannot say to the local council, 'Impound this stock because it came onto my property as stray stock.' After all, the stock came onto the property by agreement. The Department of Agriculture has grave concerns in this area. I raise this matter with the Minister because I doubt whether the Bill covers the position to which I have referred, although I believe that it does in the case of dead stock because such stock is no longer livestock and therefore becomes a 'good'. I ask the Minister in charge of the Bill to indicate his thoughts on the matter.

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): Will the Minister in his reply put forward the case as it relates to tow truck owners who quite frequently pick up old vehicles that have been involved in accidents and take them back to either their own property or a property designated by the owner? I refer particularly to occasions when it comes back to their own property and they have it sitting there for up to two years. Will this Bill enable the tow truck owner to sell the car that has been left there for some length of time?

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER (Minister of Education): I thank members for their interest and intriguing questions on this measure. There is always some interest in laws of this kind which try to embrace unusual rather than usual situations. A number of members have asked questions in and outside the Chamber with respect to the inclusion of animals in the definition of 'goods'. My advice on this matter is that the definition in the Bill as it stands includes animals. Concern has been expressed by some authorities that perhaps the definition needs to be refined in some way to be more precise with respect to animals, and that process is proceeding now and may require further attention in another place. I trust that that will clarify the matter for

members, particularly in regard to whether an animal is alive or dead. It is a mass that belongs to someone and has to be attended to, and therefore falls within the definition of 'goods'.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: It is probably of little value, although it may still require an expenditure to bury it or have it removed. I suggest that it still falls within the definition of 'goods' in the legislation as it stands. I trust that those explanations help members.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! We are not in Committee. Members will have the opportunity of raising questions in Committee.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank members for their support of this measure. The member for Bragg has raised the matter of wrecks and the responsibility of tow truck operators who store those wrecks or persons who accept the wrecks when delivered to them by tow truck operators. My advice is that the Bill as it stands would cover those situations. I understand that a number of tow truck operators enter into contractual arrangements with the owners of such cars with respect to their storage and obligations arising out of those storage arrangements. However, in the absence of such arrangements this legislation will fill the void. With respect to the matter of stolen goods, I may have to take further advice and will undertake to do so for the honourable member.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—'Unclaimed goods.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 2, line 24—Leave out '28' and insert '42'.

I have already canvassed the issue in the second reading debate. The Legal Services Commission thought that 60 days was fair, just and reasonable. The Attorney saw fit to state 28 days so given that there were cogent reasons for there being a greater time lapse than provided under the Bill, the Opposition has added 50 per cent to the 28 days and come up with 42 days. The Minister will appreciate the reasons for meeting somewhere between the two needs involved. Whilst formally putting the amendment, I should like to make a comment. I was fascinated—

The CHAIRMAN: Does the comment relate to the clause?

Mr S.J. BAKER: It certainly does. I would not say anything that did not relate to the clause. I was fascinated to hear that dead horses came under this Act and could be disposed of. What is the value of a horse, dead or alive? It is like the gunsmoke thrillers. Does a person have to wait 28 days before disposing of the remains? I was interested in the Minister's response. That matter was raised by the member for Davenport. I do not know whether the member for Davenport wishes to pursue—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member can pursue the question without any help.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The question of theft was an interesting one. I would also like clarification on whether a dead horse is a saleable good and whether it comes under this Act.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I have not canvassed the appropriate compromise to be reached with respect to the number of days. I do not see anything offensive in increasing the number to 42. Whether or not that is the appropriate figure, I am unable to say. I understand that representations have been received from the Legal Services Commission and, undoubtedly, it speaks on behalf of persons who are transient, difficult to contact, in hospital, unknown, and the like. With people who leave their goods and chattels with

other persons, often in those circumstances advice should be listened to with a good deal of care. For that reason I am prepared to accept the amendment, although I suggest it may well be the subject of further discussion and consideration in another place when measured alongside other representations that may have been received by the Attorney. I take in good faith the motives suggested by the honourable member. With respect to the value of a carcass, it is well established that it may well have a money value and that clearly brings it into the definition of 'goods' as provided in the legislation.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I thank the Minister for his comments on the second reading. I have a concern about theft. The Bill covers it in the main because in the second and third category the police have to be informed that the goods will be sold by a certain method. However, it does not place on the police an obligation to take any action, and it does not really protect a bailee, the person selling the goods, from any future charge of receiving stolen goods or of being involved in selling stolen goods. In category 1, I do not think the police even have to be informed of the sale. I am not asking the Minister to make any changes now; I would just like him to take up this matter with the Attorney.

It is possible that a person could steal an article worth less than \$100 and leave it with, say, any one of us to look after. Subsequently, we could sell it, and in those cases we do not have to notify the police. We sell it and then under this Act it is found that the purchaser has got legal title. The bailee may have been involved in the sale of a stolen good, unbeknown to the bailee. I think we could put in a protection clause stipulating that, where the police have been informed that a person intended to sell an item in category 1, 2 or 3 and where the police were given details of the goods (perhaps a serial number or, for example, if it was a chain saw, the engine number), and the police take no action within a period of, say, 14 or seven days in saying that the goods have been stolen, then the person is quite clear to sell it and may not become entwined in any future legal action involving the committing of an offence.

I might be overly sensitive, but sometimes laws quite unfortunately catch up with innocent people. This would be one way of protecting the bailee. I ask whether the Minister can take up this matter with the Attorney—to tighten this area to protect the bailee from any future action and also to ensure that the police have a look at every sale notified in perhaps categories 1, 2 and 3 and not just the categories as the Bill provides for now. If I am wrong in that, the Minister can correct me.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for his interest in this matter. He has raised an important point, and I will certainly have the Attorney look at it. I understand that some of the honourable member's fears may well be unfounded. Nevertheless, these points should be clarified and checked, and I will have that done.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 6 passed.

Clause 7—'Claim made by bailor after commencement of proceedings under this Act.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 3, line 45—Leave out '28' and insert '42'.

We have discussed previously the matter of the elapse of time between notice being given or a notice being placed in the paper. This relates to when the owner or the bailor has turned up but then fails to meet the costs of the keeping of those goods. Perhaps in this case the 28 day provision is a little more serious. Again, I refer to the Legal Services Commission's response to this matter: it asks for 60 days,

for the very same reasons. I thank the Minister for his indulgence in this matter.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: For the reasons outlined in respect of the previous amendment, I accept this amendment, but I add the rider that I added previously.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (8 to 11) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (1987)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 26 February. Page 3216.)

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): It gives me pleasure to support this very short Bill. Clause 2 relates to allowing motor vehicle owners who reside at Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs to continue with their 50 per cent concession rates on registration fees. This was a recommendation of the select committee of the other place. We supported the recommendation, and thus support the Government in moving this way. The Opposition believes that the concessions for people in the outback should continue. Even though significant developments in the Roxby Downs area will occur, until that happens we support the continuance of this concession.

In relation to the other major provision in the Bill, the Opposition considers that any move which enables the administration of the Act to be easier and which enables the judiciary to better organise or more easily organise its members in terms of the tribunal should be supported, and we have no difficulty in doing so.

The Opposition supports the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—'Registration fees for vehicles in outer areas.'

Mr INGERSON: I want to ask the Minister a general question relating to concessions, referring specifically to the areas of Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs. How will we define that people in fact reside in those areas and how will that be clearly set out, to avoid a movement of people calling for concessions outside that area?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: That is an important question, as identification and certainty of location are important in the matter of concessions. On application, a person would have to designate where they live. People living in the areas outside the newly formed local government areas would of course qualify in any event. We will continue the subsidy in those two local government areas referred to and so, in fact, the situation has not changed. The people who have always had the 50 per cent benefit will continue to receive it. The amendment is to overcome the provision in the Local Government Act which requires people who live within local government areas to pay full price for registration of their vehicles.

If there is any problem at all, the Registrar has the facility to check through either the police or other avenues to ensure that the person has a driver's licence and that the address is as quoted on the application form. It is an important question. I believe that the system will ensure that there is no abuse. Quite frankly, it would be difficult to contemplate any abuse.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (3 and 4) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

[Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 3.58 p.m.]

COOBER PEDY (LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXTENSION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL (1987)

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Transport): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

This Bill is designed to allow any person who has, for a period of at least 12 months, served either as a member of the Committee of Management of the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association or as a member of that committee and then the new council at Coober Pedy, to be eligible for nomination and election as mayor at the next local government periodical elections.

The principal Act presently provides that those persons who were members of the committee of management immediately before its dissolution and then became members of the council recently formed at Coober Pedy may count service on the committee as service as a member of a council. This provision accordingly assists a specified group of people to qualify for nomination for election as mayor but does not allow other people who may have served for lengthy periods on the committee of management only to have their service counted as service with a council for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1934.

The Government has received representations that the present position is unfair, in that service on the committee of management may be counted as service with a council for some people but not for others. The Government is willing to take steps to amend the Act to remove this anomaly, especially as it is recognised that the association was performing many of the functions of local government at Coober Pedy.

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2 enacts a new section 5 of the principal Act that provides that, notwithstanding the provisions of the Local Government Act 1934, a person who has, since the commencement of the principal Act, served for at least 12 months as a member of the committee of management of the association or as such a member and then as a member of the council is eligible to stand for election as mayor of the council.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): The Opposition supports this measure. It was initiated by my colleague the member for Eyre after a deficiency was noted in the legislation directly associated with the first poll for local government at Coober Pedy. We believe that it is an eminently suitable amendment to give the opportunity for those members of the community who have been associated with the Miners Association to nominate for the position of Mayor. It is quite consistent with the situation which would otherwise apply in any other local government area where a person had provided that type of service to his community. This matter has been before a select committee and has the approval of our colleagues in another place on a bipartisan basis, and I believe that it should have the same fate here.

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I support the Bill and I want to say from the outset that I am pleased that the Government has been able to bring this measure through the various stages

quickly. I do not intend to support or to become involved with any organisations in Coober Pedy or in the question of who should stand for any position in local government. However, I do not believe that legislative barriers should be placed in the way of people who may desire to offer themselves for election. As I understand the situation, a number of people have indicated that they may contest certain positions. I wish them well, because I believe that the measure will improve local government in the Coober Pedy area, and that is something I support.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Transport): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr ROBERTSON (Bright): I wish to take up an issue on behalf of some constituents of mine in portion of the Hallett Cove area relating to renaming part of the suburb of Hallett Cove as Karrara, the original name given to the estate on which they live. I will now trace the history of this issue. On 25 November 1985 the Secretary of the Karrara Residents Association, Mr Wal Lodge, wrote to the Premier asking that the name of Karrara estate be retained as a suburb name and that the portion of Hallett Cove, which is known locally as Karrara, be officially designated as Karrara.

In a reply on 22 January last year Mr Bruce Guerin indicated that the Geographic Names Board opposed the principle of renaming on the ground, principally, that it was against the proliferation of large numbers of suburbs and on the quite reasonable ground that one could not simply take the estate name and adopt it as a suburb name simply because it had been used by the real estate industry to promote sales.

However, I took the point of view that, for a whole range of reasons, this case was special and ought to be considered as special by the board. On 21 April last year I wrote to the Geographic Names Board pointing out that 935 houses already existed in the Karrara estate, that a further 649 were planned by a whole series of developers including Trikon and Barrett and Barrett, and that there was a fair likelihood that a portion of land presently designated as rural B by the Marion council would ultimately be rezoned residential, creating space for 450 additional dwellings. That provides by my reckoning a total in excess of 2 000 potential houses for the so-called Karrara area of Hallett Cove.

On 8 July last year the Geographic Names Board wrote to me and suggested that by their rule of thumb 4 000 houses was a desirable size for a suburb and that any area that had, or potentially had, less than that would not rate a description as a separate suburb. They also indicated that because there was somewhere between 340 and 350 suburbs currently in the Adelaide metropolitan area we could well do without others. They conceded in that letter that some suburbs were quite small and that they had no intention of allowing any others. To sum up the board's attitude, I will quote the last paragraph of the letter to me, which I think is a reasonable summary of the board's objections, some of which I certainly concede. However, I take issue, as I have already said, with the principle as applied in this particular case. The board stated:

In conclusion, it must be realised that nomenclature is of international significance and its stability is of considerable importance. It is a subject where everyone's personal preference,

often motivated by self interest, cannot be achieved and in the interests of the public at large, general delivery and business interests, Government records and Australia Post deliveries, unnecessary change to established nomenclature should be resisted by responsible authorities.

There are a number of points to that with which I take issue in this particular case. In relation to Australia Post objecting to yet another suburb name, that may or may not hold water at an official level. However, we have certainly gone to the point of talking to people at the local mail exchange who I am told would welcome the naming of this area as Karrara, as considerable confusion arises for Australia Post deliveries under the existing names. So, the logic works the other way in this case, because as the area is as it is there is a good argument for calling it Karrara and dispensing with the Hallett Cove name.

On receipt of that letter I passed it on to Mr Lodge. He again wrote to the Geographic Names Board on 6 August last year. In his letter he summarised arguments in favour of making an exception for the people of Karrara, as follows:

For some time we have been requesting a change of name of portion of the suburb of Hallett Cove to Karrara.

We have now been advised by the member for Bright, Derek Robertson, that your board have advised him that 'Australia Post is of the opinion that suburbs should contain where possible approximately 4 000 housing units'.

We understand that Australia Post works by postcode numbers and not suburbs and that in fact a single postcode number may contain one or more suburbs; for example postcode 5158 covers the suburbs of O'Halloran Hill, Trott Park, Sheidow Park and Hallett Cove whilst many other postcodes have four or more suburbs. Surely it is logical to consider not only the number of housing units but the area of the suburb and its other land use.

Tradespeople and in fact many private visitors to the area are confused by the distance from the north of Hallett Cove to the south some 4 kilometres and 2½ kilometres west to east, 10 sq. kilometres, with a potential number of housing units in excess of 4 000. The whole suburb is zoned residential with the exception of the conservation park.

Compare this area with nearby Seacombe Heights, Sturt, Seacombe Gardens, Dover Gardens and Seacliff, all approximately 1 sq. km and Kingston Park ¼ sq. km. None of these suburbs approximate 6 000 housing units.

Even Trott Park with 3 sq. km and all residential except for the area set aside for the proposed controlled access arterial road and Sheidow Park with 6.25 sq. km and areas of hills face and light commercial as well as residential is only 6.25 sq. km. Many of the newer suburbs do not qualify for the 4 000 unit test, to name a few Trott Park, Sheidow Park, O'Halloran Hill and Flagstaff Hill.

Then, later, Mr Lodge stated:

Residents who bought land from the South Australian Land Commission in Karrara were surely entitled to believe that, as a statutory body, the commission had the blessing of the State Government to make the statement that Karrara would be a suburb.

We believe that it is not too late to make the change of name as the development is only seven years old and in fact has doubled in occupancy in only the last two or three years.

At the time that Hallett Cove was declared a suburb it could not possibly have been envisaged that it would expand the way that it has and is still expanding and developing. We request that the board again reconsider their decision.

We have received a response to that letter, and the Geographic Names Board has again knocked back that request. I put on the record this afternoon, for the benefit of the people at Karrara and of the Geographic Names Board, that I believe that Karrara deserves to be treated as an exception. It is isolated geographically from the rest of the area of Hallett Cove, and it is separated by Waterfall Gully in the south, by the hills face zone in the north, by Lonsdale Road in the east and by the sea in the west. It is quite distinct and separate and is linked to the other part of Hallett Cove by one road only, which passes through it. It is quite a separate and identifiable agglomeration of housing.

The second point is that the 5150 post code already covers four suburbs, namely, Hallett Cove, Sheidow Park, Trott

Park and O'Halloran Hill. The last three are small suburbs, so the addition of Karrara will not make a great deal of difference to that area. Thirdly, I have already mentioned that visitors are for ever being confused and lost in the wilds of Hallett Cove because they cannot get from one part of it to the other. People arriving at Hallett Cove by train cannot tell where they are because there are two stations, Hallett Cove and Hallett Cove Beach, and get off at the wrong station. Delivery vans consistently go to wrong addresses. The suburb is divided north and south by a railway line as well as the division about which I have already talked. Taxis are for ever going to wrong addresses, and emergency vehicles have provoked a number of near misses by going to wrong addresses looking for people in need of emergency treatment. They have not been able to pick up patients, put out fires, or whatever. That has occurred in the past solely because these areas have not had their own distinctive names.

Lastly, Karrara is a new area. The people in the street directory business who produce directories for the benefit of all and sundry have argued that they will have to change street directories if the suburb name is changed. They will not have to do that because the area is still developing, and three-quarters of it still does not have houses on it. When it does, they will have to remake the street maps, anyway, so that argument does not hold water.

Finally, I urge the board to reconsider the matter in light of those four points and to give the people of Karrara their suburb, because they thoroughly deserve it. Their arguments are extremely good, and I sincerely commend those arguments to the board and hope that it reconsiders its decision.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I wish to raise briefly a couple of matters. Today we heard what was probably one of the most hypocritical announcements one could hear in a Parliament. By that, we condemn ourselves in the eyes of the public and confirm the public's view that a decision is not made on whether a cause is just or to the benefit of the community; a decision is made as to whether it is politically expedient and whether the electorate where the attention is directed is a safe or an unsafe seat. Unfortunately, I do not have all my records with me, so I will speak using approximate dates.

In approximately 1983 I made an approach to the then Minister of Water Resources for land to be made available for a car park alongside the Happy Valley Primary School and, at the same time, indicated that there may be a chance of making a road connecting the area of the Horndale Winery for the school community traffic to avoid Chandlers Hill Road. That proposition was a secondary consideration. The then Minister of Water Resources, I believe, was sympathetic to the cause of the school for which I was arguing. The school community—teachers, parents, and children—and the police knew of the congestion of traffic on Education Road in front of the Chandlers Hill child-care centre and of the primary school I have seen grow from 65 children in 1968 to more than 600 or 700 students.

The department and, thereby, the then Minister of Water Resources informed me that there was no way we could use any of that land for a car park because of the oils and greases which would leak out of parked cars, and the other pollutants which would wash down through the creek to the drain which was established around the Happy Valley Reservoir when it was first built many years ago. The area was part of the land which the Playford Government had started to acquire (some 300 acres, I believe) and which was finally completed by the Hon. Mr Cororan, as Minister of the time, in about 1970. (It may even have been just before the 1968 election).

I argued at that time that there was no way that the pollution from that car park would leach into the reservoir through the earth bank, and that the school needed that car park. I know that it was a safe Liberal seat. I represented it, as a member of the Liberal Party, but the Government at that time said 'No'.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: The previous Minister of Water Resources states that he would still say 'No'. I accepted that decision by that Minister and department as being just, since all the time the Engineering and Water Supply Department was arguing that pollution was a problem for our water for consumption in Adelaide, and the department was putting in a treatment works because of that concern. We were spending millions of dollars in the reservoir within virtually a stone's throw of this proposed car park, and I was told it was not on.

I am not saying that the previous Minister was wrong. I am pleased that the school will get a car park, but I am talking about the cussedness of the way in which the decisions were made. When the seat was a safe Liberal seat and a redistribution in progress would make it a swinging seat, the then Government would not give an inch. Deep down, I think that the previous Minister was genuine in what he believed, even though he had a sympathetic core for that school and its needs. But the present Government, knowing the problems in the electorate with interest rates and all the other charges, has said, 'We can make this sacrifice on principle. Perhaps Evans might not hear or know about it. We will make this sacrifice.'

I reiterate my words: I am thrilled that the school will have the car park. I believe my original assessment was correct. I believe that the school had been denied a car park it could have used for the past three or four years, and I believe that .4 of a hectare is peanuts for the piece of land that is available and it should be more, for the long-term benefit and for reasons of safety, because we could have better access, and all sorts of things could be done. I believe that when there is a road next to that piece of land, which is the main road to Clarendon and Meadows, through to Morphett Vale, and so on, that road will have more pollution than the car park is ever likely to get. My request was a just one, the school's request was a just one, and the community was denied that car park, I believe, because people thought, 'That is a nail in the coffin for Evans if he runs down here,' but now—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: The honourable member raises the question of the lights, and I agree: we fought for them and she helped fight for them, but I would like to find the plummy engineer who designed them and put a post alongside a tree so that it is not possible to push a perambulator through it and walk through at the same time. The engineer should have been hung and quartered for such a decision.

I know that we have the lights, but the honourable member also knows that the car park is in exactly the same position as that refused by the same colour of Government a few years ago. I say, 'Good luck! Congratulations, and well done to the Happy Valley Primary School.' They deserve it; they need it, and I hope that the Minister of Education gets on and builds the car park.

I want to raise another point about the sort of hypocrisy we have today. I may not have time to say it all, but I will at least make the initial point. This Government knows that the real estate industry is in a depressed state. It knows, by the prices of properties being sold, that prices are deflated. It knows, by the amount of tax it is collecting through stamp duty, that it is less than it would have got a few

years ago for the sale of properties to the same value. But throughout the metropolitan area the Government is so skun for money that it is selling every piece of land on which it can possibly put up a sign: for example, I instance the Highways Department land at the bottom of the Old Belair Road—and the Old Belair Road may not be able to cater for the long-term traffic increase, yet the Government is selling blocks of land that it may have to buy back later with houses on them. It is selling them for the measly amount it can get at the moment, when those pieces of land cost the Government nothing to keep in real terms.

Land is being surveyed along the STA line and the Government is trying to sell off to councils any little piece of land it can. If we want to talk about hypocrisy and principles, in the catchment area it is selling forest reserve land which has been in the hands of the people through Government for 100 years or more. And it is not selling it as a collective lot in one title, while advocating that it does not want more houses in the water catchment area, but it is selling them as smaller individual allotments of four or five acres on the wet swamp area of Mylor—where we do not want water pollution or houses.

We will not let private people subdivide: we say to them, 'We'd like to stop you and aggregate some of the titles.' When the Government has an opportunity to practise the principle it preaches and aggregate those titles, it refuses and wants to capitalise and make every cent it can. It will sell its principles for money.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: It is selling its principles for money, and, if the honourable member disagrees, I ask her to go to Mylor, to Blaser Road and on the other side of the river, and see whether there is a chance to aggregate those properties into the one title. The Government is not doing that; it is selling them, so that there will be more than one home built on them—and that is against the Government's philosophy.

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

Ms LENEHAN (Mawson): I refer to the question that I asked earlier today concerning a radio report this morning of Senator Vanstone's criticism of the Minister of Tourism (Hon. Barbara Wiese) concerning a small photograph in side the front cover of the excellent summary of the South Australian Tourism Plan 1987-89. I have it on good authority that Amanda Vanstone has been used in this matter. Indeed, I believe that the member for Coles is in fact behind the whole of this public criticism of the Minister and that she has not been prepared to raise the matter in this Parliament, as a result of the incredible buffeting she must have suffered the last time that she raised this petty, childish criticism of the Minister.

So, rather than raise this matter herself (and I suspect to their credit the male members of the Opposition were not prepared to raise it), the member for Coles went out and found a Senator who was prepared to raise this matter in the public media. As a member of this community and as a member of this Parliament, I am disgusted at this kind of behaviour. What does it achieve? Does it damage the Minister? Far from it. The feedback that I have received from the community shows that it is not damaging the Minister but creating a completely destructive attitude and environment in respect of the State's tourism industry.

By belittling the Minister, the member for Coles and now Senator Vanstone are in fact belittling the industry, because, as the Minister of Transport said in reply to my question earlier today, the document is signed by four people: the

Chairman of the Tourism Development Board; the Chairman of the Tourism Development Council; the Chairman of the South Australian Association of Regional Tourist Organisations; and the Minister. However, did we hear any complaint directly related to tourism addressed to the other three signatories? After all, they signed the document.

Let us consider how we came to have this publication. It has been prepared by the Department of Tourism after 'extensive consultation with the industry and the Government'. So, is the criticism to be directed at the industry, because it is prepared to say that we live in a country that is trying to attract tourists and to promote the outback and one way in which we are doing that is to ensure that we promote such places as the Birdsville Track and the outback of South Australia which is, or we would like it to be, the gateway to Central Australia?

As secretary of the former Minister's committee, I know that we were fighting hard to establish this concept and making representations. Indeed, the Minister was making strong representations to get direct flights from Japan, and part of the selling in Japan was the program of flying direct to Adelaide, which is the gateway to the outback, and returning through Darwin.

Members interjecting:

Ms LENEHAN: If the criticism of this photograph is genuine, it must be the most extraordinary example of parochialism that I have come across in many a long day. I find it incredible that, when one looks at the document, one is talking about a small photograph, only 2in. square, compared to the enormous volume of pictorial matter in the rest of the document, and it is incredible that someone should criticise the document on that basis.

I believe that the document is an exciting one. It is one of two documents that have been prepared, the first being the original strategic plan about which I have talked at length in this House. I commend this document, which is a summary for people to consider. Not only is it interesting and stimulating: it really shows a plan and vision for the future and outlines the trends and challenges facing the South Australian tourism industry over the next three years. It also explains the objectives, strategies and actions that the South Australian Government must adopt to remain competitive and increase the South Australian tourism industry.

Instead of praising the document or even acknowledging its worth and value, what have certain Opposition members chosen to do? They have chosen to denigrate the Minister personally. When have they done so? When the Minister is out of South Australia and overseas promoting this State. As the Acting Minister of Tourism has said, the Minister is doing that very well and not trying to bad mouth and belittle her country as the Premier of Queensland has done recently.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

Ms LENEHAN: As a matter of interest, the Minister is trying to ensure that we have future conferences in this State based on tourism. The acting Minister has told us that the Minister has been given enormous publicity in Berlin, and that is very important. I am referring to the actions of a petty person who is not prepared to acknowledge what the Minister has achieved. In this regard, let me remind members that the former Minister of Tourism, now Minister of Transport, has repeatedly acknowledged in this Chamber what the member for Coles did during her time as Minister. I know this very well because I was a member of the Minister's Caucus committee at that time and on many occasions the Hon. Gavin Keneally has risen and acknowledged the contribution and achievements of the

former Minister of Tourism. He has never stood up and denigrated the Minister as to what she achieved. However, let us consider the pettiness of the former Minister of Tourism, the member for Coles.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Mawson is getting too much help.

Ms LENEHAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I do not need it, but I am delighted that my colleagues feel as strongly about this matter as I do. What has the member for Coles done? She has not been gracious, professional or mature enough to say that the present Minister is doing a good job for her State, that the Minister is willing to travel (that is important as Minister of Tourism), and that the

Minister is prepared to promote the State and to do everything in her power to ensure that one of the growth industries in this State, namely tourism, is given recognition and support not just from the Government but from all sections of the industry. It occurs to me that the member for Coles has not succeeded in denigrating the Minister in the community, because the feedback that I am getting proves that members of the community do not like those sorts of gutter tactics that are doing nothing for tourism or for the image of the shadow Minister.

Motion carried.

At 4.35 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 17 March at 2 p.m.