

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 25 November 1987

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.P. Trainer)** took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

PETITION: HOUSING TRUST

A petition signed by 232 residents of South Australia praying that the House of Assembly urge the Government to retain existing heaters in South Australian Housing Trust homes in the western region after premises are vacated was presented by Mr Peterson.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. J.C. Bannon):
South Australian Superannuation Board and South Australian Superannuation Fund Investment Trust—Reports, 1986-87.

By the Minister of Education (Hon. G.J. Crafter):
South Australian Ethnic Affairs Commission—Report, 1986-87.

QUESTION TIME

LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Mr OLSEN: Is the Premier aware that his Government's refusal to adequately fund the Legal Services Commission has resulted in victims of domestic violence being denied assistance unless they can prove that they have been 'recently beaten by their husbands'? Earlier this month the Opposition asked the Premier for an explanation of his Government's decision to deny funding to the commission for legal aid this year, the Government's threat to withdraw a further \$1 million from the commission's own reserves, and the Government's attempt to cover this up through creative accounting in its ledgers.

At the time the Premier was unable to provide any explanation. I am now in receipt of a letter to the Legal Services Commission, a copy of which has been given to the Women's Adviser to the Premier, which graphically illustrates just one of the outcomes of the Government's new funding policy in relation to legal aid. The letter is from a lawyer who provides legal assistance for victims of domestic violence seeking help at an Adelaide women's shelter. As the lawyer points out, all the women must be victims of domestic violence in order to gain admission to the shelter. She says, and I quote:

Most of these women have grave concerns for their own safety and the safety of their children should they leave the shelter and be sighted by their husbands. Most of these women are destitute and live on a pension. I believe all these women should have the opportunity to obtain a custody order and restraining orders, and

be granted legal assistance to do so. This is being denied them at the moment. Under your funding policy, your assignments officers are refusing all legal assistance unless I can prove to their satisfaction my clients have been recently 'beaten' by their husbands, or that there is definitely a dispute over custody.

As a result of that women are asking what this ruling means. Again, do they have to prove that their bruises or cuts are a week, rather than a month old, in order to qualify for legal aid? She goes on to say that she is being forced to advise these women to attend counselling to see whether there is a dispute, and then wait until the husband applies for custody before legal aid is available. That can take up to six weeks. I do not think it is a very humorous matter, and the Premier's mirth at the question and its seriousness is somewhat surprising. Given the Premier's statement to the House on 12 November when he protested that his Government had 'consistently and strongly supported adequate funding for legal aid', and in view of his interest yesterday in the rights of victims of domestic violence, he ought immediately to review funding to the Legal Services Commission so that this deplorable ruling is scrapped.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: First, in relation to the question that the Leader of the Opposition referred to on legal aid funding and asked of me, the identical question was asked, almost within a matter of minutes, of the Attorney-General, who has the responsibility here in this area—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: He was able to provide a very adequate response indeed, and I simply refer that to the Leader of the Opposition, who obviously missed it. Secondly, the particular policy of the Legal Aid Commission that is referred to by the Leader of the Opposition is something, I suggest, that he can take up with it. Obviously, it has to determine the level of legal aid within its resources to the greatest extent possible, and we will try to ensure, as we have consistently done, that within our means it gets what support it can from the State. I repeat that, as the Attorney said, there have been more funds pumped into legal aid and those services made more widely available under our Government than at any other time. Finally, I am a little uneasy about the motives and method of the Leader of the Opposition's raising this issue. It is very lately a discovery of his that there is such a thing as domestic violence, while my Government has had it under intensive study—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON:—and has made more attempts to do something about it. Just yesterday we announced a sweeping range of action involving expenditure of substantial funds in years when those on the other side are urging us to stop spending. Suddenly, the new hearts and flowers approach of the Leader of the Opposition decides he cannot be left out on this. He has to demonstrate his concern. I appreciate his concern, and I thank him for it. That concern would have been better demonstrated when he was responsible for appalling policies of the Tonkin Government, which did nothing in this area for three years.

That concern would have been better demonstrated over the period that he has been Leader of the Opposition in supporting the Government's attempts to ensure that we have sufficient revenue for these areas. That concern would have been better demonstrated if the Liberal Party had a policy of some action on this issue. None of those things has arisen, but the Leader read in the paper this morning that the Labor Government has introduced a comprehensive policy on domestic violence and said, 'Goodness me! How can I get in on the act?' So he has got in on the act

today. Full marks for ingenuity, but no marks for consistency or sincerity.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order. Traditionally, the Chair, certainly while I have been the incumbent and under previous incumbents, has always extended a greater degree of tolerance to the Leader of the Opposition than to many other members of the Chamber. I am of the view that the Leader of the Opposition is abusing that tolerance. The honourable member for Peake.

Mr S.G. EVANS: On a point of order, Sir, I ask whether it is appropriate for the Premier to make a claim of an ulterior motive by a member in asking a question and using a particular line, because that is what he did in answering the Leader's question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair did not observe any improper motives attributed to the Leader of the Opposition by the Premier. The honourable member for Peake.

CHEMICAL USE

Mr PLUNKETT: I direct a question to the Minister of Transport, representing the Minister of Health in another place. Will the Minister investigate the use of chemicals pentachlorophenol (PCP), tributyltin oxide (TBTO) and lindane? I refer to a recent article in the *Advertiser* concerning the use of poisonous chemicals as fungicides and pesticides for wood treatment in New Zealand. The press has expressed concern that registration in Australia for the chemicals PCP and TBTO is presently under consideration by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I commend the honourable member for bringing this important question to the notice of the Parliament. I am happy to refer it to my colleague in another place for his consideration and bring down a report for the honourable member as soon as I am able to do so.

RACING INDUSTRY

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Can the Minister of Emergency Services confirm that he has received a report from the police which recommends a full investigation into all three racing codes and, if so, when did he receive that report, will the Government act on its recommendations, and, if so, when? The article in this morning's *Advertiser* suggesting that the Government has received a report is at odds with the Minister's statement yesterday that this investigation had not yet been completed. I understand that on about 30 July the Police Commissioner was preparing to forward the report to the Minister. If that is the case, the Minister should explain why it has taken so long for the Government to act on its recommendations.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: First, I think virtually the same question was asked yesterday by one of the honourable member's colleagues. I do not think that the item in this morning's newspaper by Deborah Cornwall in any way contained matter that had not been introduced in the House yesterday. All I can do is repeat what I said yesterday as clearly and concisely as possible.

I was briefed (as was the Minister of Recreation and Sport, on my recommendation) some weeks ago about the continuing investigation into aspects of racing in this State. A part of that briefing involved an indication of where the police proposed to next take that investigation. It was not

for me to approve or not approve anything; it is a matter for the professional competence of the police to carry on. They were merely responding to my request that I be put in the picture following the arrest of and charges laid against an Assistant Commissioner who had something to do with this matter in his position in the Police Department. So, if that briefing constituted a report by the honourable member's lights, I am quite happy to call it a report. What was in that report I am not prepared to say.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Deputy Leader and the Deputy Premier not to conduct a dialogue across the Chamber. The honourable member for Briggs.

KOCKUMS PACIFIC

Mr RANN: Can the Premier inform the House of the benefits likely to flow to South Australian industry as a result of the establishment of a new company, Kockums Pacific? Early this year the Swedish ship builder Kockums, part of the successful consortium to build submarines in South Australia, announced that it would be setting up a venture capital company in Australia. It has been reported in the media that the Premier raised the establishment of this company with Kockums during a visit to Sweden earlier this year. In September Kockums executive Roger Sprimot announced that the Swedish manufacturer would establish a company, to be known as Kockums Pacific, here in Adelaide and that that company would have a capital base of \$10 million.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: This was one of the conditions under which the submarine contract was awarded. In other words, it was felt that as part of the benefit of the program we should be getting some extra technological transfer assistance and benefit from the program. I was therefore delighted when Kockums announced, as the honourable member has reminded the House, that it was to proceed with the establishment of the venture capital company and that it would be based here in South Australia. That is very important for us and for the work it will do and, as the honourable member has mentioned, it has a capitalisation of \$10 million.

Basically, it will act as a technology transfer company. In other words, it will put South Australian companies in touch with their Swedish counterparts for the purpose of joint ventures or, where appropriate, a trading relationship. It will also in the other direction put Swedish companies in touch with South Australian firms and act as a clearing house for links between the two economies. This is one of the exciting opportunities that the submarine project provides to South Australia specifically, in that relationship with the very developed and very successful economy in Sweden, particularly in the export based technology areas.

At the moment, I understand that Kockums Pacific is drawing up a register of companies that could develop such contacts and, in the long term, I believe we will see a lot more exchange, trade and export work being done between the two markets in Australia and Sweden; it will also provide us with a base in that much larger general European market. Members might be interested to know that already we are beginning to see some tangible benefits in expenditure terms flowing from the submarine project. Something like \$4 million has been spent on the provision of initial accommodation for the submarine corporation at Woodville and construction of the \$120 million facility at the port will soon be under way.

That construction program will employ about 200 people over a two year period, which is very good news indeed,

and consultancy contracts worth \$9 million have already been let, the majority being in South Australia. So the benefits are flowing, but the challenge is still there to South Australian business and industry to make sure that they get in with their bids and contacts to get maximum advantage. The establishment of Kockums Pacific and its base here in South Australia will provide just such a major opportunity.

RACING INDUSTRY

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I would like to ask another question of the Deputy Premier. Have the police recommended an inquiry into all codes of racing in South Australia and, if so, is that investigation now proceeding?

The SPEAKER: Order! This appears to the Chair to be the same question as has already been put or, if not, remarkably similar, and I draw members' attention to the guidelines which have been circulated on this matter previously, and which indicate that questions that are out of order include those that repeat in substance questions already answered or to which an answer has been refused, or questions multiplied with slight variations on the same point. I rule the question out of order. I call the member for Bragg.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the question that I asked previously was: 'Can the Deputy Premier confirm that he has received a report from the police ...?', while this question was: 'Have the police recommended an inquiry into all codes of racing in South Australia and, if so, is that investigation now proceeding?' I submit that they are basically different questions.

The SPEAKER: The Chair always attempts to be as fair as possible in the circumstances. It is not practical for me to give a definitive snap decision without the chance to examine the wording more closely. I propose to give the call to the honourable member for Bragg, and we will return to the Deputy Leader after I have had time to look at the wording of both questions. The honourable member for Bragg.

RACING INDUSTRY

Mr INGERSON: Will the Minister of Emergency Services review the conduct of police investigations so far into allegations of corruption in the racing industry to determine whether they have been fully and properly undertaken and, in particular, will he establish why the former Chief Steward of the Trotting Control Board, Mr Alan Broadfoot, was not interviewed during the investigation?

Yesterday, I asked why the Assistant Commissioner, Mr Harvey, had not interviewed Mr Broadfoot, and the Minister did not answer that question. I have also raised this matter with the Police Commissioner. I did so at a meeting on 30 July this year. I have notes of that meeting. They also show that I raised the need for the police not to restrict the investigation to the use of the drug etorphine, but to look at a large range of other drugs including dexamethazone, caffeine, cocaine, anabolic steroids and cough mixtures. In a telephone call to me later on the same day, the commissioner told me that a report on the investigation was being sent to the Minister, that the guidelines for the investigation had been set by the Government, and not the police, and that the report would recommend that the investigation be extended. This meeting occurred almost four months ago, yet it appears the Government is still reluctant to have a full investigation.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: There seems to be a new-found enthusiasm on the part of members of the Opposition

to try to tell the police how to do their job. It is not for me—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. Slater interjecting:

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

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: It is not for me, as Minister of Emergency Services, to be giving a direction to the police as to how they should carry out an inquiry, any more than it is the responsibility of the Minister of Education to direct schoolteachers on how to teach long division. There is an area of professional expertise which must be left to the people who are involved, trusting that they will do it properly. My job is to ensure that I am properly briefed all the time as to what is going on. I do not recall that the very specific matter raised by the honourable member yesterday—with the naming of an individual—was part of the briefing which Assistant Commissioner Hurley gave me at the briefing to which I have referred. On the next occasion when I am briefed I will take the opportunity to raise this matter. I do not believe that I have any responsibility beyond that.

PHOTON FLYER

Ms LENEHAN: Will the Minister of Education assist in facilitating visits by the Morphet Vale High School's Photon Flyer, appropriate students and staff members, including Mr David Milne, to country high schools, in areas such as Mount Gambier and the Riverland? As members would be aware, the Photon Flyer has recently successfully completed the World Solar Challenge Race from Darwin to Adelaide, finishing eleventh out of 24 starters. In a recent edition of the Morphet Vale High School newsletter the journey is described as 'amazing'. The newsletter states:

Thirty-two students and seven teachers have driven or escorted the car . . . There have been many memorable events—the incredible pandemonium of the start on 1 November, the evening corroboree north of Alice Springs when the concert band met the Photon Flyer crew, the achievement of 205 km in a day in the barren north of South Australia, the patience of students in the hot and humid conditions, and many others. This achievement of Mr David Milne and his inspired crew has been incredible; the support from students, staff, parents, and from people across Australia has been amazing, and has made this unique and spectacular success possible.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should be aware that, when explaining her question, only sufficient facts as to make the question clear are required. It is most inappropriate for the honourable member to contribute so much that there is little for the Minister to say in reply. The honourable member for Mawson.

Ms LENEHAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am a little excited by the event and I will return to my question. In discussion with the school principal, I have been informed that visits to country high schools in the South-East and Riverland would require only a commitment from the Education Department of a number of temporary relief teaching days to replace Mr David Milne.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Murray-Mallee should not let his warm relations with the honourable member for Mawson distract him from his responsibility not to interject. The honourable Minister of Education.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I can understand the honourable member's enthusiasm, because it is certainly infectious, with respect to the substantial

achievement of both the Goodwood High School and the Morphett Vale High School in their courage, perseverance and incredible commitment in mounting their challenges in the Darwin to Adelaide Pentax World Solar Challenge and to see that group of teachers and their supporters and students travel through the heat and other difficulties from Darwin to Adelaide, sticking with it and arriving in Adelaide last Sunday, was a remarkable achievement. I shall be pleased to ask the Southern Area Director to consider the honourable member's request that additional support be given to the school so that the staff and students involved may take this vehicle to other schools in the more remote areas of the State in order that they, too, can participate in this important, interesting and exciting project.

The project has much educational value as well and it is only right that the opportunity should be afforded to students around the State to see this vehicle, which was supported by 60-odd organisations and companies throughout South Australia, especially in that local area. The support of local service clubs and industries, as well as local government involvement in this exercise by the Noarlunga council, has been heartwarming. On Sunday the Lord Mayor, the Mayor of Noarlunga, the Director-General of Education and I welcomed the vehicle back to the city. I add my congratulations to all involved in this most creditable achievement.

HARNESS RACING

Mr S.J. BAKER: My question is addressed to the Minister of Recreation and Sport, and I shall ask it slowly so that we may receive the proper answer.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Mitcham has the call and no other member. The honourable member for Mitcham.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Is the Minister satisfied that he has been properly and fully advised by the Trotting Control Board on its handling of the Batik Print positive swab and, in particular, does he take full responsibility for the information on this matter that he gave the House in his ministerial statement of 18 March this year?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Obviously, the honourable member did not listen terribly carefully to the answers given yesterday and earlier today. I leave the issue of the police inquiries to the Minister in charge of the police. If the honourable member is delving into those inquiries being conducted by the police, then he should direct his questions to the Minister in charge. I am happy to be briefed when the Minister sees fit, he being the Minister responsible in relation to those police inquiries.

My comments are on the record, and I have asked the department to investigate the allegations in today's article and on *Four Corners*. Members of this House and the public at large will, when I have received it shortly, have the opportunity to read the report of the inquiry into whether or not we should have a racing commission. I am sure that that will throw some further light on the whole debate.

BOOL LAGOON

Mr ROBERTSON: Is the Minister for Environment and Planning aware of the impending transfer of a ranger from Bool Lagoon to Robe, and is he satisfied that this will enable the effective management of the area to be maintained, or is he at all concerned that resources available for national

parks might not be adequate to meet the Minister's responsibilities?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: One could always usefully employ additional resources, but the honourable member refers to my responsibilities under the Act which run to things like apprehending anybody who may take protected wildlife or anything like that. I am sure that from time to time breaches of the Act go undetected and, even if we had twice the current field staff, from time to time breaches of the Act would go undetected. However, I will make two points in relation to the question asked.

The first is that what is proposed is the result of a considerable restructuring which has been going on for some time and which has had the effect of placing more people in the field within the national parks system. Bool Lagoon will be administered from Naracoorte, where there is quite a reasonable staffing complement which we believe will be able to effectively ensure that the area is properly managed and, as the honourable member said, that particular salary will go to Robe.

Looking further down the track, and particularly in light of the amendments which were passed by the House a few weeks ago and which are now in another place, it is intended to generate some additional revenue earning capacities at Bool Lagoon as a result of which we believe it will be possible to have somebody actually in residence there all the time. I want to scotch this suggestion that somehow or other there has been a decline in the number of field based staff for national parks. In general terms I denied that suggestion when the Bill was being considered in this House a few weeks ago.

I conclude by quoting one or two statistics which should make it plain. In July 1983 the National Parks and Wildlife Service was funded for 195 field based staff, including 75 rangers. On 1 July of this year it was funded for 201.3 field based staff, which is more than it has ever had, and for 89 rangers. In fact, the number of field based staff is a little above that figure and that will have to be reduced, otherwise there will be over expenditure on the part of that section of the department. These figures support what I said when the Bill was being debated: that, indeed, more people are in the field in the national parks system at present than has ever been the case.

RACING INDUSTRY

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: My question is again addressed to the Deputy Premier. Are the police investigating all codes of racing in South Australia?

The SPEAKER: Order! As the Chair recalls, that is just another variation on the same question that has been ruled out of order.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I thought as a result of the conversation that I had with you that that question would be permissible. I thought the advice that you gave me was, 'Why don't you ask this?', which is what I have done. I also make the point, Mr Speaker, that you seem intent on ruling questions out when I should have thought that in Question Time the doubt, if any, should lie with the questioner rather than members being prevented from asking questions.

Again, I submit that that is not the question I asked initially. The original question was, 'Has the Government received a report?' Then I said that the report mentioned the codes of racing. I asked what had been done, whether he had received the report, whether the Government would act on it, and, if so, when. This question is whether the

police are investigating all three codes of racing, which is a different question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Leader's recollection of our private conversation is not exactly the same as mine.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I did suggest to the Deputy Leader that it might be possible for him to phrase his question in terms of (and I have to check my memory very carefully)—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!—whether the investigation was still proceeding. However, as I recall just a moment ago, when the Deputy Leader put his question with a variation on it for the third time, he asked whether the Deputy Premier, as Minister of Emergency Services, had received a report, which was clearly a repetition of the earlier question.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Let me repeat it for the third time: are the police investigating all codes of racing in South Australia? That was my last question. It was not whether the Government had received a report. By whatever mental gymnastics one can make those two the same, I for one cannot, and I think that the majority of the House cannot, either. It is a different question. The first was whether the Government had received a report. The second question was whether the police were investigating all codes of racing. The Minister is happy to answer the question, and I do not know why you are preventing him from doing so, quite frankly.

The SPEAKER: Order! I can sense that the Deputy Premier is eager to answer this question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! However, I believe that in order to uphold the authority of the Chair I cannot exercise the degree of tolerance towards the Deputy Leader that I have shown on previous occasions, and I rule out of order the question as put for the third time. I repeat the section of the guidelines that I quoted earlier, as follows:

Out of order are questions multiplied with slight variations on the same point or repeating in substance questions already answered or to which an answer has been refused.

I call on the honourable member for Light.

HEPATITIS B

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Deputy Premier explain the logic behind the Government's program of hepatitis B immunisation under which certain groups of police officers identified as 'high risk' will have only half their number immunised against the disease? Following representations from the Police Department, the Police Association and the Opposition, the Government agreed in May to provide immunisations against hepatitis B to about 350 'high risk' officers.

In July 1987 the Government announced with great fanfare that this would be extended to encompass a further 600 police deemed also to be at risk. While this was welcomed by police officers, they are now in a state of disbelief, having discovered that some of their number have been, or will be, inoculated, while others working side by side will remain at risk of infection. For example, only 20 of 45 active patrol members in the Port Adelaide area will be inoculated. Further, of 42 CIB personnel in the Port Adelaide Division—considered by the department to be a particularly high risk group—only 20 will be inoculated.

Police officers have already expressed their concern about this extraordinary situation, and have pointed out that the work duties of all these personnel are of equal risk. In a letter to the Minister, two officers from Port Adelaide have

summed up the importance of immunisation and the rather unusual nature of the Government's immunisation program in the following way:

We feel that in the present situation, inoculation against hepatitis B should be considered as much an essential tool of trade to the modern police officer as are radios, vehicles and handcuffs—not a privilege for a token few.

Another point made by the police officers is that, by inoculating only half the officers, the Government is:

... virtually admitting future unconditional liability for any claim laid against them by an officer, not included on the program, who may contract the disease.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The information that flowed into the Government decision to which the honourable member has referred was that all officers in the higher risk category would be inoculated as a result of the resources that had been made available. If that is not the case—and I will immediately check that out with the Commissioner—I will consult my colleagues on the matter. I thank the honourable member for providing this advice.

CHANDLERS HILL ROAD

Mr TYLER: Will the Minister of Transport ask the Highways Department to review its recent decision not to reduce the speed limit on Chandlers Hill Road from 80 km/h to 60 km/h between Southern Cross Drive and Reservoir Drive, Happy Valley? Many constituents have approached me in recent months concerning this section of Chandlers Hill Road. They tell me that they believe the 80 km/h speed limit for this section of road is ludicrous given the degree of development in the area, the volume of traffic, the gradient of sections of Chandlers Hill Road and the curvature of the road, which makes visibility extremely poor at some significant intersections.

During the past 12 to 18 months there has been considerable development in the area; for instance, a shopping centre has been constructed on Chandlers Hill Road just west of Southern Cross Drive. A little further along the road is a pedestrian crossing, which is used by primary school and preschool children. Also the nearby intersection of Education Road and Reservoir Drive is extremely congested at certain times of the day. The Minister would be aware that Reservoir Drive is currently being realigned and will be known as Happy Valley Drive. The work is due for completion in 1988. My constituents argue that this is further evidence that the speed limit needs to be reviewed.

As a result of my constituents' concerns about the matter, in July I asked for the speed limit to be reduced. The Highways Department investigated this section of the road and found that the existing speed limit was still appropriate. I have now been advised that, during the last week, two accidents have occurred on this section of Chandlers Hill Road at its intersection with Reservoir Road. My constituents are alarmed that the department seems reluctant to try to improve the safety of this section of road by reducing the speed limit. Accordingly, they have asked me to seek the Minister's assurance that he will have this matter further investigated.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question and I will certainly ask the Highways Department to look again at the speed limit on that section of road. At one time or another, most members of Parliament have written to the Minister of Transport of the day seeking a reduction in speed limits. In my time as Minister, I know that many of them have been surprised that such reductions have not been agreed to by the Minister on the recommendation of the Highways Department. I

would like the honourable member to tell his constituents, first, that the decisions that the Highways Department makes are not ludicrous, although some people may not agree with them, and secondly, that the Highways Department is very concerned about road safety. Indeed, that is one of its responsibilities in designing and building roads, and it takes that responsibility very seriously.

There are two problems in determining the appropriate speed limit. First, there needs to be a consistency throughout the metropolitan areas of the State about the types of road on which speed limits are determined to ensure that people using these roads are not confused by similar types of roads having different speed limits. In fact, if local government controlled speed limits, we would have a multiplicity of speed zones around the State which would be totally confusing and impossible to police. The Highways Department has to take an overall view of speed limits; it cannot take an individual view, looking at one section of road and determining the speed limit for that section without having regard to similar sections of road throughout the State. There needs to be a consistency, and I think the motorist in South Australia would demand that.

Secondly, it is quite clear (and all the evidence would show) that people drive in accordance with what they believe to be a reasonable speed for that road. If we reduce the speed limit from 80 km/h to 60 km/h, it does not have a great deal of effect on drivers' speeds unless, of course, there is heavy policing to ensure that the new speed limit is adhered to. For instance, about 85 per cent of motorists exceed the speed limit on Mount Barker Road. If we reduced the speed limit by 20 km/h, that would mean that 100 per cent of motorists on that road would exceed the limit unless there was heavy policing. The evidence indicates that.

I recognise why members of Parliament and their constituents are sometimes unhappy about the decisions made in the Highways Department. I thought it important to explain to the House and, through the House, to the electorate, the difficult task the Highways Department has in determining speed limits which are consistent, which are relevant and which will be adhered to by the motorist in South Australia.

It is clear that conditions on roads change, and at times they change very quickly; and when I am asked by members of Parliament to consider particular speed limits, I am only too happy to have the Highways Department examine the road once again. However, I am very reluctant, as Minister of Transport, to superimpose my view about the appropriate speed limit for a particular stretch of road over and above that which the Highways Department recommends to me, because they are the experts and are charged with being the experts in giving that advice.

I know that in the past that has been done and I guess it will be done in the future if particular circumstances warrant it, but it will be in unusual circumstances indeed. I take the honourable member's question, which is an important one, and I will ask the Highways Department again to have a look at this section of road to see whether a reduction in the speed limit is appropriate.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mr BECKER: My question is directed to the Premier. Following the Premier's commissioning of a report on domestic violence and his release of that report yesterday, does his Government intend to act on recommendation No. 100, which effectively requires the Government to create a completely new defence against murder for a woman who

kills her partner after suffering domestic violence even if, as the report suggests, the killing is premeditated and occurs when that partner is asleep?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: That was the matter which was highlighted in this morning's press report on the Domestic Violence Council. I was not sure of the number of the recommendation, but the honourable member says it is No. 100. There are something like 270 recommendations in the report, so it is just one of very many. In relation to those involving legal matters, as I said in releasing the report yesterday, these are being referred to the Attorney-General who will be giving them full consideration and subsequently reporting on them to the Government.

At this stage no decisions have been made about whether or not a further defence should be created in this way. It would certainly require very considered assessment before anything would come forward, although that is true of a whole range of legal recommendations in the report. They have been specifically taken out of the report. Some can be acted upon fairly shortly, and others like that need a lot more consideration.

MOTOR CAR PURCHASE

Mr FERGUSON: I direct my question to the Minister of Education, representing the Minister of Consumer Affairs in another place. Can the Minister inform the House whether the Consumer Affairs Department would consider introducing a cooling off period for the purchase of motor cars?

I have been approached by one of my constituents who recently signed a contract to buy a motor car with the understanding that finance would be available to purchase the car. When all aspects were considered by the finance company, it was determined that finance would not be made available but my constituent was still obliged to honour the contract which was undertaken. She is now in the unfortunate position of the other finance which she has obtained being far more expensive than from the company which was first proposed. It has been put to me that a cooling off period is available for the sale of door-to-door goods and that this device might be useful in the purchase of motor cars. It has been drawn to my attention by an officer from Legal Services that the problem of motor car sales in circumstances like this is quite common.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The problems of the honourable member's constituent are twofold, as I see it. One aspect relates to the nature of the contract entered into and whether that was subject to the provision of finance by the specific company that offered that finance in the first instance or whether it was a contract in a different form. Secondly, there is the question in respect of the general law that applies to the purchase of motor vehicles. I will have both matters referred to my colleague for his investigation.

CONSUMER DEBT

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Will the Premier extend the terms of reference of the working party that the Government has appointed to investigate rising consumer debt, so that it can investigate the impact of gambling and rising Government taxes and charges?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: In announcing the working party last week, the Minister of Community Welfare sought to shift home to credit providers the responsibility for the

increasing number of people getting themselves into serious financial difficulty through escalating personal debt. I pose my question to ensure that the working party seeks to obtain a full perspective of the problem. The Minister of Community Welfare has said that the Government is alarmed at the increasing number of low and middle income earners who have become 'hopelessly over-committed' in the past five years. In this period, revenue collected from State Government taxes and charges has risen at about twice the rate of average weekly earnings, meaning that the average family has less and less to spend on essentials like food, clothing, housing and recreation.

There is increasing evidence that more and more people are being tempted to gamble in the hope that they can compensate for this decline in living standards. Figures supplied by the TAB show that last financial year it is estimated that South Australians spent \$921.2 million on all forms of legal gambling—or more than \$2.5 million a day. Figures revealed yesterday show that, in the Casino alone, money is now being gambled at the rate of \$650 000 a day. Legal gambling has also escalated at twice the rate of wages over the past five years. These trends suggest that more and more low and middle income earners are being caught in a vicious circle where they gamble in the hope that they can offset their fall in living standards, only to be forced into more personal debt to feed this habit. The question does not presuppose the need to limit gambling opportunities, but only the need to examine their impact if the Government's analysis of escalating personal debt is to be a full and objective one.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: In terms of overall gambling, the amount gambled per head of population in South Australia is, I believe, the lowest in the country. We are a long way behind some other places in Australia where gambling is very much more pronounced and in relation to which, obviously, the ramifications of gambling would be more serious. It must be remembered that in South Australia we do not have poker machines. I know that some people advocate that we have those, but certainly the *per capita* gambling rate increases significantly in places where there are poker machines. I imagine that the honourable member's question is prompted in part by the report in this morning's paper—because he made an oblique reference to it—

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, would you please rule whether the Minister—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Murray-Mallee will wait until he has received the call. The honourable member has a point of order?

Mr LEWIS: Will you rule, Sir, on whether the Minister of Labour is out of order or not?

The SPEAKER: The Minister is clearly out of order, and I ask him to either resume his seat or to go completely into the Speaker's Gallery. He cannot conduct conversations across the barrier. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The honourable member's question may well have been prompted by a report in this morning's *Advertiser* headlined '\$85 the price of a typical casino punt'. In fact, that is quite erroneous. The calculation that suggests, as the article reports, that Adelaide Casino visitors on average lose \$85 a day each is totally erroneous. The figures supplied are accurate but I will explain why it is a wrong interpretation that sees people losing \$85 a head at the Casino. There is a confusion between the gross and net returns in terms of gross gambling revenue as opposed to net gambling revenue, as defined in the Casino Act. The gross gambling revenue is the total of chips and Keno tickets purchased: that is, it is the total money at risk in respect of

gambling at the Casino. On this basis, with an average of 7 700 persons visiting the Casino each day \$85 is about the average amount that each person would take to the Casino with which to gamble.

So, if one talks about gambling to the extent of \$85 a head average, that is correct. However, the net gambling revenue is the gross gambling revenue less all the prizes paid out by the Casino. Therefore, the true figure in fact represents only about \$19.50 a person: in other words, about \$20 which one would expect to pay for the sort of entertainment that one gets in a whole series of venues in and around the city. That is the average loss and puts the matter into a much better perspective. It is erroneous to talk about everyone going to the Casino and losing about \$85. It could be about \$19.

Having said that, let me underline another point that also refutes something that the honourable member was implying: there is no such thing as the average gambler. In casino gambling in particular there is an enormous discrepancy between those who wager large sums and those who simply have a flutter or go into the Casino merely to look around. All those categories are catered for in the Casino, so the average concept is unreal in terms of the actual profit and loss of people who attend the Casino. That point is worth remembering in the context of the Casino's marketing strategy, which is increasingly to see that the major amount of gambling (the high rollers, if you like) is done by those people who come from other States and from overseas.

We promote the Casino as part of an overall tourist package. So, in fact the money wagered here (and I hope left here to a certain extent) is money that is not generated in the local economy: it comes from outside. What it is doing is generating jobs in the local economy.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The honourable member should listen to this. I know that he was against the Casino, as was the shadow Minister of Tourism. In fact, that money in turn is employing over 1 000 people who would otherwise not be employed. So, in itself it is creating jobs and economic activity, and the more people from other States and overseas use our Casino facilities the better I like it and the better all South Australians should. However, we obviously will not deny such people that pleasure and, if people want to enjoy themselves in that way, they can. The perspective that I have placed on the figures will reinforce the fact that, unless people go completely berserk, the Casino is the sort of place in which one can have reasonable pleasure without too great a financial risk.

ENFIELD COUNCIL

Mr GREGORY: Will the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government ask his colleague to investigate alleged breaches of the Local Government Act by the Mayor of the Corporation of the City of Enfield? In its edition of 18 November 1987, the *Standard*, which is published by Messenger Newspapers, carried the headline 'Enfield row over secret talks leak' with a subheading 'Confidential council matters discussed in Parliament'. The editorial under that headline states:

A bitter row broke out at Enfield council's latest meeting when it was discovered confidential matters dealt with in camera had been discussed in Parliament.

At the meeting West Ward councillor Rudi Binka accused Mayor Ray Norton of leaking information about an alleged conflict of interest row involving Cr Binka to Legislative Councillor John Burdett. Mr Burdett then raised questions in Parliament about the matter on Tuesday 3 November referring to discussions which took place at the *in camera* meeting.

"You, Mr Mayor, were a member privy to privileged information which you have passed on to Mr Burdett," Cr Binka said in a strained voice. "Who gave you the authority to refer the matter? Did any one of you council members give the mayor authority? How much can I trust any of you here?"

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. I would be pleased to refer the question to my colleague in another place, the Minister of Local Government, so that she can have this matter investigated in a manner that she feels is most appropriate. It certainly is a serious allegation. The procedures outlined to the House by the honourable member would be of considerable concern to us all. In view of those concerns, I am happy to ask my colleague in another place to take the necessary action to resolve this matter.

UPPER STURT ROAD PLANNING STUDY

Mr S.G. EVANS: Has the Minister of Transport had any further discussions with the Minister for Environment and Planning regarding the Upper Sturt Road planning study since their discussions in 1986 and, if so, what was the result and what action is contemplated now regarding that study? The Minister of Transport wrote to me on 11 August 1986 and informed me that, although he had discussed this matter with his colleague the Minister for Environment and Planning and the Commissioner of Highways, the proposal was not awaiting his approval.

I have asked this question because, in relation to the boundaries of the Belair park, the Minister of Transport also informed me recently that the National Parks and Wildlife Act had to be amended before he could achieve what he wanted to achieve and this involved waiting for the matter to come before Parliament.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question. As Minister I have been involved with this matter for some time now. Before we can improve the condition of the Upper Sturt Road (and that is something for which the honourable member has lobbied for some time), changes need to be made to the National Parks and Wildlife Act so that we can acquire a small section of the Belair National Park and then give other sections back to it so that this roadwork can take place. My colleague has informed me that the necessary amending legislation is now before another place, and that will enable such procedures to take place. The first step was to amend the Act so that the Highways Department and the National Parks and Wildlife Service—

Mr S.G. Evans: Have you had any discussions since 1986?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I have had discussions with the Minister but I cannot say for certain whether they were prior to or since 1986. I had discussions with the Minister some time ago and, more particularly, there were discussions between our officers, with the knowledge of my colleague and me. It was some time ago, so I cannot really put a date on it. The important thing is that this Act is to be amended, and my colleague the Minister for Environment and Planning has advised me of the progress in that area, so I think that the answers to the honourable member's problems are now a matter of time rather than of intent.

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER (Minister of Education) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Legal Practitioners Act 1981. Read a first time.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the Legal Practitioners Act 1981 to provide for the imposition of a levy on practising certificates. The levy will be used for the purpose of improving and maintaining the Supreme Court Library. During 1986-87, the devaluation of the Australian dollar created a dramatic shortfall in the spending power of the library for overseas subscriptions and textbooks. The Government provided temporary assistance in that year to overcome the shortfall and to enable the library to maintain its collection. However, the Government cannot continue to offset the full effect of the devaluation.

The role of the Supreme Court Library is to provide a library service to judicial officers and the legal profession. The profession has access to the library collection and may borrow books to use within the courts. Under the current provisions of the Act no portion of the practising certificate fee is applied to the maintenance of the Supreme Court Library. Whereas, it is common practice in other States (except New South Wales) for the legal profession to contribute towards the maintenance of the court libraries.

The Government is of the view that, as the Supreme Court Library is open to, and used by, members of the legal profession, it is reasonable to expect the profession to make some contribution towards maintaining the library. The proposed levy will be set by regulation at \$35 and it will enable the Supreme Court Library to be funded at a level which will maintain the collection and enable the purchase of essential textbooks. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 amends section 16 (5) of the Act which provides that an application for a practising certificate must be accompanied by the prescribed fee. The amendment provides that the application must also be accompanied by the prescribed levy. Clause 3 amends section 95 of the Act which sets out the manner in which revenue raised from practising certificate fees must be dealt with. The amendment provides that revenue from levies will be applied for the purpose of maintaining and improving the Supreme Court Library. Clause 4 makes a consequential amendment to the Governor's regulation making power in section 97 of the Act.

Mr S.J. BAKER secured the adjournment of the debate.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 12 November. Page 1895.)

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): The Opposition supports the Bill, which in essence does three major things: it changes the name of the River Murray Commission to the River Murray-Darling Basin Commission; it formalises the establishment of a Ministerial Council comprising 12 Min-

isters; and it increases the number of Commissioners from four to eight. In actual fact, it formally spreads the application of the agreement of 1982 over the whole of the Murray-Darling Basin. This has been in effect since that agreement was reached.

While it did not spell that out, the three States and the Commonwealth agreed to operate on the basis that the terms of the agreement, to all intents and purposes, would apply over the basin, the Government's concerned having agreed that any development or changes to the existing structure of the various rivers would be referred to the River Murray Commission for consideration and comment prior to proceeding. I believe that that undertaking has largely been accepted by the Governments concerned. In many respects the Bill really formalises what has taken place in that regard.

The Ministerial Council that was created comprises 12 members in all—three Ministers from each of the four contracting Governments. The other significant change that has been made to the agreement is the fact that now, rather than having a Commissioner and a Deputy Commissioner, there will be two Commissioners from each of the four Governments, or one Commissioner with expertise in the area of engineering in particular and another Commissioner with expertise in the area of land management and environment, etc. I have no problem with that amendment. However, I am concerned about the delay in implementing the legislation and the fact that very little has been done to overcome the problems created in the Murray Valley system since white man occupied this country.

Over a period of about 150 years we have been effectively utilising the resource of the Murray-Darling Basin, but as a result of development, whether by way of irrigation, industries or cities within the basin, there has been an enormous impact on that great resource.

My real complaint is that, until such time as the Governments concerned are prepared to put up the necessary money to get on with the job and do what has to be done, we face grave problems. I appreciate that environmental aspects of the Murray-Darling Basin involve ongoing studies, and the work that has been done over the years by the River Murray Commission has clearly identified high priority works that have to be undertaken yet, year by year, we see virtually no increase in allocation of funding for works to be undertaken.

A glorious example in South Australia is the Woolpunda scheme, which was first looked at about 1981. At that time I let a contract to consultants, I think Coffey and Partners, to examine intercepting natural ground water inflows into the Murray River between lock 2 and lock 3. The consultants reported in a comparatively short time indicating that it was feasible and that it was an excellent cost value undertaking that would divert from the Murray in South Australia about 60 000 tonnes of an estimated 80 000 or 90 000 tonnes natural inflow of salt into the river in South Australia.

This was at a position above the major take-off points for domestic water use at Morgan, Swan Reach and Stockwell and the pipeline systems from Murray Bridge. Consequently, for the major consumers of domestic water—the metropolitan area and the agricultural areas of South Australia—the benefits would be significant indeed. When one considers that for much of the time in South Australia the salinity level in the Murray River exceeds the figure laid down by the WHO as being the upper limit of what we should attempt for human consumption, as I said earlier, the Coffey and Partners report in late 1982 or in 1983 was a feasible cost benefit project that should proceed.

Since then we have seen ongoing studies and works of a minor nature. In other words, the resources were not poured into that project to get on with it, whereas it was obvious that 60 000 tonnes of salt could be removed effectively from the system. That is a great disappointment to me and a clear indication of lack of sincerity because of the sheer absence of financial commitment by the Governments concerned to really get on and do the job.

It is worth mentioning some of the history of this resource, which has been described as Australia's greatest natural recurring resource. A publication put out at the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the Hume dam, a celebration that I had the opportunity to attend, along with the Minister of Water Resources, last year, states:

The total Murray system, including the Darling and Murrumbidgee Rivers and their tributaries, drains over one million square kilometres or one seventh of the total area of Australia. It accounts for approximately 46 per cent of Australia's agricultural production and contains approximately one quarter of the national cattle herd, one half of the sheep flock, one half of the cropland and three-quarters of the nation's irrigation area. The resources of the area support directly and indirectly two million people, with the total value of primary and secondary production estimated to be in excess of \$10 000 million per year.

Clearly, \$10 000 million a year is generated to the benefit of the national economy, yet to try to get a commitment from Governments to put back \$50 million or \$100 million to try to maintain that resource is like getting blood out of a stone. It is an absolute national disgrace that this situation has been allowed to occur and, until such time as the public become fully conscious and aware of the degradation occurring in the Murray-Darling Basin, it seems that nothing will be done. It is the old problem: Governments tend to respond only to the weight of public opinion. Unfortunately, it falls greatly back onto the public to generate sufficient weight of public opinion to bring that pressure to bear on the State and Federal Governments to get on and do something about protecting what is Australia's greatest natural resource. The publication goes on to state:

South Australia is particularly dependent upon the Murray for its water. Adelaide alone receives between 20 and 80 per cent of its water from the Murray, depending on climatic conditions. The Murray supplies 49 per cent of South Australia's domestic and industrial requirements and almost all of the water for irrigation.

The dependence of South Australia is beyond question yet, as I say, when it comes to a commitment from Governments to get on with the job, rather than procrastinating and letting the situation just drift on from year to year, there is none. Instead, Governments hope that we will be blessed by good rainfalls in the catchment area so that there will not be a salinity crisis in South Australia and thus no public outcry, but unfortunately the time will come when that will be the case. It could be this year or the year after when we will run into another cycle of dry years and the salinity level in South Australia will once again go through the roof.

That will cost the economy of this State countless millions of dollars, not only in the irrigated areas but right across South Australia, whether it is down here in secondary industry or elsewhere. I refer, for instance, to the effect of corrosion on every household in South Australia served by Murray River water. It is the responsibility of each of us to protect that resource. We have an obligation to protect future generations to ensure that that resource is maintained and also improved. I refer members to similar river systems that have been upgraded throughout the world and the problems that have been encountered, whether it be as a result of irrigation, with the intrusion of saline ground water back into the river system, or as a result of industrial development polluting the river system.

Many of the countries and their river systems have been effectively rehabilitated, and the River Thames in England is a good example. Not so many years ago the Thames was almost completely devoid of fish life but, with the capital works program that has been undertaken, resulting in the diversion of industrial effluents away from the Thames, fish life is now extending further and further up the river each year. As the regulations take effect, fewer and fewer pollutants go into the river: they are removed year by year.

A river system to which I often refer which has many similarities with regard to its pollution load and how that pollution enters the system, although not so much its appearance, is the Colorado system in the United States. The salinity load enters the river in a similar way to the salinity or pollution load in the Murray-Darling system. Much of it is as a result of ground water intrusion caused by irrigation—in other words, irrigation induced salinity. There are natural ground water flows and surplus run-off. The situation with the Murray-Darling system is very similar.

The River Murray Commission has identified a number of capital works projects that could be undertaken forthwith if moneys were made available. As I have said on numerous occasions (and as I have noted in schedule 2 of this amending legislation), there is provision for variation of the contribution made by the contracting Governments. I do not know that it is significantly different from the existing provision in schedule 1 of the River Murray Agreement, but it is referred to again in schedule 2. The Federal Government must be prepared to recognise the Murray-Darling Basin and system as a national resource and not try to fob it off as part and parcel of four sovereign States, which lets it off the hook. Rivers do not recognise State boundaries. This system is a national resource and must be treated as such.

I referred to the Colorado system, in the United States, which covers some seven upper and lower basin States. An almost identical problem occurred there in that the upper basin States did not want to contribute financially to resolving the problems faced by the lower basin States, although many of the problems in the lower basin were created by undertakings, works and development in the upper basin. Until the Federal Government of the United States came in over the top of the States (but with their agreement) and funded most of the works to the extent of about 75 per cent with the States picking up the remaining 25 per cent, very little progress was made. Human nature being what it is, those who are not directly affected are loath to contribute financially to the benefit of those for whom they might have created a problem.

There is only one way out of it, and that is for the Federal Government to pick up the lion's share of the contribution so that the problem is spread over the majority of taxpayers of the nation. One has only to refer to the statement that I read earlier from the River Murray Commission which identified clearly the value of the Murray-Darling Basin to the economy of this nation and the fact that most of the revenue generated from productivity in the form of taxation flows back to the national Government. The Federal Government should pick up 70 per cent of the major works that have been identified by the River Murray Commission and the States should pick up the remaining 10 per cent each. Until that occurs, the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and Ministerial Council will continue to analyse and consider numerous documents, publications and studies. Unfortunately, no progress has been made into putting such studies into effect.

The crux of the problem with which we are confronted is not so much whether legislation should provide for a ministerial council; I have no problem with that. However, that in itself will not solve the problem. The commission knows what must be done and the additional input from the ministerial council and the increase in the number of members of the Murray-Darling Commission from four to eight can only be of benefit, because it will broaden the base and knowledge of that commission. I have no argument with the work that the River Murray Commission has done. In fact it has done a remarkably good job given the limitations that have been placed on it. In the early stages, very real limits were placed on the River Murray Commission and it had very little say over the major rivers outside the Murray, Mitta-Mitta and Kiewa system, so it is surprising that the commission has achieved as much as it has. I will refer again to the publication by the River Murray Commission with reference to the history of the development of the agreement and the commission itself. It is worth putting on record, because it would not do any harm for members and the public to be conscious of how it has developed over the years. The report states:

During the late nineteenth century, each of the three colonies on the Murray claimed the right to use its watercourse and water without regard to the interest of the other colonies.

As I said, human nature being what it is, 'What is yours is mine and what is mine is mine'. It is no different between the States. The report continues:

However, after Federation, it was realised that an interstate agreement on the Murray and its use was essential and various proposals were advanced. A royal commission in 1902 and an interstate conference of engineers in 1913 both recommended joint control of the Murray. In 1915, the River Murray Waters Agreement was ratified by the Commonwealth and the States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Under this agreement, the River Murray Commission was constituted in January 1917.

The report outlines the responsibilities of the commission as follows:

The role of the commission under its original agreement (and as amended from time to time until 1970) was limited to activities associated with the sharing of the water resources of the River Murray between the States in prescribed proportions and the economical use and development of these water resources. This entailed the following responsibilities:

- the construction, operation and maintenance of works for the storage and regulation of river flows for irrigation, navigation and other water supply purposes.

These works comprise:

- Dartmouth Dam;
- Hume Dam;
- Yarrowonga Weir;
- Lake Victoria storage;
- Regulating structures on River Murray effluent creeks;
- Thirteen locks and weirs between Torrumbarry and Blanchetown;
- Maude and Redbank Weirs on the Murrumbidgee River;
- Barrages at the river mouth.
- the allocation of available water between the States for water supply and irrigation purposes;
- the measurement of flows in and diversions from the River Murray and its tributaries;
- the release of water for dilution to achieve acceptable salinity levels;
- protection of Hume catchment from erosion;
- the investigation and initiation of proposals to provide better conservation and regulation of River Murray water resources.

Basically, those were the responsibilities of the River Murray Commission. I am pleased that the role of the new Murray-Darling Commission has now formally been recognised and that the environmental aspects will also be taken into consideration. As I have said, we can have all the legislation, all the studies and all the reports in the world, but until such time as the Governments concerned—particularly the Federal Government—are prepared to stand up

and be counted and provide the necessary resources to come to grips with the problems of the Murray-Darling Basin, then the whole situation remains a national disgrace.

It is very much in the hands of our friend the Deputy Premier, as Minister of Water Resources, to do more than just bring legislation before the House and publicly announce a new report, a new study and so forth. Let us see some genuine action and get on with the job. The publication further states:

The role of the River Murray Commission was broadened in 1982 to allow more direct and independent action in the management of the nation's most important river system.

This legislation will formalise the work and effort that went into the new River Murray Waters Agreement which was finally agreed to on 1 October 1982. If we consider the works that must be undertaken State by State, certainly in Victoria in relation to water logging, high water tables and salinity problems, particularly in the Shepparton/Kerang area, we see that a massive amount of capital will have to go into those areas to come to grips with the problems. There have been suggestions that much of this can be disposed of by flows down the Murray River out to sea but, while this approach has been supported in some areas, once we start heading down the path of that action being an acceptable means of disposal, it can only lead to more and more problems in the longer term.

There is only one place for the salt, and that is out of the basin. Many proposals have been put forward from time to time as to how the salt should be disposed of in Victoria, such as whether it be piped through to the sea. Naturally, economic costs have to be taken into account, but we are talking about a resource that is worth about \$10 000 million annually, and that is acknowledged by the Federal Government. The Federal Government does not argue with that figure; it has been determined after a great deal of study and input. When we talk of figures of that magnitude and then start quibbling about spending \$50 million or \$100 million to correct a major fault which has been created by white occupation in the past 150 years, it is nothing short of an absolute disgrace that we are haggling about it and that virtually no progress has been made.

In many respects, until such time as sincerity is shown by money being put in place to get on with the job, much of what has been done in this area becomes little more than window dressing, because the problem is still there. We have a moral obligation to the next generation to see that that resource is handed over in a better condition than when we inherited it. I cannot tolerate a situation in which we continue, year after year, to make statements, issue press releases and receive more reports yet, when it comes to the crunch, nothing is done.

We only have to look at the State and Federal budgets to see how much money is provided to really getting on with protecting this resource—and it is next to nothing. A resource of this nature will serve us and future generations well, so long as we look after it. We have the right to use that resource and use it to its absolute limit, so long as we make sure that we hand it over in a better state than that in which we inherited it. For that reason, we on this side support the Bill, although the benefits are yet to be seen. In theory, the benefits are there; to date, we have not seen many of the benefits, because at this stage they are purely on paper.

In the past five years we have seen virtually no tangible evidence of Governments being sincere in putting into effect the objects under the River Murray Waters Agreement, which now becomes the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement. For the reasons I have stated, we support the Bill. I will be

interested to hear, in the Minister's response to the second reading debate, when he anticipates that some of the moneys that are generated from his resource will actually start to flow back into it. At the moment it is such a minute, token gesture that it is not even worth considering as being in any way a contribution or a serious attempt to come to grips with the problems. It is an essential resource to South Australia. South Australia would completely fail without it, and we have an enormous vested interest in making sure that the agreement which was finally reached in 1982 is supported to the nth degree, and the benefits that will flow from that to this State will be enormous.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): It is a pleasure to follow my colleague the member for Chaffey, a person who, it is said, has Murray River water pulsing in his veins—with a very low salt content. I say that because the honourable member has brought to this place over a long period of time—in fact, since 1968, with the exception of a short period between 1970 and 1973—first-hand knowledge of the Murray River, its requirements, the need for it to be cleaned up, and its value to South Australia's future, not only in relation to the metropolitan area but to the State's agriculture and, more particularly, horticulture areas.

The honourable member, as a former Minister of Water Resources, was able to demonstrate his knowledge of the river in getting across to a number of people within the system a message which was practical and, I am advised, appreciated. Certainly, the information that he was able to give seminars in the United States of America relative to water control and irrigation matters was the subject of a very worthwhile document presented to this House as a portion of an overseas study tour report, a document which has been utilised very widely around the world and used not so much as a textbook but as a guide on matters of irrigation and associated subjects.

I did not stand particularly to lavish praise on the member for Chaffey, although I believe that what I have said was warranted. I take the opportunity because the Minister who occupies the bench at present and, indeed, is in charge of this portfolio and I in one sense cut our political teeth on the subject of the Murray River. It took some months after we arrived here in 1970 for the debate to come full circle—from Chowilla to the Dartmouth dam. However, the reason why he and I, as well as the members for Gilles, Eyre, Hanson, Kavel (the Deputy Leader), Playford, the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Mines and Energy are in this place—

The Hon. J.W. Slater interjecting:

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes, the member for Gilles got his guernsey earlier in the piece. However, certainly the events of the late 1960s and 1970 in some measure were our introduction to this place. The debate that took place in relation to the Murray River and the Chowilla dam *versus* the Dartmouth dam still rates, in my opinion, as one of the most important debates that a number of us took part in. It involved a tremendous amount of research. It involved and rehashed in some senses a lot of material that had been placed in *Hansard* before many of us arrived in this place.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: And the Liberal Party was right on that occasion, too.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Exactly, the Liberal Party was right on that occasion, as subsequent events have shown. But it was a very worthy debate, and in looking back it is interesting to see that many of the predictions made at that time have come true. Many statements were made by members at that stage before the change of Government in 1970, and much information was put forward relative to the

importance of turning the section of the Murray River that flows through South Australia into more of a water supply rather than a sewer. As my colleague the member for Chaffey has pointed out, the importance of getting rid of salt was highlighted. Both he and I, as members of the Public Works Standing Committee, had the experience between 1977 and 1979 of looking at some of the rehabilitation work to be undertaken along the Murray River. This involved the Noora salt pans, and the system that has subsequently been introduced has greatly enhanced the Murray River system.

When campaigning for the return of the member for Chaffey, leading up to the 1973 election, I can remember standing with him at the side of Chambers Creek and looking at the salt retention dams, which were not even a stone's throw away but merely a step apart from the Murray River, and one could see the seepage coming through the banks. One had to admit that the chances of keeping the salt out of the river were virtually nil while circumstances remained as they were then. The job has not been completed yet. In his second reading explanation the Minister said:

The advanced institutional arrangements which this agreement provides will ensure that resource management is undertaken within the most effective framework and should certainly ensure that the interests of South Australia are properly catered for.

Without the passage of this Bill and the events that it foreshadows, the chances of retaining the existing population in some parts of the River Murray system is certainly under question. The matter of the chances of the metropolis of Adelaide and the extended metropolis of this city being able to survive as far as water requirements are concerned is very much a continuing question. It is interesting that in the first years of becoming associated with this place one very quickly became associated with one Mr Vern Lawrence, who was the Executive Director of the Murray Valley Development League, as it was then called. I had the opportunity, early in 1971, I think it was, to undertake a trip down the length of the Murray River, from the site of the Dartmouth Dam, at the junction of the Mitta-Mitta and the Dart rivers. I was accompanied on that trip by the former member for Bragg (David Tonkin), the former member for Murray (Ivon Wardle), the former member for Heyden (the late Bill McAnaney), and the former member for Flinders (John Carnie). The five of us went to Albury, whence we were taken to look at the Snowy Mountains development work that had been undertaken. We were then taken by four wheel drive vehicles to the actual site of what was to be the centre of the Dartmouth dam.

All that was present on that occasion were a few pieces of cleared mallee land to show the site where the wall would go, and there were a few pegs in the ground to indicate what was to be the centre of the wall. We were given a very graphic description of how the groynes and the various other activities would be put into place prior to the establishment of that Dartmouth wall.

As Speaker of this House, in late 1979, or perhaps 1980, I was invited by the then Government of the day to go, in association with members on both sides of the House, to the opening of the Dartmouth dam. It was a magnificent experience to stand on virtually the same site that I had stood on only a matter of some seven or eight years before, when there was nothing there other than scrub and a few posts indicating where the development might take place. On the occasion of the opening, we flew over the area and then were taken by bus to the completed development. It involved a very major engineering feat for Australia. Some would say that it rates with the best of the developments undertaken as part of the Snowy Mountains development. Perhaps that will remain a matter of conjecture, but the

development certainly played a major role in providing for South Australia a guarantee in relation to its water requirements.

Since those times we have seen less crises relative to the passage of salt sludge and a lack of water, as well as the problems associated with low river levels, etc., which used to be commonplace. This is a similar case to the lack of coal back in the 1940s and 1950s before we became self sufficient with our own brown coal—although that is digressing and a matter of the past.

I now refer to a matter in relation to benefits to be derived by South Australia. I mentioned the fact that it is probably not unexpected that when Vern Lawrence left the scene in respect of the Murray Valley development other people started to take up the cudgels and subsequently local government became more involved in the Murray Valley Development League and the subsequent organisations. In fact, Jim Hullick, the Secretary-General of the Local Government Association in South Australia, became very much involved with that organisation. Former members of Federal Parliament, from both sides, played a major role in various aspects of the 'Save the Murray' campaign. The Hon. Gordon Davidson, a former Senator for South Australia (who was in the precincts of this House earlier this week,) played a major part. As I was driving back to Gawler last evening after the House had got up I heard the tail end of a debate in the Federal Parliament in which Ralph Jacobi, the former member for Hawker, was lauded by a National Party member who was contributing to the debate for his part in the overall movement towards a better water supply for South Australia.

It has been mostly bipartisan, although there have been a few bumps along the way as to how to do it best this time or that time. However, there has basically been a bipartisan interest taken by State and Federal members to ensure that South Australia will ultimately enjoy the benefit of a better water system.

To those who have played a part I add my congratulations. Local government has become involved and, through the Secretary-General of the Local Government Association, much additional work has been done. Indeed, I am certain that it is the continued work of people such as the Jim Hullicks and Vern Lawrences that has got us to the point where we are today. Governments have had to get together to make decisions and they have been prodded and poked all along the line. South Australia has been blessed with Commissioners who have represented the State well. These have included Mr Shannon and Mr Yeates.

Mr Lewis: And Keith Lewis.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes, and Mr Dridan. All those people played a part in this eventual movement. In the remaining few minutes at my disposal I wish to revert to the subject of local government. Local government in those council areas abutting the Murray River has had continuing difficulty in coming to grips with some problems on the river. Those councils have been subject to pressures and doubts whether their population will be maintained because, if there were no water or a reduction in the overall production of an area, the likelihood of their industry closing down would be real. There has always been a potential social problem existing in places such as Berri or Barmera, where the loss of a winery, a small pickling company or any such facility was likely to start the rot and produce a major problem.

If one goes to Morgan and sees the size of the old wharf there, one can close one's eyes and think about the volume of river traffic that passed over that wharf. That traffic comprised produce not only from along the Murray River

but also from the Darling River and the Murrumbidgee River. At Morgan, wool was transferred from the river boat for carriage to Adelaide on the railway that does not exist today. With the loss of the river traffic and subsequently the rail traffic, the question that arose in the minds of Morgan people was whether they could survive.

Members who came into this House in 1970 well recall that one of the issues on which they cut their teeth at that time concerned the proposed closure of the Highways Department punt facility at Morgan. I recall the late Claude Allen, member for Frome, standing in this place and drawing to members' attention the fact that the proposal, then being considered, to close down that facility and move it to Murray Bridge was likely to put 10 or 11 homes at Morgan on the market at the one time, completely destroying the real estate market there, and he predicted the other consequences that would follow.

Since then, however, we have seen Morgan become the centre of a major development for water filtration for the area of the Iron Triangle, and there has been a resurgence of population comprising not only people participating in the management of that facility but also many retired people from Adelaide and elsewhere. Indeed, real estate prices in Morgan at present are not too bad. So, Morgan was another place that experienced difficulties.

If I may relate a personal anecdote, before I graduated in late 1951 I tried to find where I should commence a practice. I took a 15-mile swing around a hundreds map of South Australia and considered major developments. Murray Bridge was a possible place in which to commence a veterinary practice, because it had a big cattle population, and I also considered Gawler, Maitland and Jamestown. The final choice was between Gawler and Murray Bridge, and I decided against Murray Bridge because it had too big a concentration of one kind of stock in the one place and, if anything were to happen to the dairy industry of Murray Bridge, what would happen to a poor veterinarian struggling for a place in the sun? Yet, in 1956 Murray Bridge was closed as a dairying establishment for almost 18 months because of the flooding of the Murray River. That was a circumstance of which I had no prior knowledge but it pinpointed the difficulties that people along the Murray River can face in a number of ways. Indeed, it is such difficulties that have befallen the various councils along the river. Yet those councils have been persistent and, assisted by members of both political persuasions, they have tried to maintain their place in the sun.

Most recently, I recall the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Heysen, the member for Chaffey, the member for Murray-Mallee and I meeting with the Minister to consider shack sites and the importance of developing a recreation facility along the Murray River. Although the result that we thought that we had achieved on that day was not exactly the result with which we finished up, at least there has been ongoing dialogue with local government and with the Department of Environment and Planning to ensure that this facility as a leisure site would maintain a place for South Australian leisure.

The comments that I have made today have been fairly wide and general. Perhaps it should be for me simply to say that I cut my teeth in this place on matters concerning the Murray River. Despite recent rumours in the press, may I say that I have not stopped cutting my teeth on matters directly associated with the Parliament of South Australia and I shall continue to cut my teeth on such matters at least for some time to come in the future.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): As stated by my colleagues the member for Light and the member for Chaffey, who is

the Liberal Party spokesman on these matters, the Opposition supports this Bill. However, just because Liberal members support it does not mean that the measure should pass through Parliament without our placing on record our reasons for supporting it and our reasons for considering the proper management of the Murray River as an important national preoccupation. It has certainly been an increasingly important preoccupation with the States of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia in conjunction with the Commonwealth over the past eight years.

I draw the line at that because the Labor Governments of Dunstan and Corcoran did not place appropriate emphasis on the commission or on the river which the commission was supposed to be managing. Had that been done, in all probability the member for Chaffey might never have regained his seat. The cynical way in which those Governments, especially the Dunstan Government, treated the people in the Riverland in particular, and all South Australians in general, over questions relating to the sound management of the water resource obtained from the Murray River was good enough reason for people all along the river to understand and accept that the Dunstan Government cared not so much for the river as for the political opportunism which issues concerning the river provided for it.

Since the time he first became a member in this place and was re-elected, my colleague the member for Chaffey has worked tirelessly to try and focus appropriate attention on those problems which have needed urgent attention. He is to be commended by everybody in this place, and indeed by all South Australians, for continuing to draw to our attention the importance of competent and well-informed decision-making through the River Murray Commission and the States that contribute to it by legislative and administrative action.

I commend the Minister for continuing the work started by the member for Chaffey when he became Minister of Water Resources in the Tonkin Government in 1979 and for recognising also the great importance of the river as a multiple user resource and not just a single or dual user resource with a few other things tacked on. This Minister has demonstrated his capacity for responsible decision-making and sound judgment in relation to the Murray River by continuing to argue for and finally introducing a comprehensive management review not only of the river and its waters but also the immediate environs through which it flows in South Australia. I urge all other Federal, Victorian and New South Wales Ministers to follow that example in their respective States and acknowledge that the Murray River and its tributaries should be more effectively managed than is the case at present. They need to do this with a holistic approach and not just for the parochial benefits of their respective States. They should look at it from the point of view of benefiting the entire population living in the south-east of Australia, which comprises the vast majority of people.

I now draw attention to the particular deficiency which the old River Murray Commission and the new commission now have envisaged. There are not only three States in the Murray-Darling Basin. All members would know that there are four States, and more than half of the Darling River's catchment area is beyond the northern boundary of New South Wales. At the present time the Queensland Government is not involved in the commission, but it is hoped that it will be soon. There have been no utterances from the Queensland Government as to whether it gives a fig, a jig or a damn as to what happens in that part of the Murray-Darling Basin which comes within that State's boundaries and which may affect any other State further down the

tributaries or in the main channel of the Darling River before it joins the Murray-Wentworth system.

The Queensland Government needs to wake up to the fact that it is an integral part of Australia, and it is hoped that events in recent days will help it do that. I might be forgiven for alluding to those events in Queensland, but I will not be tempted to digress from the subject matter of the Bill other than to say that any new Government in Queensland should, in all conscience, if it is to be moral and responsible in the way that it views its role as part of the Australian Federation, provide support for and participate in the responsible management processes of the Murray-Darling Basin. Then—and only then—we will have, to use the Minister's words in the second reading explanation, a sound framework for total catchment management, but until that stage is reached that will not be possible; there will continue to be the risk of pollutants and other problems coming from that part of the Darling catchment area within Queensland.

I now turn to the Murray Valley Development League. For the whole time I have been a member in this place I also have been a member of the league and I completely support its stated goals. In the days of Vern Lawrence it stated almost in platitudinous fashion the virtues and benefits to be derived from arriving at this kind of measure which controls, through consultation, the way in which development and human activity is undertaken in the Murray Valley Basin. Further, in recent years, it has more consistently put forward sensible policies and real strategies for achieving some of the things contained in this Bill and some of the things that the member for Chaffey achieved during his term as Minister along with some of the things achieved by the current Minister, the member for Baudin.

The Murray Valley Development League has strengthened its arm and sharpened its political cutting edge in recent years. It has made a substantial contribution to the development of bipartisan policies and to a better understanding of what has needed to be done. The times to which I allude were mentioned by the member for Light. He mentioned the personalities involved, including Mr Jim Hullick, who wearing his other hat is the South Australian Director of the Local Government Association at the same time being the league's most recent national President. In my own region (region 6), we have an outstanding, intelligent, committed and energetic Chairman in the person of Mr Graham Camac, who is ably and competently supported by Mr Bill Paterson, who is wearing another hat as Clerk of the District Council of Meningie.

I have a profound respect for those two men, whose judgment can be trusted by anybody. They are well-read people and they are capable of reasoned argument on any matter which comes before them and certainly on any matter which they choose to support. This new group of people, the existence of which I suppose in some part has been inspired by the presence of Dr Philip Moore, who has now left the employ of the league, was successful in identifying the broader based concern of people not only in metropolitan Adelaide, but on Yorke Peninsula and in the Lower and Mid North, the Upper North, the Iron Triangle and points as far away as Woomera and even Coober Pedy, residents in those localities having received benefits from the reticulation of water from the Murray River to their towns, industries and homes.

Moreover, water from the Murray River also services the towns throughout the South-East, certainly in the Upper South-East, from Tailem Bend to Keith, where high quality underground water is not available. Water pumped from the river at Tailem Bend is reticulated through a pipeline

to Keith, and a spur line from Coonalpyn across the Upper South-East to Meningie on the shores of Lake Albert brings water to that area, where the quality of the water in the estuarine lake system is not high enough for domestic use.

The Murray Valley Development League recruited those people to support an improvement in the plight of the river, and those of us who depend upon it successfully encouraged local government bodies in metropolitan Adelaide and in the other places to which I have just referred to be associated with the league and make a financial contribution to it, thereby providing the means by which it could more effectively lobby State and Federal Governments, particularly the New South Wales, Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. The aim was to enlighten them on what their real responsibilities are. Had that not occurred, in conjunction with the efforts of the member for Chaffey, when he was Minister, and with the efforts of this Minister, as well as those of people like Ralph Jacobi and the current member for Mayo, Alexander Downer, who was instrumental in mounting a 'Save the Murray' campaign, we would not be where we are today, and I hope that we continue in the same direction.

I repeat for the benefit of members that the total catchment area of the river system comprises one-seventh of Australia, and in that total catchment area 46 per cent—almost half—of the nation's agricultural produce is grown. Further, 75 per cent of the productive output of our irrigation industries come from that area, although it is not just an irrigator's resource. Notwithstanding that, I want it clearly understood that no ultimate plan concerning the ultimate and continuing use of the Murray River ought to overlook the considerable economic benefits that Australia and this State derive from the effort of irrigators dependent on Murray River water. Before the river was used by irrigators it was used by graziers in two ways, at least. First, where the river channel passed through the arid regions of this continent, it provided essential water for livestock grazing in the immediate vicinity.

Mr S.G. Evans: Livestock can graze up to 10 miles away.

Mr LEWIS: Sure, and sheep can go even wider than that in mild weather. The river also provided those people with the means to get their produce to market. The Murray River was the first national transport route, and it could still be playing a significant role in that respect, given the amount of public funds that were committed to making it navigable from its mouth at the port of Goolwa and Milang for more than 2 000 miles upstream through the installation of a system of locks.

That route was destroyed by interstate jealousy when the State Governments of New South Wales and Victoria deliberately, mischievously and unwisely, in my opinion, spent substantial parts of their gross domestic products as independent sovereign bodies (they were not States but colonies at that time) on building railways, thus removing from Murray River ports and tributaries the freight that was otherwise being conveyed along the Murray on paddle steamers to Goolwa and thence to Port Elliot for export. It is a pity that that trade was destroyed in such an uneconomic and unrealistic manner by what can only be described as parochial greed on the part of those States.

I make the point that it is high time that those States and the Commonwealth Government recognised what was done and offered compensation in regard to transportation by providing South Australia with at least a reasonable international airport so that we do not have to send our perishable or more valuable exports interstate by domestic carriers before we can load them on to international carriers to get out of the country. The present system costs industries in

this State considerably more than the costs involved in other States simply because of the bloody-mindedness of Federal politicians. By that I mean members of Parliament in Canberra, as well as the bureaucrats who support them, in the main coming from New South Wales and Victoria. They leave South Australians and South Australian interests completely out of their thinking and planning. It is well known that our original transportation system was developed in part by the forebears of the member for Chaffey, and it is only proper that he should have such an interest in this measure before us today.

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

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Let me say at the outset that we support the Bill, as indicated by earlier speakers. I feel compelled to say a few words about the Bill. The Murray River is particularly important to my electorate, the eastern boundary of which starts just above Murray Bridge and extends into the river in the vicinity of Morgan and Cadell. I have always had a Murray River boundary as part of the electorate of Kavel but, as a result of the last redistribution, the boundary was extended considerably both north and south. I am now responsible, with the member for Murray-Mallee and the member for Chaffey, for a good bit of river frontage. The member for Murray-Mallee has as his western boundary what is my eastern boundary, and I suppose I am responsible to midstream for the southern portion and he is responsible for the northern portion (I think the boundary goes through the middle). Certainly, the Murray River is well represented in this place.

One cannot overestimate the importance of the river to the South Australian economy. Certainly, it is the life blood of the city of Adelaide. When discussing the Murray River one should put on record the foresight of former Premier Playford among whose notable contributions to the development of this State was the utilisation of Murray River waters for the development of metropolitan Adelaide and the State in general.

During those developmental years in a State not blessed with the natural resources of anything like the extent of those in the eastern States, Playford set about the business of developing South Australia. The reticulation of power and water was fundamental to the implementation of that strategy. A unique system of pipelines was developed throughout the State—unique even by world standards. Playford recognised that power and water were essential to the development of South Australia and set about, in a businesslike fashion, developing those resources.

The Liberal Government of which I was a member also realised the significance of the Murray River and we committed considerable resources to the much vexed question of reducing salinity in our section of the river. Other members have paid tribute to the efforts of the member for Chaffey, who was born and bred in the Riverland and who understands the effects of salinity on the river and on production, with resultant effects on metropolitan Adelaide. More than anyone else he convinced that Administration to commit significant resources to the reduction of salinity, and many millions of dollars were committed by that Liberal Government to that project. It remains one of the major problems with which we are faced.

It would be more helpful in the Australian context if some of the more strident members of the environmental lobby got their priorities right. At election time there was an enormous hoo-ha about the proposal to build a developmental dam in Tasmania. I also recall a lot of hoo-ha

about Lake Pedder. I notice now that the flooding of Lake Pedder is an environmental plus in some conservation brochures; it is featured as a place of marked beauty to be visited.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. Views and opinions can change. There has been all this hoo-ha about logging some reasonably small sections of the rainforest in Queensland. I am told by people of the calibre of Harry Butler, who has fallen from grace somewhat in the environmental movement because he has a fairly balanced—

An honourable member: More than a little.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: He has fallen from grace because he has a fairly balanced view about balancing development with conservation.

An honourable member: He is a realist.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: He has a realistic approach to these matters and has been involved in the regeneration of some of these logged areas. One cannot tell the regrown areas from virgin forest. I am merely highlighting some of the issues that the environmentalists latch on to from time to time as being of enormous significance to the development of Australia and the preservation of our heritage. I have seen some of the restoration work on Fraser Island, which was one of the key issues early on. The revegetated areas cannot be differentiated from the virgin or untouched parts of the island. The sand dunes have been replanted and you cannot tell any difference.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should return to the Murray River.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I will. These are the environmental matters that seem to consume the energies of the environmental lobby and highlight their efforts in particular districts to defeat a Government. The major issues that ought to occupy a lot more of their time are the questions of land degradation, particularly, and what is happening to the lifeline of the nation, namely, the Murray-Darling system. They are the continuing environmental issues that are of enormous ongoing significance to the productivity and economic health of this nation. Literally millions and millions of acres of land has been and continues to be degraded, not these little pockets that claim great focus of attention from this well-oiled, well-paid and well-funded lobby—this new phenomenon that has appeared on the Australian scene in recent years. The major problems of ongoing significance which will be with us next year, in the next decade and for centuries—

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: They ought to be lobbying for some of that \$10 000 million to be poured back into the Murray system.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. These problems are critical to the future of this nation and the magnificent Murray-Darling system is one of those two major environmental issues that we will have to live with and will continue to have an enormous economic significance to Australia. I will cite a couple of statistics that indicate the significance of the Murray-Darling system to the nation. The Murray-Darling basin drains an area of 1 062 530 square kilometres or approximately 14 per cent of the total area of Australia, which is 7 682 300 square kilometres. It includes parts of four States: 17 per cent of Queensland; 83 per cent of New South Wales; 50 per cent of Victoria; and 7 per cent of South Australia. The proportion of the basin within the States is: Queensland, 25 per cent; New South Wales, 57 per cent; Victoria, 12 per cent; and South Australia, 6 per cent.

I wish to cite to the House one or two other statistics, for which I am indebted to the member for Chaffey. The

total Murray system accounts for approximately 46 per cent of Australia's agricultural production and contains approximately one-quarter of the national cattle herd, one-half of the sheep flock, one-half of the crop land and three-quarters of the nation's irrigation area. Given that the basin drains 83 per cent of New South Wales, it is no wonder that it accounts for an enormous percentage of the sheep and cattle herds and grain production in Australia. The resources of the area support directly and indirectly 2 000 000 people with the total value of primary and secondary production estimated to be in excess of \$10 000 million a year. Any group or individual who ignores the significance of the basin and the necessity for its proper use and conservation ignores the very lifeblood of Australia.

I have made the point that the member for Chaffey made a significant contribution to the committing of funds to improve the environment of the Murray River, particularly with regard to the salinity program. I also put on record his efforts in relation to that more modest stream: the Torrens. The River Torrens Linear Park beautification scheme and flood mitigation project were the result of efforts of the member for Chaffey. While I am on this theme, which I will link up, the Premier said today that the Tonkin Government had few achievements.

That is quite untrue. I would suggest that, apart from inflicting record taxation on the public of South Australia, the achievements of the Bannon Government, in the five years during which we have endured that Government (and we can recite this in our sleep), include a Grand Prix, 20 per cent of a submarine construction project, and the other thing which is much vaunted now and about which we heard last night—the Convention Centre. What I am saying is that the Liberal Government negotiated and, against fierce opposition from the Labor Party, put the Roxby Downs project through Parliament and got it up and running. That was a Liberal achievement. The Liberal Minister Michael Wilson was instrumental in achieving the Adelaide International Airport, which has made an enormous contribution to the economy of the State by opening up export markets and has assisted greatly in the tourism industry.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I will come back to the Murray River in a minute, when I come back to the achievements of the member for Chaffey. That Government also, of course, was instrumental in getting the Hilton Hotel built.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: What is the difference between the Hilton Hotel and the pub here on the corner which is taking about five years to build? The great complex out here—

The ACTING SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader is provoking responses from Government backbenchers, and he would not do so if he referred rather more quickly to the Murray River and the Bill before the House.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The River Murray Waters Agreement is another achievement. I was simply expanding slightly on the achievements of the member for Chaffey and indicating that, in terms of economic value to the State of South Australia, the achievements of the Tonkin Liberal Government would leave for dead anything the Bannon Government has done in the past five years. The Stony Point oil scheme and Roxby Downs alone would wipe out any achievements this Government has made in terms of economic development of the State, and the member for Chaffey was the person in this place who understood the significance of the Murray River and did more than

any Minister since the days of Playford about enhancing the value of that river to this State.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: 'Rubbish', says the new chum, the member for Newland. She would not know. I doubt whether she would know what we are talking about when we talk about enhancing the economic development of this State. In terms of the Murray River, the member for Chaffey has done more than anyone in this place since the days of Playford to enhance the value of that resource to this State. That Liberal Government, the outstanding achievements of which I have referred to, was greatly enhanced by those efforts.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: If we want to get around to squabbles within political Parties, I would think that the privatisation debate at Federal level, where the poor old Prime Minister is trying to flog assets as fast as he can, with every other faction darting off in every direction, highlights the mess the Labor Party is in when it comes to questions of policy and where it thinks the nation ought to be going. They have more factions than we could dream up in our Party, and I would suggest that their days are numbered. If the Labor Party has any doubts about that, it had better have a look at its mates in New South Wales who are next up for election.

The other point I would make is that the Labor Party would say anything to win. Members of that Party do not care what sort of yarn they spin to the public as long as they get over the hurdle. Now they are all on the privatisation kick, including the Government now in office in South Australia. By the way, how is the SAOG-Sagasco privatisation going? We have not heard much of that lately.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wonder whether the honourable member could come back to the Bill that is in front of him?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The member for Chaffey has made a magnificent contribution to the health of the Murray River.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: That is the first spark of life we have had from the member for Gilles for months. I think that when a member can get up in this place and make a speech that wakens him out of his deep slumber and gets him to respond, that is a real achievement! I feel that, if I have done nothing else today in setting the record straight, I have awakened the member for Gilles, who spends most of his time in deep slumber awaiting the next election, when he can retire and sleep somewhere else. If I have woken him up to the point where he will interject and comment on my speech, then I think it must be quite Churchillian.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, a cloud of dust from cobwebs corner is right! In glancing over my notes, I see that I have covered most of the ground I intended to cover. I would have liked, with your indulgence, Mr Deputy Speaker, to have expanded a little more fully on the achievements of the Tonkin Liberal Government. It really left this crowd in the shade, and I was provoked to working that into my speech today because of the remarks of the Premier. Of course, the Premier seeks to boost his falling stocks by downgrading the efforts of that Government—which, of course, he cannot do. He cannot get over the fact that the largest project to see the light of day in this place is one that he not only vehemently opposed but called a 'mirage in the desert'.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, that is what he said. Now, of course, he knows that that has done more than anything to save the economy of this State in recent years. With those few remarks, I support the Bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member for Davenport. Before the honourable member starts his address, I must say that I have been very tolerant in the past three or four minutes, and I wonder whether the House can now come back to the measure that is in front of us. The honourable member for Davenport.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): You have offered me a challenge, Sir. I support the Bill, and I remind members of a very prominent present-day figure in the political field who gives the impression that he is worldly wise and knows all the answers to political questions. He is a reporter named Mungo McCallum and he was on air this week when a discussion was taking place on a talkback program, during which a couple of National Party members in other States said that all migrants should learn to speak English before they come to this land.

Several people phoned this talkback program and pointed out that because of the water shortages in this country in the long term, and the problem we would have with too big a population, we really should not be bringing in more migrants; we should think about consolidating and perhaps cutting some of our costs. The so-called knowledgeable Mungo McCallum, who was also on the talkback program, took up the challenge of this point about there being a water problem in good old Australia. I am sure that if another Party had been in power he might have taken a different attitude. On that occasion he said that there was little strength in the argument in relation to Australia having a water problem and that, in fact, it was a bit of a furphy.

Members interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: Members opposite are picking on me. I said that I would speak for 15 minutes and they have suggested that I speak for five minutes more than that. So I will speak for the full 20 minutes, even though I did not intend to do that. Members opposite said that I should go for another five minutes, so I will. I do not have much difficulty in doing that sometimes. They will be sorry that they offered me that challenge because I do have a lot to say.

Mungo McCallum has some credibility throughout Australia in relation to his comments in the political arena, but he suggests that Australia does not face a problem with its water quality and water quantity, and that he should not consider that statement very deeply in relation to what happens in this country. I am amazed that that is how Mungo McCallum thinks—or that is how he was thinking on that day, perhaps to suit a particular debate.

The salinity content of the Murray River is a serious problem. It is more serious for the people of this State than any other State which shares the Murray River or its tributaries and catchment areas. In 1976 I visited Holland, which was reclaiming enough of the ocean to increase its total land area by one-sixth. That is a lot of land, but in total it is minute compared to the catchment area involved in the areas covered by the agreement attached to the Bill and signed by the three States and the Commonwealth. For that I congratulate them. The Dutch were reclaiming land below sea level, removing the salt—and the salt content of seawater is quite high—by planting shrubs that would absorb salt in their water intake and actually use the salt in their growing process. The Dutch decreased the salinity of the soil until the soil could be used for agricultural purposes—after 10 or 15 years, I think—and they then removed those

plants. At that point the land became suitable for the growing of crops.

Our problem is a little different, because it relates to the salinity of our soil along the river and its tributaries. We also have a problem with underground water in the aquifers which are not that far from the surface. I refer to the debates and arguments in relation to the Chowilla/Dartmouth dispute, which ended up with a Government losing power because it was honest and another Party winning Government because it was dishonest. We learn to accept that type of thing in this place. I recall the shemozzle at that time when Mr Dunstan said that there was no way that South Australia should proceed with Dartmouth, that it had to be Chowilla; while Mr Hall (the then Premier) said quite honestly and openly that it had to be Dartmouth. Dunstan said that it had to be Chowilla because it was in South Australia.

As a result of the large surface area of the Chowilla project, the evaporation rate was something like 5ft (or 1.5 metres) per year, which would increase the salinity content even more. There was also some kind of hydraulic effect that would force water up from some of the aquifers below the surface into the water in the actual dam. That shows that it does not pay to be honest in politics, because the rewards are not there as far as the electors are concerned. Of course, that situation resulted in a long reign in Government for the ALP. There was a lot of money around and it held Government for a long while as a result of the initial dishonesty displayed in relation to the quality of Murray River water. We must never forget that that is how the ALP achieved power. The Hall Government stood firm: it went to the people on the issue and lost.

We must correct the problems associated with the Murray River for South Australia's sake and also for the other States, but more importantly—for us—for South Australia. However, I suppose Mungo McCallum did not see this as a significant issue because he lives in the eastern States and it does not matter to him what happens to the little State of South Australia with a population of only 1.5 million people. To find a solution we will need the cooperation of the Commonwealth and three States and, as the member for Murray-Mallee said, in the end it will have to include Queensland. Some of us, including the member for Chaffey, have relatives who settled along the Murray River many years ago. In those days, during the dry season, you could walk across the Murray River in many parts, and I think that 1914 was one of the worst dry seasons.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: You remember it?

Mr S.G. EVANS: I do not remember, but I hope that my father was not a liar, and he was there when people were walking across the Murray. I will not tell the House what my father said about the Murray at that time. When the locks were built the level of the Murray was raised for some distance. Some of the larger gum trees close to the river had to be removed to provide timber for sleepers and for other purposes. Much of the vegetation that was removed used the salt in the soil. I turn now to present day operations. I live near the Sturt Creek, and the E&WS Department has a treatment works above my property.

Mr Becker interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: We send a bit of rubbish down along the Patowalunga to the member for Hanson's electorate. If we did not do that, he would not have much to talk about; he does not have many problems in his electorate. If he sends it back to us, we will be happy to accept it and return it. The Sturt Creek receives effluent from the Mount Lofty or Stirling treatment works. When the department decided to build the treatment works I asked the then Minister—and he is present in the House—whether the water quality

would be satisfactory for use on plants; and whether it would affect marine life in the Sturt Creek. In reply I was told that there was no problem. You could once catch trout at the top end of the Sturt Creek, but you cannot do that today—even though there is now more water. Obviously there is something wrong with the water. At the time we were given a guarantee that there would be no problem. If we use this water on certain plants—such as proteas and knox camelias and many other plants—it kills them, and it chokes up cherry trees. We were given a guarantee at the time that there would be no problem with the water.

We use mainly Murray River water in this area, so we are catching the muck that is coming down the Murray at the moment. It may be the salt doing the damage or it may be the chlorine that is put in by the department—the water would have to be tested before we really knew. The department once tested the water free of charge, I believe, but now Amdel or some other agency charges \$100 to do it. The quality of water in the area is not good, and that means that the Sturt Creek has been affected by the Murray River sludge that it receives. My real concern is not about the little creek that runs through my property, the properties below me, down through Darlington and into the Patawalonga; it is about the fact that Hills residents will not receive filtered water. We have been told that it is a Liberal seat, a conservative area, and that we are not entitled to filtered water. Thus, we will get the junk that comes through, while the plains areas will have filtered water. We have been told that there is no way we will get it, that we can carry the can, that people in these areas do not deserve good quality water.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Who told you that?

Mr S.G. EVANS: I can tell the honourable member that I have had letters and comments galore indicating that we will not get it, but they will get it on the plains.

Members interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: Members opposite are guaranteeing that I will be able to go for 20 minutes without any problem. In relation to this Bill I think it is great that at last a combined effort will be made to try to improve the quality of water. For those who live in the Hills and who hope to get better quality water in future, it will take a long time for these measures to be significantly effective in relation to the quality of water in the Murray River.

I am not condemning anyone for that, but any person with commonsense would know that it will take years to get a program working on the Murray and to set up the type of infrastructure and reforestation programs designed to reduce the salinity content of water in the Murray River and to eliminate some of the factors that affect the water. For example, at some times of the year the water is of a very poor colour. On some occasions it is white when it comes from the Darling in flood time, while at other times it has a quite rusty look about it, as if the Minister or someone has put in iron filings up at the other end.

Mr Peterson interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: It could be algal bloom, the honourable member says. That happens around willow trees, but it is not really a problem. One of the local schools was accusing someone in the Hills with a wrecking yard of causing that problem, when in fact it was caused only by the rust-like material that develops around the willow trees. For those people in country areas and in the Hills who are not going to get filtered water from the Murray, it is important that this work is done. Also, it is important for the irrigators and those who depend on the water for irrigation.

In talking about reforestation, we must not look just at the types of trees and shrubs that take up salt and reduce

the inflow of salt into the Murray River in some of the drier land areas, but I think we could develop an industry in this area, and plant trees on the basis that both planting and harvesting will continue on an ongoing basis. I believe that gums take up salt to a great degree. Past practices indicate that to grow these trees to harvestable size takes 30 or 40 years or more. People are now concerned about attacks from environmentalists, as has occurred in Tasmania and Queensland, and due to research and work in this area it is now known that there are trees that mature much earlier and the growth rate can be increased each year to get them to harvestable size. So, I believe that we have the opportunity to undertake reforestation with the idea of harvesting the trees in future, by which method we could obtain some return on the capital invested in this area.

There is no doubt that the present Opposition spokesman for this area, the member for Chaffey, has dedicated a lot of his effort to this cause, right from when he first came into Parliament. It is rather ironic that he was defeated in 1970 because the political Party to which he belonged stuck to its guns about the need to do the right thing in relation to the Murray River. It must be gratifying for him to be here now when we reach the stage of finalising an agreement between South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and the Commonwealth.

For this I also give the present Minister of Water Resources credit for his dedication to this cause. I have no qualms in saying that he is closer than I am to having an extremist conservation attitude; I do not condemn the Minister for that, as we come from different backgrounds and have gone through life in different ways to get to this point. However, he is dedicated to the cause, and in this Parliament at least two members have had responsibility for this area and have worked, in concert with departmental officers and the other States, to achieve the desired goal. I refer particularly to the departmental officers in this State. They know the situation as well as any of us. I know how difficult it is sometimes to get a Minister to change his mind if he is not totally dedicated to a cause. To the departmental officers, the Minister and the shadow Minister I say congratulations, and I acknowledge the input of the other States and the Commonwealth which have seen the real need for this Bill and for a joint agreement. Perhaps in my lifetime the quality of the water coming from the Murray River will not be improved very much, but I am sure that in the long term great things will be achieved and we will all be proud of them after this agreement has become fully operative.

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): I do not want to speak for long in this debate, but I place on public record my admiration for the member for Chaffey and the way in which he stood up for South Australia in the 1980s, when the New South Wales Government was determined to overcome South Australia, to allow more irrigation in the Darling Basin and to use its weight of numbers to overcome South Australia's rightful claim to clean water. While this debate has been in progress, I have been to the Library and have flipped through some of the old press cuttings. It is interesting that in an article in the *Advertiser* of 6 November 1980 the New South Wales Labor Minister of Conservation and Water Resources, Mr Gordon, waxed long and eloquently on the need to reject South Australia's claims to prevent further allocation of water licences in the Murray-Darling system. On this question he rejected South Australia's claims for irrigation diversions in New South Wales, which South Australia claimed was turning the river salty. The article goes on to highlight the work being done by Mr Arnold in South Australia to sell to the South Australian

Government and the South Australian people the story that the water was becoming highly salty.

In another press statement I note a reference to a Mildura citrus grower, Dudley Marrows, who at that stage was making quite an impression in the media, particularly in the Riverland. Together with 400 irrigation operators in the Murray-Darling system he affixed his signature to a petition once again highlighting the fact that the river was becoming increasingly salty. It was due to agitation from people in the river valley from the Mildura area and subsequent areas as the river moves towards the sea, and from local growers and also to the intense lobbying on the part of the member for Chaffey here in the South Australian Parliament that at last wise counsel began to prevail.

However, it was not until 1982, and leading up to that time, following a confrontation between New South Wales and South Australia in the Land and Valuation Court, where the South Australia Government took on New South Wales, that the parties were finally brought together in the 1982 agreement. I may not have the facts exactly correct, but the principle is there. The member for Chaffey should be congratulated by all Parties on the extraordinary amount of good work that he has done. Indeed, following his work, the 1982 agreement came into being.

It is interesting to note how many pieces of legislation in South Australia alone control the development and the day-to-day management of the River Murray. In this regard I have been able to find 28 such Acts, including the Aboriginal Heritage Act, the Boating Act, the Crown Lands Act, the Health Act, the Highways Act, the Irrigation Act, the Local Government Act, and even the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act. There are also Acts concerned with local irrigation trusts, planning and environment, waste management, and water resources. It is amazing that so many Acts of Parliament should be necessary to control development in the Murray Valley.

I recently had the pleasure of being on the river and I could not help notice the magnificent red cliffs and the tonnes of salt still leaching out of those cliffs. Anyone having a love for the River Murray must be concerned about this matter and we look towards the new management of the River Murray valley to ensure that such damage is prevented. The River Murray valley is divided into flood plains and the valley itself. The definition of the flood plains dates back to the 1956 flood. Although many areas that are of concern to me and to other members are being considered as a matter of principle, clearly the matter of the quality and the acceleration of the salinity of the water in the river must be addressed, as well as the subject of erosion.

Another matter that should be addressed concerns the grazing that takes place in the immediate environs of the river. If we have a flood and the red river gums shoot, there will be a regrowth and the farmers will allow their animals to graze too close to the river. As a result, the small saplings will be eaten off and we will not see the regeneration of the mature red river gums that are so characteristic of the River Murray itself.

In supporting the Bill, I place on record my appreciation, and the appreciation of those whom I represent in this House, of the extraordinary amount of good work that has been done by the member for Chaffey. There is no doubt about the honourable member's expertise: it is recognised around the country. Indeed, the honourable member was invited to America last year to address a major world conference on water salinity and it is a tribute to the honourable member that as a South Australian he was invited to a conference in the United States as a guest speaker on water salinity.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I, too, support the Bill and take this opportunity to commend the member for Chaffey for the excellent work which he did while Minister and which he continues to do as the shadow Minister of Water Resources. We are lucky on this side, and indeed in this Parliament, to have a person such as the member for Chaffey—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, have I any protection from the Chair?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I agree with the point the honourable member for Heysen is making, and I ask the House to come to order. The honourable member for Heysen.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Chaffey can make a considerable contribution in this place on matters concerning the River Murray. Indeed, he knows more about the river than does any other member in this place and is well suited to hold the shadow portfolio of water resources in this State as well as the other responsibilities that he discharges. I know that the Ministry is looking forward considerably to the occasion, which is not too far away, when the honourable member will take up the responsibilities of Minister of Water Resources.

On this occasion I wish to bring to the notice of the Minister some problems concerning water quality in the Adelaide Hills. This subject is tied up in the legislation, because we are all concerned and keen to see an improvement in the quality of water flowing into South Australia and consumed by South Australians. I have a real concern about water quality in my electorate, especially in those parts that are within the Stirling District Council area. In recent days, we have experienced specific problems. Usually we are confronted with a distinct odour and taste associated with the water and we are told that these result from the addition of chlorine to the local water supply.

However, over the past couple of days we have had a cocktail because, as well as the odour of chlorine, we have had some copper traces. When I inquired about this, I was told that the water was being treated because of a certain algae which was growing and which had to be treated. The authorities were apologetic about the odour and indeed the taste associated with that treatment. A considerable number of people have made representations to me during the past week regarding the quality of the water. Over a period I have probably received more representations on that subject than on any other in my electorate especially since I have become responsible for the area that takes in the Stirling council district.

Often the water is extremely dirty and I am occasionally contacted by people, especially mothers of young children who say that they often have to think twice before putting their children in the bath because they are not sure whether the children will come out of the bath cleaner or dirtier. These people have now suggested that in the Hills area we might perhaps ask for a reduction in our water rates because of the extremely poor quality of the water that we receive. I suggest that the Minister consider that proposal.

Although I realise that some areas have no reticulated water supply, I point out that, when we consider the increase in the water rates, we expect a certain quality in the water we receive. I am not sure that the area to which I have referred has specific problems concerning the water distributed through it but, if it has, perhaps we should be told about those problems. Certainly we need an explanation from the Minister or the department for the poor quality of the water in that area.

Having made that point, I hope that the Minister will take those representations on board. If he is looking for further evidence, I can provide him with many letters and other contacts that I have had on this subject, and I should be happy to make those available to him. I ask the Minister to give special consideration to the problems being experienced by people in the Adelaide Hills. In supporting the Bill, I again take the opportunity to congratulate the member for Chaffey on his contribution to this debate earlier this afternoon.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier): Those members who have indicated that the machinery of the legislation is far less important than the content, along with the work that is actually undertaken by the new scheme, are absolutely right. On the other hand, those who have suggested that really there has been no progress in the area are wrong. A good deal has been said about the Woolpunda scheme. Let me very briefly put that scheme into some sort of context. When one looks at the problems of the Murray River, and in particular at solutions to salinity and salinity mitigation schemes, really they fall into two categories. One category relates to the whole range of engineering solutions which are available to us and which usually come down to salinity interception of one form or another, although things are in train relating to the better use of the water which is stored in Lake Victoria or the balancing of the levels between Lake Victoria and the river but, nonetheless, salinity interception is usually what we are talking about. They refer to the engineering approaches.

The other approach relates to land management techniques, whether it be the choice of crops used, the nature of irrigation used or the extent of revegetation that is introduced, particularly into those often severely eroded parts of the catchment areas of the Murray River and its tributaries. The engineering approach will bring almost immediate relief, or at least immediate amelioration, of salinity problems. For example, Woolpunda will lead to a permanent reduction of about 80 electro conductivity units in the Murray River in South Australia. On the other hand, the land management programs are the sorts of things which over a period of perhaps 30 or 40 years will gradually bring about a lowering of salinity. Both approaches have to be undertaken and both have commenced. The Woolpunda scheme has proceeded through the environmental impact stage and we have also prepared our submissions to try to ensure that the sort of cost sharing that is envisaged in these arrangements under the Murray-Darling system can take place.

I am sure that members of this House would criticise this Government if, in our anxiety to get the Woolpunda scheme really in operation, we were to pass up the possibility of being able to get funding under the arrangements that I believe will flow as a result of the concurrent passage of this legislation here, in New South Wales, in Victoria and in the Commonwealth. Further, I would not want to set aside the value of the enormous amount of information which has been prepared at the behest of the ministerial council which has been formed as an interim piece of machinery to bring about these objectives. There has been an extraordinary efflorescence of research, studies and the like, which means that we are now able to much better understand the environment of the river systems, the relationship between productivity and salinity, the various things that have to be done in order to enhance the recreation potential of the Murray River and its tributaries and many other things. I could go on at some length about these things, because as Minister I have been living with them for the past couple of years, but I believe that the debate has been

of sufficient length to indicate the importance that this Parliament gives to this historic compact between the States.

I thank members for their contributions to this debate. I point out that I think that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition rather enjoyed himself more than he constructively contributed to this debate, but I would not want to rebut piece by piece what was contained in his speech, such as needs rebuttal, particularly in relation to what he said about environmentalists. I will simply see to it that these pages of *Hansard* are well read at the Conservation Council. I commend the Bill and its second reading to the House.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I start putting the clauses, I draw to the attention of the Committee that the schedule, which is rather lengthy, actually refers to clause 10, so the schedule will not be put separately. Anybody who wishes to raise questions on the schedule should do so on clause 10.

Clauses 1 to 9 passed.

Clause 10—'Insertion of new schedule.'

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Clause 2 (3) of the schedule provides:

A further approval of the Parliaments referred to in subclause 2 (1) shall not be required where any other State becomes a party to this agreement pursuant to clause 117A.

Does the Minister have any indication at this stage as to the current position that is being adopted by Queensland in relation to when that State is likely to become a party to the legislation? Is it holding back because of the arrangement which has occurred in the past where the cost sharing has been basically on an equal basis, and has that been the reason why Queensland has tended to stay out? If it is, will the provision relating to cost sharing and contained in clause 23 (7) of the schedule have some influence where it provides for a variation in cost sharing whereby the Commonwealth can accept a greater share of the financial responsibility?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I say this in no partisan spirit, but Queensland has been keeping its cards fairly close to its chest. There is a sense in which perhaps it cannot be blamed for doing that. I point out that Queensland was not invited to the very first meeting, I think because it had not been a party to the original agreement and partly also because, although the area of the basin that is in Queensland is not inconsiderable, the total contribution of that part of the continent to the total run of the basin really is very marginal. For those reasons Queensland was not invited.

That fact was adversely commented upon in some quarters and it was decided that we should invite Queensland to exercise what one might call observer status. I think that Queensland attended one meeting but I do not think it was present at our most recent meeting. A meeting has been scheduled for Albury in a few weeks time, but at this stage I have no information as to whether Queensland will be present. Although it has had observer status, I—and, so far as I am aware, this applies to the other Ministers who were signatories to the agreement—have no official information as to what the attitude of Queensland will be or whether it will be interested in participating in the future but, as the honourable member points out, the clause to which he has referred does facilitate that entry. I ask if the Committee would allow the honourable member to repeat the second part of his question without losing his rights under the clause.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: One of the possible reasons why Queensland has been reluctant to participate in the River Murray Commission as an equal partner with the three States and the Commonwealth is that its financial commitment in terms of its involvement in the total Mur-

ray-Darling Basin would have been out of proportion and consequently it would have been an incentive for it to remain out. If that is the case, then possibly the amendment to subclause 48 (3) under clause 23 of the second schedule is of interest as it provides:

The Ministerial Council may determine the shares in which one or more of the contracting Governments is to bear the costs of constructing, maintaining, operating and controlling the works referred to in subclause 33 (1).

If sufficient consideration is given to cost sharing ratios, it may be more attractive to allow Queensland to come in. Is it the desire of the States involved with the Murray-Darling Basin Commission that Queensland be included?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: In general terms most people would say it is desirable for Queensland to be involved, but the tangible benefits from its involvement are fairly small. As I have said previously, if one looks at the contribution that the tributaries flowing from Queensland make to the total flow through the basin, one sees that it is very small. It is certainly true that at this stage if Queensland was to come in on an equal share basis it is difficult to see what advantages it would derive from the costs with which it would be faced.

Even at substantially reduced costs (and the honourable member correctly points out that this clause could allow Queensland to be involved on a reduced cost basis) it is still a bit difficult to see what tangible benefits Queensland would derive from the whole scheme. It is true to say that the whole genesis of the scheme was that the contracting parties saw that there were real benefits to be gained from the expenditures which would be made in common. It is a little difficult to see what the real benefits would be for Queensland. However, the existing contracting parties would not want to freeze Queensland out in any way and obviously it would be of benefit to the existing parties for Queensland to be in. The question is whether Queensland could see any benefit. The legislation facilitates that entry should Queensland desire to take it up.

Mr LEWIS: I draw the Minister's attention to the other end of the system. We have worked long and hard to get the other two States and the Commonwealth to recognise that the Murray-Darling system starts in the north somewhere near Charleville and in the east near Omeo in the Alps and ends at the mouth. However, I understand that the Commissioners have jurisdiction only to the barrage, and there is a difference. I am sure that point is not lost on the Minister and I am anxious to see the commission extend its jurisdiction and responsibility, particularly for funding, throughout the river system to the mouth. One reason for this is that, if it is to be effective in total management, the Murray mouth has to be kept open.

I am concerned about the consequences of reduced flow in some years. All irrigators throughout the system take advantage of the waters. There are other urban and peri-urban users also and if we reduce the flow in the river by the time it gets to South Australia below lock 1 there is nil flow between that lock and the barrages. If that continues month after month, no water goes out to sea and we will again have a sandbar closing the mouth completely.

Members know that there is no guarantee that there will not be a heavy downpour of tropical rain forming in the Darling Downs, and that will produce a system of unstable lows and highs bringing South-East trades across the Alps and dumping a heap of water on the western plains watershed of the northern tributaries. Then there is a flood. What happens to the Coorong and the barrages if the Murray mouth is silted up? Either we meet the cost of reopening the mouth and keeping it open as a State expense, which could be enormous—

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: That is the point I am coming to. When the flood hits, if Youngusband Peninsula does not give where the mouth was, it will reopen somewhere else, where it might have been centuries past. If that is the case, the whole of the Coorong system and the Young-usband Peninsula as we know it will change. What we have attempted to do to stabilise the sort of reasonably reliable ecosystem expectancy in the Coorong National Park will be shot to bits, because we could breach Youngusband Peninsula in more than one place, and then we have lost that.

We will have lost the park and the way in which it is established for the present, and we will have to suffer the consequences, whatever they may be, of the enormous flow back of water from Youngusband Peninsula across the flat plains, that is, the estuarine lake systems and the black soil mud flats, back behind them when the flood hits. We would not have fair notice of that. I am concerned to ensure that the commission accepts the responsibility beyond the barrage to the mouth in the waters of the Great Australian Bight.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: That is precisely what this legislation provides and, so far as I am aware, the jurisdiction of the commission has always extended below the barrages, certainly to the extent that Sir Richard Peninsula is under the control of the commission, and always has been. The honourable member would know that there has been a good deal of controversy over the years about the use of vehicles on Sir Richard Peninsula, and why I have been running to the Commissioners in relation to this matter were it not for the fact that the commission exercises authority over that peninsula?

Whatever the case might have been in the past, I draw the honourable member's attention to schedule 8, which is a pictorial or map representation of the definition contained on page 4 under the second schedule, which provides:

'The Murray-Darling Basin' means so much of the area within the boundaries of the map shown in the schedule to this agreement as forms part of the territory of the contracting Governments.

I am persuaded by the arguments of the honourable member. They are based on an assumption that I do not think was correct before the passage of the Bill and certainly will not be correct afterwards, because this makes it clear.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Following the comments of the member for Murray-Mallee, if the Minister checks back to 1981 or 1982 when the mouth closed up, he will see that the cost fell back onto the State Government to open the mouth at that stage, it was not a common cost. At page 4 the second schedule deals with the establishment of the Ministerial Council and the provision of 12 Ministers, but how realistic or likely is it that the majority of the 12 Ministers will be able to attend on an annual basis? I always found it difficult to get four Ministers together let alone 12 at any one time.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: In a formal sense it does not really matter, because each jurisdiction has only the one vote. That is really what is important in this matter. It is for the States to determine the nature of their own representation but, again, I would make the point that there is just one vote per State.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: At page 8, clause 23 (7), we come back to cost sharing. It states:

The Ministerial Council may determine the shares in which one or more of the contracting Governments—

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure that the honourable member is aware of this, but he has only three opportunities to speak.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: On the whole schedule?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: That makes a farce—

The CHAIRMAN: Irrespective of whether it makes a farce, I am bound by Standing Orders. I do not wish to sit the honourable member down, but I assure him that under the Standing Orders he has 15 minutes, and I thought I would just remind him of that at this time.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I have only one remaining question. What I was really getting at and what I said during the second reading debate was that, as far as I am concerned, the success or failure of most of this legislation will be determined by an effective or reasonable cost sharing between the States and the Commonwealth. Overseas experience has clearly shown that, unless the Federal Government of the country concerned is prepared to pick up the major share of the cost of the capital works and the operation, then it just never occurs, because the upper river States of any of these systems are loath to pick up a major share, even if they have created the problem, for the benefit of the down river users. Has the Minister at this stage any indication as to the willingness of the Federal Government to recognise what history has proved to be the case in other countries, that is, that unless it is prepared to pick up more than a quarter share this whole business will just lead us nowhere?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: These are tough times in which to get money out of anyone, of course. The forthcoming meeting at Albury will be our first meeting at which Minister Kerin is the lead Minister for the Commonwealth. Prior to this Senator Evans was the lead Minister and was, I think, the major catalyst in ensuring that we were able to get to this point. He showed a great deal of adroit chairmanship in ensuring that, finally, the various contracting parties were able to get to a basis of agreement. Along with that went, I believe, some willingness for the Federal Government to put at least some money where its mouth is. I guess that the change of ministerial arrangements at Commonwealth level has still to be tested in the Ministerial Council and elsewhere.

All I can say is that in a couple of weeks time at Albury I guess it will have its first test, and I think all States realise that. However, there are some advantages for New South Wales and particularly Victoria in funding works in South Australia. Salinity mitigation schemes in South Australia may well assist the Victorians with some of their problems, because quite a drastic decrease in the salinity of the water in the South Australian system would perhaps allow the Victorians to return some salt to the river system and still have an ultimate result better than we have now.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The alternative is the sort of thing the honourable member has been talking about—piping it all to Bass Strait, or something. That would entail an enormous cost.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: I am talking about the Federal Government picking up 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the total cost.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am trying to address that question as best I can at the moment. I am going on to talk about the responses of the other States. I am saying that the other States, by funding programs in South Australia, are not necessarily being selfless in what they are doing, because \$1 million or so spent by the Victorian Government in South Australia may still be a heck of a lot cheaper than the millions that would have to be spent in piping salt to Bass Strait, or whatever else they would have to do. The recent problems they have had in the salt lakes in the mallee with the farming community, and so on, is I guess an

illustration of the problems the Victorians have in working out what else they can do with their salt.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 22 October. Page 1521.)

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE (Coles): This is a relatively uncontentious little Bill. It amends an Act which the Opposition believes is badly drawn, badly administered and should have been reviewed in accordance with the Minister's promise about two years ago.

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood: We are in court—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am sure that the member for Coles does not need assistance.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Minister says we are in court. We were not in court a year ago when the Act could have been reviewed; we were not in court two years ago when the Minister undertook to review the Act, and that promise made to manufacturers in a public forum has never been fulfilled. As I say, the Bill itself is small and relatively uncontentious. It simply amends the Beverage Container Act by changing the definition of a low alcohol wine-based beverage.

It appears that there has been exploitation by one manufacturer of the 8 per cent alcohol limit contained in the definition. The Minister's second reading explanation, whilst it made sense, did not tell what I would describe as the whole story, and certainly would have mystified the beverage industry if I had not been able to find out further information which provided what I consider to be a perfectly acceptable explanation for the Bill, an explanation which I believe should have been included in the second reading explanation. It would have provided a more substantial justification for this amendment.

In line with this attempted exploitation, at least one company—not a South Australian company—has seen a way around the definition so that products which that company markets do not fall within the ambit of the Act, and this has been achieved by introducing a product onto the market with the same composition as the low alcohol, wine-based beverage but with an alcohol by volume content slightly in excess of 8 per cent. I am not sure whether the product actually ever got to the market or whether the warning was issued by the Minister's department prior to its getting onto the market. Following the passage of this Bill, a new regulation will need to be made prescribing an alcohol volume content.

Regulation 7 will require an amendment to remove the words 'low alcohol'. In his second reading explanation the Minister said that the present definition is the result of an amendment moved by me to add the words 'that at 20 degrees Centigrade contains less than 8 per cent alcohol volume.' I am sure that the Minister would appreciate that when that definition was moved it was at the request of the industry because it believed that it was the most workable definition available. It was certainly designed in the spirit of constructiveness and helpfulness. The fact that a manufacturer has tried to circumvent it indicates that some remedial action is necessary. I believe from discussions with the industry—and that is much more than the Minister has done, because according to the industry it has not had discussions with either the Minister or his department—

that this definition will land the Government in yet more hot water.

During the Committee stage I will question the Minister about whether he has considered the implications of this definition and, if his answers are unsatisfactory, I assure him that in another place a further amendment will be moved—again in a constructive effort to ensure that the legislation is workable. The Wine and Brandy Producers Association has informed me that, as not only wine is used in wine coolers but also spirits (and I believe that a beer based cooler is about to be released), it would be better for the definition to read, 'alcohol based beverage.' That would embrace both the spirit and beer based coolers which are in the pipeline or about to be released on the market. I will be most interested to hear the Minister's response because, if he declines to consider that proposition, it may well be that this Act will be back before us next year for further amendment to take account of the spirit and beer based coolers which are about to be introduced.

This beverage legislation, despite its admirable goals—that is, the control of litter and the conservation of resources—has led to more impositions on a single industry than any other legislation affecting the beverage industry. The Minister has been warned time and time again about the adverse effect that his methods of drawing up and administering legislation have on industry. However, the Minister has repeatedly refused to consult with the industry, and the industry has found his department extraordinarily difficult to deal with. As a result of amendments moved by the Minister last year and the year before, South Australian wine cooler manufacturers were forced to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars on plant which is now redundant. He has forced manufacturers to print millions of labels with a deposit amount which was made irrelevant by an amendment of 1986. The Minister has also forced the wine industry to enter into contracts, which it regards as entirely unsatisfactory, with marine dealers. The Minister has cost the beverage industry millions of dollars in revenue forgone through delayed promotions, advertising and loss of trade.

To give a single example, I refer to a wine cooler manufacturer which has its head office—not its manufacturing plant—based in my electorate, and I refer to Penfolds. Penfolds produces between 25 per cent and 30 per cent of Australia's wine. If it is not the biggest, it is among the biggest wine manufacturers in this country. Apart from 1 per cent of its product (which comes from the Hunter Valley at Tulloch and Griffith), all of its wine is produced in South Australia. As a result of the 1986 amendment which forced wine coolers to either bear a deposit of 15c per bottle or for the cooler to be sold in refillable containers, Penfolds has had to completely alter its West Coast Cooler, which has a refillable bottle in South Australia and a non refillable bottle throughout the rest of the country. That change cost Penfolds \$250 000. I doubt whether the change did anything whatsoever for litter control in South Australia or for the conservation of resources—but it did cost Penfolds \$250 000.

The Minister appears not to find this a matter of concern at all. Penfolds now markets another cooler besides West Coast Cooler—J.B. Reynolds Cooler. It is marketed throughout Australia in non refillable bottles, but Penfolds cannot even supply it to its own staff in South Australia on staff accounts because it simply cannot afford the cost of making the mould for the bottles and the other associated costs of establishing a separate product line for a separate market in this State for J.B. Reynolds Cooler in a refillable bottle. It is utterly ridiculous that one of the largest wine producers in Australia, which produces more wine in this State than any other producer and employs 700 people,

cannot sell its own staff one of its own products because of a pettifogging amendment to the beverage container legislation introduced by the Minister for Environment and Planning.

It is unacceptable law to force South Australian manufacturers into the position that Penfolds has been forced into. If it wanted to sell J.B. Reynolds Cooler in South Australia, it would have to bear the cost of new moulds for the bottles; it would have to carry two different stock quantities with all the administrative costs involved; it would have to have two sets of labels printed—one for the South Australian market and one for the national market; and it would have to have two sets of six pack cartons printed and two sets of major cartons printed. It would be an administrative nightmare similar to the nightmare that it has been forced to undertake with West Coast Cooler because that is such an important and popular product. Penfolds is not willing to repeat the nightmare it has experienced with West Coast Cooler for another product, namely, J.B. Reynolds Cooler.

I will enumerate some of the industry problems that go way beyond just one company but affect all companies in this industry. The refunding of the 15c deposit causes serious financial strain on many retailers who must pay out on bottles they do not sell in the first instance. Of course, as a result of that, rather than risk financial loss many retailers have ceased to sell products that are liable for deposit return which they cannot retrieve. That means that South Australian consumers go without a number of products enjoyed by everyone else in Australia. Frankly, I do not believe that the South Australian environment is any better because South Australian consumers forgo these products. What is more, I do not believe that the Minister can prove—by any figures that he has at his disposal or available to him—that that would be so. There is no evidence whatsoever to prove that, if those products were freely available without the constraints that the Minister has placed on them, the litter situation in this State would not be any worse.

Certainly, it would be no worse if an education campaign, which most people regard as being the key and principal factor in litter control, were to be undertaken, and it could have been undertaken with funds made available by the industry, had the Minister only been willing to accept the industry's very reasonable propositions.

To continue with the disadvantages that are suffered by the industry in this State, I point out that the majority of overseas manufacturers will simply not put their products on the market in this State because of low volume sales, which simply do not make special labelling and special bottling worth their while. I doubt whether South Australians are aware of what they are forgoing in terms of the range of products involved. However, the reality of today's market, especially in beverages, is that there is a demand for variety, for diversity and for new taste experiences, and many of those can be provided by imported products or products manufactured interstate, but it is simply not legal to sell them in South Australia, as a result of the Minister's beverage container legislation.

Another very important point is that the costs incurred by manufacturers of products in non-refillable containers put them at a severe disadvantage over the minority of those mainly local producers who currently comply with the legislation. As has been said many times, and as the Minister has confirmed because it is being challenged at the moment in the High Court, the Act is discriminatory and against all the principles of a free trading market. To top all that off, the Minister simply refuses to have any kind of an effective meeting with the industry. Those in the

industry have now reached the point where, when I rang to tell them that there would be a further amendment to the Beverage Container Act, they simply groaned and said, 'For heaven's sake, what is it? We can't stand much more.'

The Minister sits there and smiles. In effect, the nature of the amendment is irrelevant. The fact that one of the State's most important industries, namely, the wine industry, simply cannot stand any more impositions from this Government in respect of the Beverage Container Act one would have thought would be relevant to a Government that was the slightest bit concerned about the economic prosperity of this State. But the Minister's relaxed attitude and smiling response indicate that he does not really care very much what the wine industry thinks of the Government.

In August 1986, the beverage industry group, which comprises a number of manufacturers, manufacturers both of alcohol based beverages and soft drink beverages, wrote to the Minister and put to him a workable plan which would enable refillable containers to be returned to bottle merchants, as they always have been. It would have enabled empty non-refillable containers to be directly returned by consumers and scavengers to bottle merchants. It would have enabled deposit and handling costs to be included in the wholesale price to the retailer, who could have added sales tax, licence fee and profit margin only. Under that proposal, the bottle merchant would have paid the consumer or scavenger the deposit which would be reimbursed to the merchant by the distributor, as well as the handling charges.

The central bottle merchant, namely, Can Recycling Pty Ltd, would then have been able to sort and crush the glass to deliver to a glass manufacturer for recycling back into glass, thus preserving the conservation purposes of the Act. Further, continuous auditing at that stage would have ensured that proper funding by suppliers could have been maintained. In addition to all that, the beverage industry group offered the Minister funding for an educational program by producers, using non-refillable containers, which would have constituted a financial incentive for the use of non-refillable containers.

The Minister had all that offered to him on a plate—but for reasons which have never been explained, he knocked it back. I do not know why he did it. When the time comes for him to address the House it may be that he will tell us. But he had then an excellent scheme which embodied all the purposes of the Act: litter control, public education and resource conservation, and at minimal cost to the Government, but he rejected it. This, of course, does not deal directly with the amending legislation that is before the House, but these comments are relevant, because it would be irresponsible of the Opposition to not highlight, every time legislation such as this is before the House, the impositions that this Government has put on the beverage industry in this State. If these impositions had some effective value in terms of public good there would probably be little, if any, criticism, but the fact is that they do not. The Minister cannot prove that they do have—and there is no evidence whatsoever that they have any such value.

Every responsible person in this State wants to see litter control at a very high level, and in the past the record of South Australia has been good, although there are parts of South Australia, particularly in the north, where the record in recent years and now is not good at all, but very bad. My colleagues who represent country electorates would have plenty of information in this regard and no doubt they will tell the House of the effect of glass litter in their electorates. This demonstrates that the system that the Minister has in

place is by no means 100 per cent, or anywhere near that effective. I simply reinforce the fact that the Minister has not kept a promise to review the Act, made in a public forum to the industry about two years ago. Unless the Minister can give the House a satisfactory response to the questions I have posed about the relevance of this amendment in the light of the proposed introduction of beer based and spirit based coolers, it is likely to land us in yet more difficulty, as I have said. All in all, the record is extremely poor.

I appreciate that, until the High Court judgment in the Bond brewing case is brought down, there will not be an opportunity to do so, but I suggest that at the earliest opportunity the Minister should establish a select committee to examine this legislation. I believe that as a result of the establishment of such a committee representations that would be made to it by all interested parties—and there are many—would mean that the Act would be tossed out and redrawn in much simpler form and that, as a result of that, litter control in this State could be improved and, as a side benefit but an extremely important one, the beverage industry in this State, instead of being crushed by continued impositions and administrative bungling, would be able to employ more people to sell more of its product and to enjoy a competitive advantage with interstate manufacturers, and that would benefit the whole of South Australia. I support the Bill, but at the same time I condemn the Minister for his attitude to the beverage industry in South Australia. I believe that he will be forced to reassess that attitude within at least the next 12 months.

Mr ROBERTSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

SHOP TRADING HOURS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 November. Page 1804.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): From the outset, let it be clearly understood that the Liberal Opposition has supported the second reading debate because it supports the principle of the Bill. However, due to the extraordinary actions of the Government, I will move, prior to the Committee stage, that the debate be adjourned until such time as the Industrial Commission has ruled on the current wage demands supported by the Government and until such time as the Commissioner for Prices has reported to the Parliament on the implications for consumers of any price increases which will result from labour cost blowouts.

Premier Bannon and his henchman, Minister Blevins, encouraged by his mealy-mouthed parliamentary confederates, have acted with sheer contempt for this Parliament and the best interests of South Australians. The debate is no longer about the benefits or otherwise of Saturday afternoon trading: it is about everyone being sold down the drain to retain the Premier's tenuous power base within Trades Hall. A cynic would suggest that the events which have unfolded were totally predictable. The seeds of this debacle were sown when the baking union, upset by the introduction of seven days baking, successfully moved a motion of condemnation against Minister Blevins and, by implication, the ALP Caucus.

The battle lines were firmly drawn. Any deregulation which impacted on union members would have to be paid for in blood. Throw in the ingredients of a Premier who is

willing to sell his soul to retain his position, a union which holds the balance of power in the ALP conventions and which has consistently resisted any change to trading hours, and we have the prime ingredients for political blackmail. In short, we are seeing a pay-off of monumental proportions for consistent support to the centre-left faction by the SDA over the past 10 years.

However, it is not the Premier who will be paying the price: it is the poor, the people on pensions and fixed incomes, the single parent and the unemployed. These are the very people that have oft been referred to by the ALP as their natural constituency, and for whom they will fight. This ignominious action belies the rhetoric. Most can understand the actions of Minister Blevins. He is completely without scruples, with no respect for the people he was elected to serve. Since being appointed Minister of Labour, he has excelled himself in looking after his left-wing mates. Why are the painters and dockers still ripping off shipping owners and agents in Port Adelaide? Why are the building unions still running riot on commercial construction sites in this State? Minister Blevins smiles benignly on their activities. What has been his contribution to this debacle? Members may well recall that during the budget estimates the Minister declared that he would allow the RTA and SDA to negotiate the terms and conditions under which the Saturday extension would be implemented.

He has broken another undertaking. He said that he would not move until 1988 before introducing legislation, but we now have the legislation before the House and find that another undertaking has been broken. He embarked on unprecedented intervention in the Industrial Commission to support the SDA claims. It was an unprecedented action. Never before in the history of industrial relations in this State have we seen a Government intercede on behalf of a factional interest.

True, the Government has interceded on questions of principle. For instance, in the national wage case the Government has made submissions, and similar submissions have been made when a change in conditions is to apply across the board: for instance, in the case of four weeks annual leave, long service leave, and other such changes. However, never before have we seen the sort of Government intervention in an Industrial Commission of the nation that we have seen in this case.

Initially, I attended the hearings before the commission. Let everyone be aware of what transpired at that hearing. Before the commission the Minister's legal representative, who seems to be grossly overpaid, asked to be heard in the public interest. These were the exact words: 'in the public interest'. When questioned by the Commissioner as to which aspects of public interest were being pursued by the Minister, the legal brief was nonplussed, but recovered by saying the Minister was interested in the smooth introduction of extended trading hours. Of course, that is farcical, given the statements made by the RTA on this matter, that it could not be countenanced at the price that the Government wished to be paid.

When further questioned on which elements of the case the Minister would wish to comment, his legal representative was struck dumb. Three minutes later he declared that he was completely in the hands of the SDA. Nowhere has it been so graphically demonstrated that this Government and this Minister are so beholden to the union movement that they are willing to equate public interest with the outrageous demands of one of its union mates. No mention was made of the South Australian public, the poor or the disadvantaged. Premier Bannon will rue the day he appeared from behind his well-orchestrated facade of competence and

cares to show his true colours. He is now like the king with no clothes, bared for everyone to view his pompous indifference to the people of this State.

Let us now turn to the wage demands themselves. They clearly lie outside the wage guidelines. Thus it is astonishing that the Bannon Government should be actively promoting a scheme which contravenes the dictates of the national commission, given the Premier's vigorous defence of this outdated and increasingly irrelevant institution. Note the difference in the Premier's attitude to the SDA and his negotiations with the Public Service unions.

We have certainly seen interesting examples of how Public Service unions have become frustrated at the way in which they have been dealt with by the Minister of Labour and the Premier. Yet, without a whimper the Minister said that the outrageous demands made by the SDA should prevail. The union is asking for an extra \$15 per employee per week, and it is asking that there be no further productivity tradeoffs for a further \$10 a week. That is a total of \$25 a week. It is asking for 50 per cent penalty rates on Saturday mornings when 25 per cent is the current price, and it is asking for the full 3 per cent superannuation to apply across the board.

What is not understood by many people, as we discovered in our Rundle Mall survey, is that these new conditions will apply whether or not an employee works on Saturday afternoon! Participation by employers and employees is to be voluntary. For over 90 per cent of existing employees who will refuse to work on Saturday afternoons, I ask the question: what extraordinary new burdens will be placed on such employees to warrant a pay rise of the order being demanded by the SDA? Pressures will decrease because of the greater spread of customers. Their lifestyles will remain unaltered, except for the benefit of Saturday afternoon shopping. No further rise can possibly be justified in those circumstances.

For those who work Saturday afternoons, the questions are somewhat different, but the outcome similar. People will opt to work or not work on the basis of the monetary rewards pertaining. If no-one wishes to work, the stores will not open. At that stage, storekeepers would have to determine whether they wished higher rates to apply—but that situation is yet to be reached. This State has the second highest level of unemployment in the country. The Liberal Opposition shared some enthusiasm with the Minister of Labour that new employment opportunities would be created for those without jobs as a result of the change of trading hours.

An adult employee currently earns an average of \$333.30 for a 38-hour week, a junior \$204.20. Casual employees receive a loading of 70 per cent after 12.30 p.m. and 120 per cent after 3.30 p.m. Thus it is feasible for adults to receive over \$13 per hour (on average) for employment between 12.30 and 3.30 and juniors in excess of \$8 per hour under existing standards (and even more after 3.30 p.m.). I challenge the Minister to undertake a survey of small traders in this State—over 70 per cent of them would be ecstatic with a return of \$10 per hour for the 50, 60, 70, 80 or 90 hours they work each week.

I wonder whether members on the other side of the House have actually talked to the shopkeepers because, if they have, they would know that they are working these hours for very little return. Under existing conditions the remuneration can hardly be regarded as niggardly for those employees who do not have sport, family or social commitments.

It is useful to compare the standards prevailing in Australia with other countries. Most European and Asian coun-

tries, as well as the USA, do not pay penalty rates to shop assistants. These employees are paid overtime only when they have worked 40 or even 44 hours per week, and even then the overtime rates are exceedingly modest compared with the rates prevailing in this country. However, the fight is not with the shop assistants, nor indeed the SDA. The SDA simply is following that tired and well worn course set by the union movement in this country of putting forward an ambit claim in the same way that the retail traders have set down their conditions for extended trading. What is different is that the Government has declared to the world that the claims of the SDA are right and proper and 'in the public interest'; they should succeed. The Government effectively has screwed up the proceedings of the commission which is now encumbered by this totally irresponsible direction.

Who will represent the little people, the small traders and the poor consumers who will have to pay the bills? When are they represented before Industrial Commissions in this country? We never see ALP Governments representing them. They are left to suffer as a result of the sweetheart deals made along the way which pay no heed to the poverty and the suffering that some people have to bear. When they are making their way to the Bankruptcy Court Premier Bannon, in his usual constructive fashion, will be figuring out how to extract more taxes in order to pay for the increased welfare bill. It is a great system!

Given that there is no sensitivity anywhere in the ALP ranks for the problems of their constituents, I can hardly expect any sympathy for the plight of small business operators. These men and women will have the privilege, per favour of Premier Bannon, of working longer, paying more and receiving less. Indeed, Premier Gorbachev should award him the Star of Lenin for destroying these poor struggling capitalists without a shot being fired. I have received many representations from small business people, some of whom have been refused an audience with their local ALP representatives, who have preferred to hide. My suggestion is that, if they do not have the guts to stand up for their decision, they should get out and the world will be a far better place for their absence.

With the indulgence of the House, I will read some of the submissions that I have received. Whilst the views expressed in them do not necessarily coincide with the position of the Liberal Party on the matter, they do actually tell a story, and that is that all people should be able to be represented in this Parliament. On other occasions, irrespective of whether or not I have agreed with the comments made, I have put those representations forward faithfully, in the hope that this Parliament becomes better attuned and better adjusted to the views of the community. A letter from the South Australian Mixed Business Association states:

Please find enclosed an article published in the *Advertiser* on 23 November 1987. I respectfully ask you to study this article because, in the opinion of the S.A. Mixed Business Association and its 1 200 members, it correctly states the impact that extended shop trading hours will have on small retailers (whom your Government appears to have forsaken)—

and this is a letter to the Premier, and I would like him to respond to that statement—

the South Australian economy, and the worsening unemployment situation. This association believes it is utter folly for your Government, through your Minister of Labour (Mr Blevins) to pursue this matter because of the effect it will have on the livelihoods of small retailers, who are heavily dependent on weekend trade, their families and employees.

Mr Blevins has chosen to ignore the voice of the small retailer in his desire to please big business; it would appear he considers only the viewpoint of the Retail Traders Association, and a rather reluctant Shop Assistants Union, of any consequence, but I can assure you, Mr Premier, this office received many hundreds of

calls from small retailers who are angry and irate at your Government's actions.

We question whether you really understand the strength of opinion and feeling felt by small (and some not so small) retailers against any change in trading hours.

On the subject of consumer demand, whatever it might be, it has been created by certain sections of the media in their own vested interests. Only recently when the union pay claim was being debated in the House, the *Advertiser* reported Mr Blevins as saying that it was 'not the unions, or the consumer, who want the extension of trading hours, but the Retail Traders Association and it must expect to pay for it'.

Mr Premier, I ask you to reconsider this matter and maintain the status quo before irreparable damage is suffered by a large number of small retailers.

In my own area the Mitcham Traders Association wrote to me and enclosed a copy of the letter which it wrote to the Minister of Labour, as follows:

The Mitcham Traders Association represents over 50 small-retailers all of whom strongly oppose the introduction of Saturday afternoon trading. Our shops are open to the public for 50 hours a week giving the average full time worker 12 hours per week outside their working hours to shop in. Surely this is adequate. We as small retailers do not wish to work the extra five hours which we will be forced to do under the current terms of our leases. Why have you neglected to redress this serious situation?

Our staff are indicating most strongly that they do not wish to work Saturday afternoons stating that their family lives are more important than the extra money. Small retailers cannot afford the extra costs involved particularly as consumers will have no increase in their disposable income. Why are the RTA, who represent only a few large retailers, being allowed to dictate to you on an issue affecting many thousands of small retailers who have had no say? Why are the interests of small retailers being ignored? The members of the RTA will only benefit from extended hours at the expense of small retailers. Why are you as Minister responsible allowing this situation to happen? Small business is the largest employer in the private sector and accounts for the majority of the gross national product. Why has this sector not been consulted on an issue which affects it more than any other group?

In view of the fact that no real attempt to gauge the true feelings of the public has been made and that small retailers and shop assistants are actively against it, why are you so committed to it?

Lastly we wish to say that we object strongly to your comments about only knowing rich retailers. The reason for this is obvious. You have not taken the trouble to meet the vast majority of retailers, small ones like ourselves.

We respectfully request answers to our questions before this issue goes further.

The article by Malcolm Newell that appeared in the *Advertiser* on Monday 23 November painted a very bleak picture also. A letter from Wendts Jewellers states:

I would like to express our very grave concern regarding trading hours, and support Malcolm Newell's article in the *Advertiser* on Monday 23 November 1987. Small business is not in a position to survive extended trading hours. It was proven last year and on a number of occasions since. The public are being given much more time to spend the same amount of money, meanwhile our overheads go up and our costs increase with no increase in revenue.

The only course of action for the small business retailer is to cut costs (1) lay off staff, which increases unemployment, and reduces the amount of money into the system, and (2) increase our margins (which are as low as possible now), which will, in turn, reduce the buying power of the consumer dollar.

Is this what we want for 'our State'? Small business won't survive; something must be done to counter the big store monopoly. Make our State great—cut out extended trading hours.

I have a similar letter from Verandah Music in the Renaissance Arcade. Other letters continue in the same vein. I have received submissions from most of the employer groups and most people involved with small business who collectively represent a very large number of people in the community. The shop assistants are well catered for, but how will the traders in shopping centres cope with increased hours, given that existing leases require all shops to be open when the centres are open? Minister Blevins has again indulged in fiddling with the truth. He has made no effort

whatsoever to protect the interests of such shopkeepers who may not wish to participate in all day trading.

At this stage it is our intention to allow for people to voluntarily participate in the Saturday trading process. When the Minister responds, perhaps he can explain the flow-on effects of this dirty deal—and it is a dirty deal. He admitted to the House that he had no idea of its impact, but he is willing to introduce it with all these cost implications wrought by the wage demands of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Union, supported strongly by the Government in an unprecedented fashion.

I now turn to the flow-on effects, because they do not just stop with the shop assistants. A number of awards are linked with the shop assistants, including the shops country award, and awards covering cafes and restaurants, delicatessens, display employees, caretakers and cleaners, lift attendants and clerks. Therefore, one can deduce that the Premier is supporting a rise for all these employees. Obviously, he has researched the value of their contributions and has determined that they should all be beneficiaries of his magnanimity—outside the wages guidelines!

Of course, the ball does not stop rolling there, because other employees in the hospitality and service areas will feel aggrieved if their relativities are distorted, so we can confidently predict that they will join the line-up. Certainly, it is worth restating that this deal is done irrespective of whether a person works on Saturday afternoons, which means that for no extra work being done—no extra productivity—wages and conditions will increase the salary bills enormously. Everyone else will see that there has been no trade-off, that nothing has been given away, and they will say, 'If it is good enough for them, it is good enough for us.'

We have a situation where the Premier is supporting an absolute wages blow-out across the board, where people in all industries and unions will say, 'These people have received this benefit for giving nothing extra; how about us?' The Premier's generosity will be warmly applauded by the many recipients of his largess. The only people upset will be the poor, the struggling families, the aged, the sick, the invalids and the self-employed. Indeed, I ask every member opposite to tell the people of this State exactly where they stand on this issue. Where do they stand on the cost implications of this move?

No doubt the Minister and the Premier will immediately restructure the public services in this State. Having moved to satisfy the demand for Saturday afternoon shopping, they will surely open up a number of Government offices on the weekend as well. Consumers will appreciate the opportunity to pay bills, obtain licences and have access to advice on Government regulations on Saturdays.

Unfortunately, the public has gained the impression that Government service has been diminishing, which is quite inconsistent with the Government's new found zest for deregulation, not to mention the skyrocketing tax bill. I wish to point to a specific case involving the motor vehicle industry. I refer to the submission that I have received from the Motor Trade Association, as follows:

MTA dealers state that there is very little trading on both Thursday and Friday nights as a result of the extension of late night shopping within the past 10 years. Unlike trade in the retail stores, consumers have not taken up the benefits of late night trading and, in general, Saturday morning trading is not preferred by consumers. In all three cases there is no facility for registering vehicles, checking financial providers and it does seem that consumers do require those facilities in order that they close a deal.

It is no good signing a deal on Saturday afternoon, Saturday morning, or Thursday or Friday night because there is no way that all the legal requirements can be satisfied. I further quote:

Dealers generally have extremely low manning levels on these three occasions and naturally this is even more so in the current state of the motor industry where the whole viability of some dealers is threatened by factors including devaluation of the dollar and the rapid rise in the price of vehicles, fringe benefits tax, the substantial rise in the price of imported as compared with Australian made vehicles, interest rates and generally the effect on the economy. Not unnaturally, all these factors have combined to reduce the market for new and consequently used motor vehicles, a product which at any time consumers are reticent about purchasing in view of the substantial outlay that has to be made.

The MTA submits that there would be very few benefits to consumers from extended trading hours as no more vehicles will be sold and consumer purchasing patterns at this time on Saturday morning, Thursday and Friday nights do not display an increasing incidence of vehicle purchases, whereas in the retail stores we assume that consumption patterns generally have shown a shift towards increased purchases in these non-normal trading hour periods.

The association is saying that unless the services go with the extended hours, unless the Government actually provides some of these services, certain parts of the industry will be disadvantaged. What about bus services? Has any thought been given to that? Is the Minister of Transport suddenly going to turn on buses in order to meet the requirements of Saturday afternoon trading? Members know that Saturday and Sunday bus services are limited compared to services during the week. In view of the current financial situation confronting the STA, are we going to provide additional bus services?

Many of these questions remain unanswered. No comment has been made by the Government saying, 'We are going to lift our game and we are going to provide services when the consumer desires it.' The Government has said, 'We will be good fellows and make people pay an extraordinary price for Saturday afternoon trading.' The question being asked is how much will it all cost? No single authority can provide a clear answer, which is why the Liberal Opposition is insisting that the Prices Commissioner report to Parliament on the cost implications. I now refer to the penalty provisions prevailing in shops and delis on Saturdays. In shops there is a 25 per cent loading until 12.30 p.m., a 50 per cent loading between 12.30 and 3.30 p.m., and a 100 per cent loading after 3.30 p.m. In delis there is a 25 per cent loading until 12 o'clock, a 50 per cent loading to midnight and a 100 per cent loading on Sundays. On top of that, casuals receive a further loading of 20 per cent on the base rate. Penalty rates are calculated over and above the base rate. Those traders who trade until lunchtime only and do not alter their trading circumstances, under the Bannon scheme, will have the privilege of paying an extra \$25 a week, 3 per cent superannuation and a further 25 per cent wage penalty to their employees.

We have heard a number of fatuous statements from the Minister of Labour that competition will take care of any cost increases. One would assume that he has done some homework on the retail market and understands that there is little fat in the system to trim, given the poor record of the past three years. I seek leave to have a table inserted in *Hansard*.

The SPEAKER: Can I have the honourable member's assurance that the material is entirely statistical?

Mr S.J. BAKER: Yes, Sir.
Leave granted.

Retail Sales (Excluding Motor Vehicles)				
	South Australia \$m	% increase	% of Aust. Australia	Australia \$m
1983-84	3 840.0	—	8.8	43 796.1
1984-85	4 065.5	5.9	8.6	47 028.0
1985-86	4 484.8	10.3	8.5	52 519.5
1986-87	4 664.0	4.0	8.2	56 830.4

Mr S.J. BAKER: The table shows that in 1983-84 South Australia enjoyed 8.8 per cent of the national retail trade, excluding motor vehicles, so that important component is left out. In 1986-87 it had dropped to 8.2 per cent of the national total. In the process we have lost absolutely \$340 million in trade. It has disappeared from trade in South Australia. In the space of three years we have lost \$340 million in trade in comparison with the situation if we had retained our 1983-84 position, which was and still is roughly equivalent to the population share in South Australia. We are \$340 million worse off. The Minister claims that competition will take care of it. Further, the 1986-87 trading figures for South Australia, when adjusted for price rises, are worse than the 1983-84 result. In this difficult, almost disastrous trading situation, any increase in labour costs will compound the problem and send many more traders to the wall. There is simply no room in the market. That is why the Liberal Party is emphatic that Saturday afternoon trading shall not eventuate unless costs can be contained. If the Minister is suggesting that the stores lay off staff to achieve new economies, I am sure his union mates will be suitably impressed.

Alternatively, the Minister and his union friends may well have done their homework. They may well say 'We will price the little people out of the market so that the bigger people can get a greater share,' and that is a serious question—that the Minister and the Premier of this State have set out on a deliberate course of taking away from the little people of the State to feed the larger concerns, particularly the unions. Under conservative assumptions labour costs will increase by about 16 per cent with the advent of Saturday afternoon trading under Bannon's wage cocktail.

There is considerable variance between the different types of enterprise. For example, supermarkets are likely to have lower labour cost increases than department stores, which are better off than small traders with one or more employees. It is the small operators who pay the highest price, due to the indivisibility of labour units. This in itself will hasten the demise of many traders who are competing with major stores and who are surviving because of their Saturday afternoon trade. At one end of the scale, the supermarket area, the Bannon package will increase wage costs by about 11 per cent, whereas at the other end it is as high as 20 per cent. When overheads and wage add-ons are taken into account, these figures further increase.

In June 1986 there were 14 322 retail establishments in South Australia, compared with 12 798 in June 1980. Even in the past year or so we have seen a further expansion in the number of shops. Members can have a look around Adelaide today at the linear shops or extensions to shopping centres which are taking place. Even in areas close to Mitcham we have a number of examples where shops are mushrooming. There is simply not enough room in the system for such shops—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Minister will have his chance to respond. What I am saying is that under those circumstances any wage increase is critical. The declining shopping cake has to be divided up between more and more traders, and somehow Minister Blevins believes that massive cost increases of this nature can be absorbed. It is a sick joke.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: I am explaining to the Premier that the free enterprise system, as it is operating, is providing more shops. There is nothing to stop anyone building a shop, but for the Minister, knowing those circumstances, to then impose enormous cost increases on those people is scan-

dalous. That is not private enterprise; there is nothing of private enterprise about the Premier and the Minister of Labour of this State imposing extraordinary cost burdens on small traders. There is nothing of free enterprise about that.

I shall now turn to the content of the Bill. The Liberal Party has had a policy for some three years which supports extended trading hours. Underlying that stance has been a recognition that this State and this country have to join the real world. Lifestyles have changed dramatically over the past 20 years. The number of two income families and single parents in the work force has escalated, but service delivery has not kept pace. More importantly, however, this State is out of kilter with the rest of the world.

Finance markets have been deregulated, and the labour market must surely follow. We do not have deregulated labour markets in the way in which the Labor Party perceives them. Deregulated labour markets do not mean the imposition on all traders of \$25 a week per employee; they do not mean the imposition of extra penalty rates; and they do not mean the payment of 3 per cent of superannuation for employees. Deregulation does not include any of those items. The number of visitors to this State from interstate and overseas is increasing rapidly. Many are nonplussed at our indifference to their demands and view South Australia as some sort of backwater in an essentially dynamic world. When putting forward our policy three years ago, the Liberal Party appreciated that change would be difficult for many small shopkeepers. It was our view, however, that if such change was managed properly the benefits would flow not only to consumers but also to traders in the longer term.

Many shops in Europe do not open during periods of low turnover. In some southern European countries they close for three hours for a siesta. In others they may close on a Tuesday or open later during the early part of the week. Under existing conditions it is not possible for this to happen in this State, and that is why the Liberal Party placed some important constraints on extended trading hours, namely, that penalty rates for Saturday afternoons had to be eliminated or minimised; participation of employers and employees was to be on a voluntary basis; and restrictive agreements on manpower scheduling had to be eliminated.

They were the prior conditions and they are simple conditions. The Minister has not even allowed small traders in shopping centres the right to open during hours that will best suit their trade. He has not paid any attention to those people who are subject to agreements which will force them to open when the shopping centres are open. The policy that we put forward three years ago has not altered. As I said previously, the expression of concern from traders and consumers alike has reached a crescendo. No-one can understand why the Government is taking action to support extraordinary wage increases for shop assistants. I trust that in my opening remarks the real reasons were adequately explained.

The whole exercise is one of political expediency to stabilise the votes on the floor of the ALP convention. Premier Bannon has treated the needy and small shopkeepers in our community with total disdain. He has no feeling whatsoever for those struggling to make ends meet. He does not even appreciate that this cynical move will place enormous pressures on the wages system and on the welfare budget. He stands condemned for his crass stupidity and his gross indifference, and I ask every member on the other side to participate in this debate. Tell us about the poor constituents who will have to carry the burden and pay the price.

I ask every member opposite to participate in this debate and stand up for the people to whom they have so often referred. So many times I hear from the other side of the House, 'Look—I'm worried about my pensioners' or 'I'm worried about my unemployed people.' Here is their chance; here is their big opportunity to show what large hearts they possess. I know that none of them will, because they are all totally gutless. My final word is that, unless the Premier changes his mind, unless the Minister of Labour is removed from office (which I feel is probably the only solution), this Bill will ultimately fail.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Coles—which is most appropriate.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: (Coles) Your interjection (rather than interjection) reminds me, Mr Speaker, of the days when I was first campaigning for the seat of Coles in 1977. Upon knocking on a certain door (one of the more than 6 000 upon which I knocked during that campaign) I went through my customary spiel announcing my name and the fact that I was the Liberal candidate for Coles, and the woman who opened the door said, 'It's very nice of you to call, dear, but I always shop at Woolworths.' So it is indeed appropriate that I should be participating in this debate, but not for that somewhat flippant reason.

I believe that I have participated in every debate on shop trading hours since my election to this House 10 years ago. My interest in the extension of shop trading hours goes back prior to my election to the time when, as a candidate for election, I gave evidence in 1977 to the Royal Commission into Shop Trading Hours. At that time I pointed out that my observations of people in the electorate that I hoped to represent, particularly the women in that electorate and most particularly the women who were in paid employment—especially full-time paid employment—indicated that people were anxious to have an opportunity to shop without being under the extreme pressure of time which forces one to choose products in haste and to generally be under a great deal of tension when shopping.

The Minister of Labour is looking very pleased, because he assumes that I support him in all things in relation to this Bill—in fact, the reverse is the case. While I certainly support an extension of trading hours on a voluntary basis, I do not support the tactics being used by the Government and the union to achieve a goal which I believe is sought by many consumers—and feared by many small businesses—and which is desired by the Government for its own purposes, which I submit have nothing whatsoever to do with either consumer demand or with the needs of business. It has a lot more to do with the balance of power in the ALP and whether the centre faction will retain some degree of control and whether the Premier can keep the numbers by giving the shop employees union what it wants in return for this legislation.

The member for Mitcham has most admirably canvassed the issues involved in this debate and has provided the House with a great deal of statistical information about retailing and the wider economic scene in which it takes place. The social issues which interested me particularly in the late 1970s, and which still interest me, are very pertinent to this debate. We live in a time of changing lifestyles; and we live in a period where more and more people are engaged in permanent part-time work and when, for many consumers, particularly women, the opportunity to shop between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. is very much circumscribed by the fact that they are in full-time employment themselves. It is not always convenient to shop on a Thursday night and, for a variety of reasons, Saturday morning is not always conve-

nient, either. An additional period during the week is sought by many people for a variety of reasons which are as numerous as are the lifestyles of the individuals who seek extended trading hours. However, the needs of those people must be balanced against the needs of the businesses that seek to serve them.

As the member for Mitcham said, it has been Liberal Party policy to extend shop trading hours on a voluntary basis, subject always to certain qualifications. Those qualifications deal notably with the fact that the issue of penalty rates must be satisfactorily addressed before we can embark on a course which would ruin many businesses. Liberal Party policies are always based on the premise that it is important that power never be distributed unevenly and never be held in monopolistic hands. For that reason we oppose all power being in the hands of big government, big unions or big business. We insist that the law acknowledges that, if people are to have freedom of choice, power must be distributed evenly: and that includes not only political power but economic power. What the Bill proposes is not a fair distribution of economic power—it places massive power in the hands of the unions.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: What about the female shop assistants—the 16-year olds?

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Minister asks about female shop assistants, the 16-year olds who will get, allegedly, these increased rates. I ask what about the jobs that will not be available for those 16-year olds because shop proprietors simply will not be able to afford to employ them. This is a classic recipe for defeating the purpose of extended trading hours, because the conditions set by the Minister will make the whole arrangement unworkable. Voluntary trading, which is supported by the Liberal Party, should be a matter of choice by retailers in response to demand from consumers. Choice is removed when volume must be maintained against large competitors and traders are forced to open whether or not they want to do so; choice is removed when extended trading is made a condition of a lease for a small business; and choice is removed when, given those factors, wages are forced up to a level which is punitive for small business owners to such an extent that they cannot afford to employ anyone and then must themselves work six full days a week.

Last month and for some of this month I have visited shopping centres in my electorate—not specifically to discuss extended trading hours but to highlight the Bannon Government's dreadful management of the State's economy. However, while I have been visiting shopping centres inevitably shop proprietors want to discuss this issue with me. During a recent visit to the Magill shopping centre I was frankly stunned at the depth of despair and disillusionment among shoppers at the way costs are rising and at the virtual impossibility of making ends meet, almost irrespective, it seemed to me, of income level or background. Whether I was speaking to someone on a middle income who might be considered to be well off or whether I was speaking to pensioners or superannuants there was an extremely high level of anxiety about the fact that no matter how hard people try they simply cannot get ahead because of the pressure of various costs. The Minister's proposal in this Bill will add yet another factor to the increasing burden of costs that retailers and consumers must bear.

I visited the Athelstone shopping centre a couple of Saturday mornings ago when shop trading was extremely slow because of the Grand Prix, which meant that proprietors had plenty of time to spare to talk to me. I spoke to a pharmacist and her husband who pleaded with me to encourage the Government to see the impossibility of their

position if this proposal goes ahead. They said that they cannot possibly afford to pay an assistant on Saturday afternoons the rate of 50 per cent penalty loading until 3.30 and 100 per cent penalty loading after 3.30. They cannot afford to pay the additional standard rate per week that—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: We are trying to reduce those penalties.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: That convinces none, and it is the opposite of the truth, as demonstrated by the facts. The member for Mitcham has quoted the facts quite specifically to the House. I have read the Minister's press statement and there is no way on earth that this pay-off to the unions will reduce wage costs to businesses—no way on earth. The pharmacist and her husband said, 'Do you realise that, if this is implemented, we will be forced as a condition of our lease to remain open?'

The Hon. Frank Blevins: That's a different issue.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Yes, it is a different issue, but it is related. It is not part of the Bill but it is very much related to it.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Minister seems unable to resist the temptation to tell us that we do not understand. The fact is that we understand only too well. If this Bill goes ahead, it will be made a condition of a lease—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: That's another issue.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: It is another issue related to this issue. Because it will be a condition of their leases, the pharmacy and all other shops in that centre will have to remain open. Because the pharmacy proprietors cannot afford to pay staff, they will both have to work on Saturday afternoons and that will mean working for six full days a week plus one night a week. The pharmacist said to me that she wondered whether the Minister of Labour realised how many homes would be locked, with young children inside because their parents, as proprietors of shops, would not be able to pay anyone to mind their children on Saturday afternoons. The children might be taken to play sport on Saturday mornings and they might be looked after on week days, but they expect to be home with their parents on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. The fact is that if what the Minister is proposing goes ahead exactly that will happen.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Gayler): Order! The honourable member for Coles has the floor. Government members will have every opportunity to reply.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. I have here a letter from the proprietor of a small general store in the City of Burnside, and he states:

I would like to express my feelings against the Government's Saturday afternoon open trading. Besides causing little storekeepers hardship, and many are in doubt now in Burnside, due to the Coles new complex with 25 variety shops to let. We have been in business for 25 years and know that times are tough and that we must fight to survive. I also have several vacant shops near our centre and I have a vacant shop next to my business. Rent here must be cheaper than that of the new Burnside Village complex. We give unparalleled service.

I can vouch for that. This storekeeper not only delivers groceries in an area where there are many elderly people who are unable, for reasons of frailty or lack of transport, to get to the shops—

Mr Lewis: And it is up and down hills as well.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: —and because it is a quite steep suburban area, but he is also neighbourly enough to collect mail from letterboxes, to check on anyone who might be housebound, and to generally perform what amounts almost to a subsidiary domiciliary care service

through his presence in the delivery of goods. That is something that we can ill afford to lose, but it is likely to be placed under very severe threat if the Minister's proposal goes ahead unchallenged, unamended and unmodified. The letter continues:

By giving in to the big stores we lose our individuality, of which Australia is made, and very soon we would have no weekends and no Sunday. I am sure that we will have more unemployment. I ask for your help and thank you for your consideration.

My constituent then signs the letter and adds:

I am supported by my wife, staff and family and the other storekeepers in this group.

I repeat: the notion of extending shop trading hours on a voluntary basis is one which I support. The manner in which the Minister is doing it, that is, making such extension not only not voluntary but prohibitive in its cost, is a classical socialist notion, whereby one proceeds to a goal and in pursuit of that goal removes all choice from the people who will be affected by the decision. The Government's action on shop trading hours, by virtually removing the price for choice, is not unlike the Government's action in relation to independent schools. A Labor Government will say, yes, by all means let people choose where they send their children, but it makes the price of the choice so high that many people simply cannot stand that price and the choice is therefore removed. That is what is happening; if ever—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: A socialist plot!

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Indeed, the Minister has put excellent words in my mouth: it is a socialist plot designed to further the power struggles within the Labor Party by satisfying the desire of the Centre Left. The Premier has bowed to those pressures, which are bearing down on him very hard indeed. The Minister of Labour is anxious to lure the Premier as far down the hill as possible—and we on this side have viewed that with considerable interest this session. We can see that the Minister's designs are likely to be achieved, but not with the help of the Opposition.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): Is it not ironic? The last time that I can recall standing in this place of an evening was prior to that fateful day in June when I fell over in a motor car. That was back on 24 June, and during the session leading up to that date I stood in this place following my colleague the member for Coles and shadow Minister for a number of portfolios and, as members will recall, we had a difference of opinion about several matters under discussion on that occasion. I certainly do not want to recanvass the details, but here I am again, standing in this place for the first time in the evening since the previous session, following the member for Coles and again on this occasion—and I make no apologies for it—I disagree with the closing remarks of my colleague in regard to this Bill. Without saying it directly, my colleague the member for Coles implied to the House that she was opposed to the move by the Government to extend shop trading hours.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore: Not at all.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: My dear colleague once again says 'Not at all'. However, that is the message that I got—perhaps I am the only member in the House who got that message.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: However, let us not show any signs of division on this subject, but simply take the opportunity to express a point of view. I agree with free trading.

Mr Robertson: Free speech.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: Too right! I agree that, in those few places in South Australia where there is now no opportunity for free trading, that opportunity ought to be extended to our traders. I want to explain that remark a little more. Although the metropolitan area of Adelaide and adjacent suburbs, as well as a relatively few other places in this whole State, are hamstrung with the shop trading hours legislation, the whole of the rest of the big paddock, in the villages, communities, towns, and in some cases cities of this State, is free of all this paraphernalia; they are not encumbered by these restrictions of when one shall or shall not close one's shop. Having said that, I want to explain a little bit further that the principal Act does not refer to when one shall or shall not open one's business. It simply identifies a closing time on each day of trade and, by virtue of its absence, it prevents the opportunity to trade, therefore, to 5 p.m. on Saturdays, etc.—which is really the nub of the Bill.

The Bill does not specify that a trader shall open his shop until 5 p.m. Indeed, by the absence of those words it is left flexible and open, just as it should be, giving the trader the opportunity to open if he feels inclined. I have absolutely no objection to that. In fact, I have been a party to arguing this matter with my colleagues, some of whom are in Parliament today while others have come and gone over the years that I have been a member of this place. On almost every occasion we have won the vote on this principle that free trading shall prevail. I am proud to be part of this outfit on this side of the House that can still today stand up and say that if people want to trade let them do so.

On that note, I have no hesitation in indicating my support for the extension of shop trading hours so as to allow traders, if they wish, individually or collectively, within the community of Adelaide and those other few identified communities in South Australia, to open their shops and trade. The matter of costs that may be added to in the form of loadings on goods traded as a result of additional salary demands, and so on, applicable to the shop assistants is really, I suppose, an issue that needs to be clarified, but it ought not be one that heads off the course that is proposed at the end of the line: that is, to allow trading to occur until 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

I do not profess to have been deeply involved in the discussions that have taken place in all sorts of places by way of positive concern, and by way of the independent shop traders lobby, the shop assistants lobby and so on in recent weeks. However, I do recognise that that is a bit of a problem in that area, and there may be a scrap or two before that matter is resolved. I would hope that the passage of this legislation is not so far inhibited as to cause it to fall off the agenda of this Parliament and not come to fruition soon. There are a few aspects of the publicity, the reporting and politically based arguments that have occurred in recent weeks that are a bit disturbing, but again I place them in the same category as I have this wages loading subject that ought not to inhibit the course of action and the principle involved in that which is proposed to enable shops to open.

Madam Acting Speaker, I do not know how long this subject is going to hang around the Parliament tonight—I am certainly not going to hang around too much longer. I gather there are a few other speakers on the subject. I would hope that it is resolved in this House fairly smartly I appreciate the advice given to me by the non-political servants of the department in relation to preparing for this debate, and I appreciate your tolerance during that early period of my remarks when somewhat rude interjections were coming from the other side.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): Madam Acting Speaker, I will never let anyone say that I am not a free trader. I can easily sustain that position. More particularly, I can attack the position being taken by the Government in the proposition that it has before the Chamber this evening in that it is not opening up trade at all; it is not deregulating anything. That is why I cannot support it.

At this point, what the Government has done is make a mockery of its own Party's deal with unions about the necessity to remove restrictive work practices from the workplace. It has made a mockery of the rest of the second tier deal in any increase that occurs in wages this year by going against the spirit of that proposition and insisting that, upon the introduction of this legislation, shopkeepers will have to pay their employees considerably more per week to provide the same service than is the case now.

Notwithstanding the fact that they may choose to sack some of their employees to reduce the impact of that increase in costs and otherwise introduce labour saving devices and management techniques into their premises, I expect that they will reduce the number of people that they employ and, furthermore, will still have to meet an increased wages bill at the end of the week. Consequently, like every other shopkeeper in the same line of business, they will increase their margins on the gross cost of the purchased goods that they are retailing to cover that cost. By increasing the margin, they will increase the price.

Mr Tyler: I thought you were a free trader?

Mr LEWIS: I am, but you are compelling the shopkeepers of this State to increase prices by introducing into the market a floor in the market higher than it is at present in the assessment of basic costs of providing fundamental services in the retail area.

Mr Groom: The market will take care of that.

Mr LEWIS: It cannot take care of an increasing cost across the board; it must meet such costs. It is like saying that you can increase the cost of superphosphate to a farmer and he will grow just as much grain and just as much pasture and make just as much profit. That is crap, and you know it.

Mr Groom: The middle men will take less.

Mr LEWIS: That is nonsense. The middle men take no less. Their costs will be the same as they are now and their perceived rewards for their efforts will be no different. Why on earth should they forgo what they get now knowing that what they get is, in the opinion of the people whom they are supplying, fairly supplied at that price in competition each with the other? While there are small retailers in competition with each other and the floor of their costs is increased, their prices must rise. Those fools amongst them who think that they can hold the prices at the present level will go broke and be out of business, and the prices charged by those remaining to their consumers will be higher anyway. Anyone who thinks that is not inevitable does not understand economics or what market forces really are.

So, there is no argument at all about the consequences of this legislation—not so much the legislation itself, but the sleazy, crooked deal made by the Minister, and carried by him through Cabinet and Caucus, with the unions to increase the price that shopkeepers, the employers, must pay for labour and all the ancillary increases that go with that on a percentage basis, such as insurance and workers compensation, which is a percentage of payroll.

Knowing that will be the case, the Government should come clean and tell the people of South Australia, 'We will free up by some margin (and it is only a limited margin anyway) the period of time between midnight Sunday and midnight next Sunday when you can buy things from people

who want to sell them to you, but it will all cost you more, regardless of whether or not you want to shop at a different time, because the wages of the people working in the shops and selling the goods will be higher. Therefore, the prices you will pay for those goods will be higher.'

That is the way it is. In my judgment, unless everything is deregulated, the position should be left alone. The Government should not be dishonest with South Australian consumers. The Government has the numbers and I tell the Minister through you, Madam Acting Speaker, that he is the hot shot with the numbers to crunch. If members opposite sincerely believe that what I am saying is true, they have the numbers to introduce it into the Bill. They had that opportunity. If they believe that it should be in the Bill, Government members can withdraw the Bill now and bring it back with appropriate amendments.

I do not mind telling the House that I have had strong lobbying from retailers in my electorate who have told me that they do not want the hours extended. I have also had strong lobbying from people working for retailers who have been geed up to do likewise. However, their opinions advanced at this time do not alter my fundamental philosophical position one jot from what it has always been ever since the first day on which I thought about this issue—about 20 years ago.

We are the most regulated country in the world. Indeed, South Australia is probably the most regulated State anywhere as regards retailing. We are really in the Dark Ages, and for the government to try to make a deal between themselves as big government and, as the member for Coles has said, the large retailers as big business, and the unions controlling the labour force (that is, the big union) is against the best interests of small traders and consumers.

Mr Tyler: You're all over the place. You don't know where you are.

Mr LEWIS: I know exactly where I am and what I believe. I do not ever attempt to shore up a falsely taken position with rhetoric and emotional claptrap that means nothing when it is all boiled down. Why should there be any difference between an hour worked at any time from midnight Sunday to midnight Sunday? If I am out of work and want a job, so long as I am paid what the law says is the base rate requirement, and so long as I am not required to work longer than a given number of hours in the day, and not in split shift, why on earth should I not be free to make a contract with an employer to work whenever that employer wants to employ me? Why must the Government have a say in that?

Mr Tyler: You're naive.

Mr LEWIS: I am not naive. The honourable member should travel and pay attention to how things are done by humanity elsewhere in civilised communities. Why on earth, if the honourable member believes in the development of this State's economic base through the development of our tourist trade, cannot he see the reality of that argument? I implore members opposite to give serious and honest consideration to the questions that I have put before them. They will then come to a clear understanding of what the world is all about.

There need be no difference from one hour to the next, and there is no difference in the minds of many millions of people who live in those countries and communities whom we regard and who regard themselves as being as civilised as we are. Certainly, in my observations they are every bit as civilised, caring and prosperous (if not more so).

The way in which we effectively regulate who can do what to whom and when and for what reason is beyond

me. We have statute books and regulations fat with the stuff and we could cut it all away and leave people to make their own arrangements within a broad but understood framework of the kind to which I have referred. I am not advocating open slather on the labour market: I am merely saying that it should be possible without the Government saying which hour on what day shall be worth how much and that one hour shall differ from any other hour on any other day of the week.

As a market gardener, I got no more for the cauliflowers, lettuces and strawberries from which I removed the weeds, or for the tomatoes and sweetcorn from which I removed the pests, whether I did that on Tuesday night, on Wednesday morning at 2 a.m., or on Sunday afternoon at 6 p.m. They still needed attention when they needed attention and I had to do it then. That is a fact of life and, if other human beings cannot understand those facts of life, it is about time that the Government did not protect them from what is reality.

The problem that this nation has is that Governments of the same ilk as members opposite have conned people into believing that they can go on doing things that are unrealistic, spending money that they have not got, and therefore living way beyond their means in an unrealistic fashion that takes no account of the amount of debt being built up and laid on their children. After all, that debt will not be paid back in those people's old age. Someone else will be required to try to recover the position that results from people's squandering policies, especially as they relate to the economy and the fiscal policies that Labor Governments are adopting and managing at present.

There are a couple of other aspects of matters that are somewhat related to my previous remarks. First, as regards the deregulation of shopping hours, the member for Alexandra was naive when he suggested that it would be possible for a shopkeeper, under the laws introduced and advocated by this Government, to decide for himself or herself when he or she could open. He says that the legislation merely provides that a shopkeeper may not open beyond a certain time, but that is nonsense. At present under planning law we regulate and ration the area of floor space available for certain kinds of trading, especially retail trading.

The Planning Act expressly requires local government to allocate space for retailing within a given area. That relates not only to car parking space outside but also to floor space available for retailing and it refers to the size of the module as well as the total area or the number of square metres involved. That is rationed, and the place where that shopping centre or shop floor can be established is rationed also. There is a limit on it and then big business can buy up the real estate upon which those premises can be established. Having bought the real estate, it will, by whatever means chosen by the project managers, erect the shopping centre in accordance with the law as dictated by this Government under its Planning Act and regulations, and it will offer those premises for lease.

Then the people who manage the leased premises not only tell the prospective shopkeeper, 'Your lease will be so much per month and come up for review after so many months' (whether it be 10, 20, 30, 40 months or any other period) but also, under pain of breach of contract and loss of lease, say, 'You shall open when we tell you to, and you shall not close unless we tell you to close.' What fairness or justice is there in a system like that? The Government calls itself a deregulator, but that is piffle. Regardless of the number of people who work in the shop, be they employees, self-employed or otherwise, until the Government seriously addresses this question, no attempt should be made to

deregulate and to increase the costs of operation in the way that this legislation does. Leave it alone. Do not con the people of South Australia into thinking that it will give them more freedom to shop when they choose to do so, without telling them at the same time that it will cost them a hell of a lot more, whether or not they choose to shop on Saturday afternoon. Members opposite know that it will cost more and the Minister, in denying that that is the case, or by saying nothing about it, has been quite deceitful, and so have the big employers.

Without fear or favour I raise the question: why on earth should it be possible to sell meat protein of one kind at entirely different hours from those applying to the sale of meat protein of another kind? This legislation explicitly determines when those transactions can occur. Members opposite call themselves deregulators. What hypocrisy and nonsense! The Minister knows (and some members on both sides of the House should know) that in this city and in areas inside the hundreds it is not possible to purchase red meats at the times one wishes to buy it if the retailer is willing to sell it. I know that the member for Flinders and other members from rural electorates will understand this point.

The availability of red meat is restricted to the public for no reason other than the fact that it is red. White meat, or meat coming from avicultural sources (whether it be pheasants, chickens or ducklings—I will defer to whatever sensitivities members have about describing it—or whether it be smallgoods) is all available for much longer hours of trading. The same thing applies to eggs and fish, but they all supply the same fundamental nutritional value. What good purpose does it serve to restrict the availability of red meat to the consumer against the interests of the producers of red meat?

I have no more vested interest in representing people who raise sheep, cattle, veal and pork than I have in representing people who produce ducklings and chickens. I have substantial numbers from all areas living in Murray-Mallee and voting for candidates who offer themselves at election time.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I also have a substantial number of fishermen. There were more fishermen in the electorate I represented during the last Parliament, but I still represent a substantial number of fishermen. Therefore, I put it to the House that the measure will not achieve what the Minister has described. It will not provide the State with increasing interest on the part of people who might otherwise wish to visit Australia. It will have the opposite effect, because everything in the shops will cost more and it will destroy whatever advantage we have, or it will increase the disadvantage we already suffer, depending on the prices relative to other cities at the present time.

If there ever was a good reason for wanting to deregulate shopping hours and to leave it to market forces to decide who shall work when and sell what, this is it, and it is one of the best ways open to those market forces. After finishing work on Friday, tourists would get here sometime after lunch on Saturday and be able to shop for whatever they need, and they would not have to wait until Monday morning. I know that that is the way I have felt about my capacity to shop whenever I have gone, say, to Coober Pedy, interstate, or more particularly overseas. I do not support the legislation, because it does not set out that which was claimed in the Minister's second reading explanation.

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): It is not often that I can rise in this House and say that I probably know more about the possible extension of shopping hours than anyone else.

Mr Tyler: You've finally found something you know something about.

Mr INGERSON: That is unlike the member for Fisher, who usually does not know too much about anything and, as usual, he is out of his position. I will spend some time talking about this so-called deregulation. It seems that deregulation means that we would allow shops to trade when they like and we would enable the cost structures of those shops also to be within that same free market policy. It is interesting to note that in this instance, and for the first time, the Government has chosen to intervene in the Industrial Commission in a case other than a test case as it relates to specific things like the number of hours worked in the day, holidays, etc; or in a national wage case, a 4 per cent flow-on case. It is the first time that a Government has backed a specific union claim in such a matter other than in those two areas. It seems to be totally hypocritical that on the one hand a Government should say, 'We are deregulating and we are enabling the shops to trade when they like, but we will make sure that their cost structures are escalated so that any benefit that they get from deregulating will be wiped out by the increase in costs.'

The Hon. T.M. McRae: What about the eight hour day?

Mr INGERSON: Let me get to that. The member for Playford and I know about that. We have been in court together and we have talked many times before about deregulation. When I was a pharmacist and he was an industrial representative, we had the privilege of arguing against each other. I respect that argument and I will talk about it in a few minutes.

Mr Becker: Who won?

Mr INGERSON: He won one and we won one: all was sweet and well. This unprecedented action by the Government is just so unbelievable when it says, 'We are going to deregulate and let everyone trade when they like', yet here for the first time ever the Government has supported a union. It makes me wonder why. Is it because the Minister of Labour, Mr Blevins, has not enough or too many numbers?

Members interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: The smile on his face suggests that the Premier is worried and that the Minister of Labour has too many numbers and, as a consequence—

Members interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: I know you can count; I have noticed the smile on your face before. Has the Premier decided to back a particular right wing union to get a few votes? Do not talk about deregulation. If the Government is fair dinkum about deregulation, it should talk about what ought to happen to costs across the board, including labour costs. The member for Hayward has returned to the House and she is probably the only other person in this House who understands the retail industry, and I give her credit for that. Let us look at what we ought to do if we are talking about costs. Why did not the Minister say that we would have five starts over seven days, Monday to Sunday? Why did not the Minister say the Government would deregulate so that 35 hours worked at any time over those five days, on any day of the week would be treated as normal hours? Why did not the Minister say that we would have a 50 per cent loading after that time?

If the Minister was fair dinkum about deregulation of shopping hours and the opportunity for small business to survive that is what he ought to have done. He has not done that. He has stood behind the cloak of the union movement and has been prepared to back it on a \$25 a week pay increase, a 50 per cent increase in penalty rates and a 3 per cent superannuation push.

What about the newspaper advertisement claiming the increases amounted to only \$7.48 a week? That was the biggest load of bunkum of all time. If ever there was a smokescreen, it was the union advertisement claiming the increases were restricted to only \$7.48 a week. Clearly, there is a \$25 a week increase, a 100 per cent increase in penalty rates and a 3 per cent superannuation push and the Bannon Government is supporting that issue. As I said, that is not deregulation. What this move is doing is pushing business to larger operators, because the smaller operators cannot survive.

It is the Big Brother arrogant approach and a rescue action for Mr Bannon. Obviously, the Minister of Labour has the numbers and is pushing this sort of nonsense through. It was interesting some weeks ago that the Minister of Labour said that he had not yet calculated what the price increases would be, yet I thought that a major reason for extending shopping hours to enable this so-called free trade was to reduce prices or at least maintain them.

I have had discussions with people in the food industry and people associated with the Retail Traders Association, and they talk about an increase, on preliminary estimates of \$150 a year or \$3 a week. The \$3 a week increase does not sound much, but it is \$3 a week guaranteed by the Government to push up the CPI affecting every person in the State. The Minister of Labour and the Bannon Government claim that what they are doing is deregulation. They say, 'We are going to allow you to shop on Saturday afternoon and we will make it cheaper for you.' That is absolute nonsense.

I can speak about that with a fair amount of experience, because I have traded in a business for seven days a week for nearly 10 years and I know that the pharmacist who works for me from Saturday afternoon to Sunday night is paid the same in that short period as the pharmacist who works for me from Monday to Friday. If we pay the pharmacist that sort of money and if everyone is asked to extend their trading (and I choose to do it—I am happy to do it) their costs cannot be contained.

I was able to do it because the competition was not there to enable everyone else to sell at comparative prices. The minute the Government brings in competition in that way prices will increase because everyone will be open. Anyone who does not believe that need only look at the retail trade to understand what I am talking about. As I said earlier, if the Minister was fair dinkum about wanting to have a deregulated market, he should look at five starts in seven days; he should look at allowing people to work Monday to Sunday at that rate, with penalties applying thereafter.

I believe that the honourable member who interjected earlier (and we have had discussion in the Industrial Commission) would not disagree with that comment either, because that involves true deregulation of the labour market. If the Minister is fair dinkum, that is what he could provide if he wanted to. That is what is done in America; in the American system there are more people working over a week because they are offered work over five days, but they can work on any five days in that week. That is what deregulation involves, but that is not what this Bill is about at all.

We cannot have a one-sided situation where we enable the work force to get increases in salary and then say to owners putting up the money and the opportunity to employ people that they must pay such cost increases and then say that it is deregulation. That is nonsense and the Minister of Labour knows that well. All that we are doing in this little stunt is guaranteeing that the small operators will be wiped out and the large operators will survive. If the Gov-

ernment is fair dinkum about that, which I think it is—big business, big government and big unions—it should come out and say so. It should not go out and mollycoddle small business people and say, 'You will be okay, Jack, because you do not have to open.' That is nonsense, too.

The minute the large operators open, the small operators have to open, which brings me to possibly the most important point relating to small business. Small businesses are family operations. Who is the mug in this system who will suffer? It is the small business operator, the family operator, and this Government could not care less about the small business and family operator; this Government is concerned only about the corporate structure—big business, big unions and big government. Why does it care about that? It cares for one reason: that is where the dollars and cents are. If we get big business, big unions and big government, that is when you can manipulate and control people. When the small free enterprise operator is there there is not that opportunity because he has that freedom, that right and the will to do his own thing. This Government is deliberately against the small operator.

I talked briefly about the small business and family side of this matter. The next major point relates to small business operators and what happens to those located in shopping centres. We have talked about free trade, but what happens to shopping centre lessees? Certainly, this Government could not care less whether small business lessees in major shopping centres are told that they have to open until 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

There is no such thing as free will in a shopping centre, and the member for Hayward would know that. When you go into a shopping centre, you know that under your lease your shop will remain open as long as the centre remains open.

I have heard members of the Labor Party say, 'You have a free will: you can do what you like'. That is nonsense. Again it shows how little the Labor Party understands about the retail market. It has no comprehension of the opportunities the small operator has to say 'I will choose to open on Saturday afternoon and I will trade when I like,' because he cannot do it. I will tell members what will happen if people do that. The next time they go to renew their lease, they will not have a business.

The Hon. T.M. McRae interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: I will tell you. That, to me, is the tragedy of this whole piece of legislation. Why has not the Labor Party had the guts to bring in relative legislation with this which says 'I will protect the small operator by making sure that his lease is flexible so that he can trade within the 40 hours'? That has not been done, because the Government does not have the guts to do that. All you want to do is make sure that your big prattling business, your big prattling union and your big government wind on. And this has nothing to do with the small operator.

You could not care less about the small operator: all you are concerned about is that there are a few consumers out there who might just want to come into those shops on a Saturday afternoon. What about prices? They will go up. I predict in this Parliament now that prices will increase, and the Government and the free market will not stop that occurring. As I know the member for Mitcham said earlier, we believe that it is absolutely critical—

Members interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: My staff are treated very well. It is critical that the option to open in a shopping centre must be guaranteed if we are to ask for the extension of shopping hours. It seems to me that those few issues as they relate to the extension of shopping hours are very important.

There are a couple of other areas which I have been asked to put clearly before the House, one in my capacity as shadow Minister of Sport, and that is the problem of those who choose to play sport. Those who wish to play sport on Saturday afternoon will have difficulties because, irrespective of what members opposite may say, if you are running a business that requires you to open on Saturday afternoon, people will have to work within the confines of opening on that Saturday afternoon and, if you wish to maintain your job in the structure, you will have to be part of that existing operation of working on Saturday afternoons.

What that means is that people who are playing sport and who are very competitive in the sporting arena will have one or perhaps two of their Saturday afternoons when they will not be able to play the sport and maintain their jobs; and if anyone says that that is not real, just go into the real marketplace and find out what happens. Of course, you get those people who wish to be spectators. As far as I am concerned, the spectators can make their choice: they either go to sport or go to shop. That is not my major concern. I am concerned about the shop workers who want to play sport on Saturday afternoons.

As I said earlier, the final point and the one which I believe is very important is that of the family business operator. One of the great privileges of being on this side of the House is that at least we have been there and done it. At least I know something about retail trade about which the Minister knows nothing. The Minister stands up and talks about free trade, and one of the great things about this Minister who talks about free trade is that the only thing he knows anything about is that as long as the owner pays, that is free trade. As long as he is deregulated and fixed, that is free trade. But when it comes to saying 'We have to open it up so that the costs of that business are minimised by having free trade in labour', that is not right. There is no good in that.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: I know: very much so. I believe that there should be one rule for both sides. I am quite happy to trade any hour of the day on one condition: that our employee works within the eight or the seven and three quarter hour day, whichever is applicable, 38 hours a week, on any one of those five days any five days out of seven, and those are the standard hours. After that, I will pay the 50 per cent penalty rate. But let us be fair dinkum; let us deregulate it properly. Do not just do it in a one-sided manner. Finally, I would like to read into *Hansard* some general comments from people who will be directly affected by this. They are people about whom the Minister does not care. He says he cares, but he really does not care. Here is an example of a small grocery operator in my electorate who wrote to me this week. He has really put in perspective what all the small operators are saying.

The member for Fisher laughs but, as I said, he is never in his proper place. He always wanders around. The member for Fisher would know that what I am going to say is applicable to every small business. The letter reads:

Besides causing little storekeepers hardship—and many are in doubt in Burnside—due to [a] new complex [that has been expanded in the area]. We have been in Burnside for some time and we know that times are tough. Also, I have a vacant shop next door to my business, and rents must be 'cheaper' than that new village complex. We give unparalleled service—

and that is one of the things that small business does, and it is a pity that some of the big unions did not give the same sort of service—

and by giving in to the 'big stores' in this way very soon we will have no weekend and I am sure more unemployment.

The Labor Government does not seem to understand that the majority of business in this State is small business, and these businesses employ something like 60 per cent of all private labour. It is one of those things that I do not think they quite understand; that if we are going to have employment in small business, we must have owners. If we wipe out these owners, we will not have anyone left in the retail trade. On behalf of small business, it is a pity that this Government did not hear it.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Mount Gambier): I believe that arguments on this side of the House may tend to be repetitive—

Mr Tyler interjecting:

The Hon. H. ALLISON: They are not all over the place. The honourable member who says that they are all over the place must have been sleeping soundly, because I have been listening and I detect a solid degree of support from members on this side of the House for small businessmen—the salt of the earth businessmen, those who live in a community and are part of it. They are not—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I have never been a big businessman. I was a small hotelier in a one man business with a family, and a few friends for staff, and we worked for 24 hours a day—or 25 if they were in the day, believe you me. We were 24 hours on call, whether we liked it or not, in a country pub—so we have had some experience in business. We did not fail in it, either. We were not thrown out of it. The Minister's Bill evokes in the small business community in Mount Gambier no small degree of cynicism. The reason for that is that the Minister, along with the Premier, is supporting the matter of an appeal for an increase in award rates for shop assistants.

He is bringing legislation into the House before that matter has been decided by the commissioners, and it really begs the question as to whether the Minister wants open trading at the weekend or whether he and his Government cynically believe that by agreeing to a salary increase, by agreeing to increased penalty rates, they will really price Saturday afternoon quietly out of existence.

Whatever the Minister's motives, there are several possibilities in the scenario. The first is that, if the Bill passes, the Minister will have achieved his aim: he will have Saturday afternoon trading and possibly a wedge in for Sunday afternoon trading. Secondly, if the Bill fails, the Minister can blame the Opposition and say, 'I did my best but they knocked it out, so it is not my fault.' The third proposition is that, whatever the Minister's motives, he may well see the demise of many small businesses. I am quite unequivocal about the fact that I support the small businesses in my city which already find it harder to compete in the face of expanding supermarket activity. Many people believe that there are far too many supermarkets in Mount Gambier, despite the fact that we draw people from the Western Districts of Victoria from as far away as Warrnambool, Horsham and Hamilton and, in South Australia, from Kingston, Bordertown, Meningie and Keith.

Mount Gambier is overstocked with large supermarkets and that is affecting small businesses in tiny country towns within 100 to 150 km of Mount Gambier. The increase in salary and penalty rates for Saturdays will mean that small traders will no longer be able to afford to employ staff. They may be unable to open but, if they do open, it is unlikely that they will show a profit. Many of them are already complaining to me that they are earning less personally than many of the staff that they employ, even during normal weekly trading hours.

In Mount Gambier, as I said, there has been a proliferation of very large supermarkets, beginning with Woolworths, then Coles and Target and, in recent months, yet another Coles. That means that we have four very large supermarkets plus four smaller locally owned supermarkets. It is obvious, when you walk through these larger stores during an ordinary working week, that the Coles/Myer conglomeration (which currently owns three of the four large supermarkets) is finding it hard to make a profit. So, if the big boys are struggling, you can imagine the problems being faced by the smaller proprietors.

I do not think that there is any doubt that the larger firms are finding it hard to make a profit, because they have been laying off staff. They are anxious to take more business from the small traders in Mount Gambier at weekends in order to compensate for the daily problems with which they are confronted. Many small traders in Mount Gambier who began 20 and 30 or more years ago and who employed a substantial number of staff during that time can now be found behind the counters themselves.

They claim that they work for a pittance and, if they were not, they would be employing people—they would be the happiest people in the world if they were able to afford staff. They are now forced to dismiss staff. They must work full-time and beyond in order to survive against the might of the corporate traders. They are also faced with a wide range of increased rates and taxes and many licences in order to open their premises. They work to cover the escalation in prices and a whole range of expenses, to cover the increased holiday loadings and other overheads that they must pay their staff, not to mention this new threat of the costly extension to weekend trading. Some people regard extended weekend trading as a promise, but the vast majority of small traders regard it as a threat to their livelihood.

The interesting thing is that I have not been lobbied by shoppers who are looking for extended hours. I do not know where they are, because not one has come through my office door, and I point out that we see between 80 and 90 people in that office every week. I have received representations from only two small traders seeking extended hours. One of them is a lawn mower and cycle agent who would like to open on Sundays; the other is a furniture dealer who would like to open occasionally on Sundays during the course of the year. So two out of several hundred businesses in Mount Gambier do not really represent a predominant point of view.

I have certainly not been lobbied by shop assistants who, by and large, do not wish to work on a Saturday afternoon. In fact, they think that working on a Saturday morning is bad enough because they are deprived of their sport and recreational activities, particularly during summer, when we have extended daylight hours. So where are these vast numbers of people who the Minister claims are lobbying extensively for Saturday afternoon trading? I cannot find them in my electorate.

Another point that the Minister should acknowledge is that there will be no extra money in this State as a result of Saturday afternoon trading or Sunday trading. The same people will simply spread their shopping over a longer period. So there will be the same volume of trade, but at what extra cost to both the shopkeeper—the small businessman particularly—and to the community at large? Prices will have to escalate to pay for the additional salary and penalty rates that the Premier and the Minister have already acceded to by telling the courts and the commission, 'Go ahead, we are right behind you.' The Minister has capitulated on wage demands for shop assistants but, as other

members on this side have said, with no apparent gain for the proprietors and no increase in productivity.

The member for Bragg suggested an alternative which has also been put forward for the tourist industry in this State, which might well benefit from a great increase in tourism if we were able to afford it. The suggestion is that within the tourist and shop trading industries individuals can work within the 37½ hour week, but penalty rates are not incurred until an individual employee works beyond that period, thus enabling an employee to spread his workload. Those people who want to work on a Saturday afternoon can do so and, if they want to take off a Monday or a Tuesday afternoon, they can do so. Many shop assistants, for example, like to shop while the shops are open during the day rather than rushing around when their own shops have closed forcing them to do what many shoppers do—shop fleetingly during their lunch break, when they could be having a nourishing meal.

The Minister has capitulated with no apparent gain to shop owners. I am not out of sympathy by any means with the people who work in shops. They are as deserving of their salary and good working conditions as are any of us. But Saturday afternoon trading is being introduced and I think the Minister would have to acknowledge that it is at a price—with no Government protest, despite the current parlous financial situation not only in South Australia but in Australia; with the current stock market decline, which has not yet stabilised; with employer organisations protesting about any form of salary increase; and with the ACTU itself opposing any improvement even in parliamentary awards. So shopkeepers will open up on Saturday afternoons, in spite of the fact that the Minister says that they will not have to do that. They will open because they want to be competitive. That is the nature of small business—competition is survival. So they will open up. However, they will see relatively empty stores, as is the case on Saturday mornings as a result of Thursday night and Friday night shopping, depending on whether you are in the city or in the country.

Ultimately, all shoppers will pay increased prices to allow a minority to shop on Saturday afternoons. The convenience in having a local store open and a small family trader on the corner could well disappear in favour of huge impersonal automated supermarkets. The Minister may well be sounding the death knell for small businesses if he cannot curtail costs. I see no indication of that in either this legislation or in the Minister's attitude or the Premier's attitude towards the request for increased salaries and increased penalty awards. I see no indication of the Government wishing to curtail costs. As I have said, small business in South Australia can well be forgiven for evincing the degree of cynicism in the Minister's legislation, and it is no wonder that small traders say that they do not want to trade at the Minister's price—and they keep on telling me that the Labor Party favours big business.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Certainly, I support the remarks made by the member for Mount Gambier and the other speakers from this side. The truth of what extended trading hours does to prices was brought home to me about two years ago when I was looking for some new kitchen cupboard handles. Unfortunately, they were not available in my home town of Maitland, and so on the next occasion when I was in Adelaide on a weekend I went to one of the large trading marts—to avoid embarrassment I will not refer to the name of the firm. This trading mart has a massive range of cupboard handles, and we were able to pick out the handles that we felt were the most appropriate. They

were priced at \$2.50 per handle. As they did not have as many as we needed and as a further order might be hard to match, as they were a woodgrain colour, I decided that it would be better to have them order in another set.

However, I told the assistant that perhaps we should wait for a week to see how we went. Someone else put me on to another place in the city, which trades from about 8.30 a.m. until 4.30 or 5 p.m. This is not a large selling organisation and does not occupy a large expanse as the other place does. It has across-the-counter trade. They also had the handles, and for these identical handles, made by the same company, which happened to be a South Australian company, they charged \$1.25 per handle—and remember that the other large complex, which trades at the weekends, charged \$2.50. So, obviously I bought the handles at the \$1.25 price, not at the 100 per cent increased price of \$2.50.

The Hon. H. Allison: You could have bought two for each door for that!

Mr MEIER: Exactly, I could have put two on every door for that price. Well, we were not so extravagant as to do that, but it certainly brought home to me the fact of how extended trading hours can increase costs, and that is with us whether we like it or not. The tragic thing about this Bill is that we know that an arrangement is being made with the unions for a \$25 a week increase, whether one works on Saturdays or not. Therefore, not only will prices go up considerably because of the normal extra costs for weekend trading but on top of that an extra \$25 for each person who works in a firm will be added. I have received several representations from people in my electorate—and it should be remembered that I represent a country electorate, covering Yorke Peninsula and the Wakefield Adelaide Plains—which have indicated that people have some grave concerns about this matter. I want to read into *Hansard* a letter from one of the firms which wrote to me on this matter and which puts the argument very clearly. I shall make some comments after I have read the letter. It is addressed to me and is from a Mr G.J. Sandercock Pty Ltd, of Ardrossan, and it is as follows:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to express my grave concern regarding the proposed extended shopping hours. As you are aware, my family company owns and operates a departmental retailing business in Ardrossan, currently trading 5½ days per week and employing 16 people.

The introduction of Saturday afternoon trading, if we were forced to follow the terms under which it has been introduced into Victoria, would be a disaster. Victorian shop assistants have been awarded a flat increase of \$25 per week, regardless of whether they work Saturdays or not, a 3% superannuation payment, time and a half for the time worked and work on a volunteer basis only.

It should also be recalled that during the year working hours have been reduced by two hours per week, which results in a 5.5% effective increase. This was on top of the 3.3% increase awarded in March.

If the Government is irresponsible enough to follow the Victorian lead, we would have experienced the following increases or likely increases this year in wage costs:

	Increase %	Cumulative %
1st Tier (March)	3.3	3.3
2 hours per week	5.5	9.0
Superannuation	3.0	12.2
\$25 for Saturdays	9.0	22.3
\$6.50 1st Tier (Oct)	1.5	24.2

These increases would cost our company approximately \$51 000 a year extra in wage costs alone, on top of which we have the introduction of WorkCover, which has effectively doubled our workers compensation premiums.

All this takes place in a frail economy, which is hovering on the edge of recession. These increases must be recouped from somewhere, which means the consumer—who supposedly wants extended shopping hours—must end up paying, which he can ill afford to do.

I thank you for your time in reading this letter, and urge you to take up this issue on our behalf. Yours faithfully (signed) John Sandercock.

So, for a company employing 16 persons the cumulative increases will amount to \$51 000 extra for this year, and the Minister is trying to tell us that business wants extended trading and that the \$25 a week increase will not have any real effect. Surely, it will have to be passed on somewhere. To pass on \$51 000 will mean either a huge increase in prices or a considerable reduction in the number of employees that a company can employ. As is pointed out in the letter, at a time when the economy is hovering on the edge of recession this is about the last thing we can afford to bring in.

I think the Government is going about this in completely the wrong way. To agree to a \$25 a week increase is simply ignoring reality. Why should our economy be put under extra strain when it is already facing all these problems? I, for one, certainly like the idea of extended shopping hours, and I have no opposition to the concept, but we must weigh up the pros and cons. One must consider the appropriate time to introduce such a measure. It is clear to me that now is not the right time to introduce this, on top of all the other increases that shopowners have had during the past 12 months particularly, and before. I have another letter here from a Mrs Joan Moyle, of Kadina, who states:

Please do all you can to prevent extended trading hours. I am afraid that many small businesses would not be able to stand the added expenses incurred and would be forced to close.

I have had personal representations and representations on the telephone, likewise, from businesses in my electorate. Of course, my businesses have another worry: that is, if extended trading hours come to the city then many people in country areas will say on a Saturday, 'Let's take the day and go down to town and do all our shopping there, have a look around and perhaps enjoy a picnic with the kids as well.' Rural businesses are currently experiencing enough problems without extra carloads of people leaving for the city on a Saturday. It will affect people not only from my electorate, but from throughout country areas. Our rural areas need all the help they can get at present. Now is not the time to take this sort of action.

The Hon. H. Allison: You get overcrowded cities, don't you?

Mr MEIER: The member for Mount Gambier says that we get overcrowded cities as a result. We are getting that problem already. I would like to make a few more comments on labour costs. There is no doubt that to simply give more and more will not solve the problem; it will create more problems. I have detailed some of them, and I will detail a problem that exists in a business in my electorate.

This business was a husband/wife team, with a daughter. When a person came to them looking for a job, they said that they could not afford to hire her; they could not afford to pay. The person said that she was in desperate need of money, and no-one else in the town would give her a job. She pleaded with them for a job, but they repeated that they could not afford to pay her. When she offered to work for \$2 an hour, they said that they would not employ her for such a small amount. She repeated that she would work for \$2 an hour and they offered to take her on at \$4 an hour—double what she wanted. She thanked them for helping her out of a real predicament. They employed her at \$4 an hour and within a matter of weeks, I believe, increased her salary to \$5 an hour, and she was quite happy to keep working for them. However, some time later things went wrong and they could not keep her on. That business is now facing the prospect of being taken to court by that

employee and all the money that should have been paid to her will have to be paid.

This is a classic case where the person who wanted to work for people who could not afford to pay normal rates was prepared to work for anything they could afford to pay. That person initially was quite happy with the situation. In that way we could afford, quite easily, to have our extended hours in businesses that cannot normally afford it; we could afford to spread the costs and it would be a realistic option.

The way in which the legislation has come before us, from the point of view that it is also before the appropriate commission to seek the salary rise, is not the right way to go about it. It is not right for South Australia. It will lead to more unemployment and more people being put off, and it will lead to a dire situation for our country businesses.

People often refer to overseas examples, and many people refer to very large overseas cities, such as London. Certainly, such a city can afford extended trading hours—there is no question at all about that—because it is supporting a massive population—virtually the population of Australia in one city. It interests me that in some countries extended trading hours are relatively limited. They do not go overboard, and they seem to get on quite well, although it is not necessarily a fact that all countries in Europe have extended trading hours as we are perhaps pushing for them here. However, as I said at the beginning, certainly the concept has a lot going for it.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr MEIER: I made that clear at the beginning. It is the way in which the Government is trying to introduce it that I am totally against.

Mr BLACKER (Flinders): I totally oppose the Bill, because it means nothing but disaster for the businesses of my electorate. When the Bill was introduced, I took the trouble to circularise many of those businesses to see how the business people reacted to it. Previously, I had no communication, either for or against, from any consumer, business person or unionist about this legislation. However, immediately the Bill was introduced and I circulated copies of the Bill and of the Minister's second reading explanation, it became clear what my electorate thought of this legislation. I can now indicate that 120 constituents or business persons have responded most definitely: they totally oppose the further extension of trading hours for our area.

The only slight exception to be inferred from those responses concerns the businesses associated with the tourism industry and the hospitality industry which recognised the need for seven-day trading and extended hours. Indeed, I am the first to admit that in the hospitality trade and the tourist industry, whether it take the form of a caravan park, flats or units that cater for the tourist and the travelling public, there is an obvious need for seven-day trading and extended hours, and we would all recognise that point.

However, as regards the small general business, whether it be a family business or one that employs 10 or 20 people, the matter is vastly difficult. To me it is a travesty of justice that this legislation should be forced on businesses that are now being taxed and pushed to the limit and to the point where they cannot absorb additional costs. I listened with interest to some of the previous speakers and I was interested to see that country areas will clearly be the most seriously affected by this legislation.

The member for Bragg gave an accurate and detailed response to the Bill and I believe that his views are shared by most people. There is no way in the world we can seriously consider the extension of trading hours while we have penalty rates for weekend workers. The member for

Bragg said that, in his experience, he was paying the same amount to a manager to work Saturday and Sunday as he was paying to his other manager to work five days a week. That clearly indicates that the cost of supplying the additional service, whether or not it be needed, is astronomical and in *pro rata* terms out of the question.

Moreover, there are many corner stores and country businesses that can survive only because of their small nature and their ability to work extended hours by means of family labour. The corner store is exempt from shop trading hours legislation now. Were it not for the ability of such stores in my electorate to operate with some protection from the larger multi-national combines, obviously they would be forced out of business.

Many businesses in my electorate would be forced to close because of this additional cost, and that is not an exaggeration. Many businesses have been forced to close already because of the cost squeeze and the increase in wages, including penalty rates. They have been forced to close principally because there is not the money within the community for them to trade. Therefore, it only stands to reason that, if we extend the hours during which money can be spent, the cost of earning an income will increase. I am referring to the small shopkeeper for whom the cost of turning over his goods will obviously be greater. There can be no other explanation.

Just the cost of the light and the power to operate during the extended hours is an additional item, let alone the additional wages and penalty rates *pro rata* per hour. This means the loss of many thousands of dollars to the average business person, to whom that amount represents the bread-line: it is the make or break point at which the small business person survives or fails under this legislation.

For a long time I have made no secret of the fact that I am opposed to extended trading hours whether they be on Thursday evening or at any other time, because no one has been able to say that extended trading hours can do anything other than force up the cost to the consumer and provide greater impositions on the time of the individual operators, especially in the case of family businesses. After all, such businesses are already pushed to the limit and operating far in excess of normal hours, and this Bill further takes away from them the right to enjoy family life.

Many of the responses that I have received from my constituents indicate that I would be derelict in my duty as the representative of my electorate if I did anything else but oppose this legislation totally. In this regard, I have received the following letter from the proprietor of a hardware store at Kimba who states:

We appreciate concern expressed by you through your circular 'To the business person' re extended shopping hours. If passed, this Bill is only going to add to the problems being weathered by small businesses throughout the State. Perhaps there is a need for extended shopping hours in cities or larger country towns, but it is about time small country businesses were given more consideration. Is the Government trying to do away with small businesses altogether?

Already this year we have seen the introduction of a 38-hour working week which has meant we still pay staff for 40 hours work and only receive 38 hours work, if we are lucky. Why add insult to injury with this latest development?

We are at present operating our business with a skeleton staff because economically we cannot afford to pay more out in wages, workers compensation, etc. If we are forced to open for extra hours we will either be forced to employ more staff and therefore go further into debt because of extra wages or be forced to work extra hours ourselves which only means less time spent with our family and more mental frustration.

With a limited population with a limited income, extra trading hours certainly won't bring any more business our way—it will merely give people more time in which to spend their limited income. We wish to raise one other point in relation to this. Supposing this legislation is passed: will banks, councils, post

offices, Government agencies etc., be forced to remain open for longer hours also?

Let us face it: if the Government were serious about this measure, it would ensure that its agencies provided a service for the community. Obviously, it will not do that and we all know why it will not do that. It is not interested in providing a service to the community on an extended hours basis, but it expects the businesses to do that. The letter continues:

Perhaps the Government can help the small businessman by doing something positive about the 17.5 per cent leave loading, like abolishing it. Yours sincerely.

The Minister has indicated that there are no shop trading hours in Kimba anyway, but there is the peer group pressure in business that, if one business opens, the rest have to do the same.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: I appreciate what the Minister is saying. We are talking about legislation that covers the State, so that the rules that operate in the metropolitan area will operate elsewhere.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: No.

Mr BLACKER: I understand the point that the Minister is making. Perhaps I can quote the 120 other responses that I received. I note that no other member has so far indicated a direct response from his or her electorate and certainly not one member from the Government has indicated that. I am quite certain I know the reason why they have not and that is because, even in the metropolitan area, I do not believe that Government members would be able to come up with a response that would indicate what the Government is trying to do now—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: The Minister asks, 'What has this Bill got to do with Kimba?' It refers to shopping hours, and that affects every consumer across the State—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Not in Kimba.

Mr BLACKER: The Minister can say that, but the person who responded to me was responding to the Minister's second reading explanation. They were not responding to my comments but, rather, to a copy of the Minister's second reading explanation and the Bill which was sent to them.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: The Minister asks whether I wrote back, but I would like to say that I have not had the time to reply. I will tell the Minister why that is so; because he knows full well that this matter has been before the House for two sitting days, with one week off in between. Let us be fair.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Ring them up.

Mr BLACKER: I have 1 207 businesses in my electorate.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: In Kimba it doesn't affect them—ring them up. Give me the address and I will ring him up.

Mr BLACKER: The Minister is being finicky in what he is saying. He knows full well that he is trying to confuse the situation and to get away from the point. The point remains that we are debating extended shop trading hours. It means also that we are increasing the price to the consumer. Irrespective of what anyone else says, that is exactly what we are doing. I would like to quote from other letters and, as the Minister has taken exception to my reference to Kimba, I will quote a letter I received from Port Lincoln. Does the legislation apply in Port Lincoln?

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: Thank you very much. A menswear clothing retailer responded to my request for information as to what he thought about extended trading hours. I provided a series of options to discover exactly what they thought and those options ranged from support or opposi-

tion for Thursday night trading, Saturday morning trading, Saturday afternoon trading, limited Sunday trading and unrestricted trading. I received the very definite view that there should not be an extension to the trading hours. Many people said that they felt that Thursday night trading was unnecessary and they opposed it. However, the bulk of the people wanted the *status quo*, in other words, Thursday night trading and Saturday morning trading.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Are these small businesses?

Mr BLACKER: Yes, small businesses.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: Surely the whole question relates to the survival of business.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: But not this Bill.

Mr BLACKER: The Minister is being totally finicky now by saying that the extended shopping hours matter is not relative to the survival of small business. I think that the Minister is being ludicrous in the extreme by suggesting that. The issues go on to that and I will quote a letter received from Independent Grocers Cooperative Limited. This was a circular letter sent to each member of that group and it states:

The start to 1988 also looks difficult, particularly at store level. The introduction of Saturday afternoon trading if we were forced to follow the Victorian debacle would be a disaster. You may be aware that Saturday afternoon trading has been 'awarded' in Victoria in exchange for a flat \$25 per week to all shop employees regardless of whether they work Saturdays or not, a 3 per cent super payment, time and a half for the time worked and work on a volunteer basis only.

I think that that is worth comment right from the word go, because quite clearly it states that the \$25 per week is part of the arrangement for extended trading hours, irrespective of whether or not the employee works that time and, further, the employee is not obligated to work—he can operate on a volunteer basis only. The letter continues:

It should also be recalled that during the year working hours have been reduced by two hours which results in a 5.5 per cent effective increase.

If we were or if the Government is irresponsible enough to follow the Victorian lead, we would have experienced the following increases or likely increases this year in wage costs:

	Increase %	Cumulative %
1st Tier \$10	3.3	3.3
2 hours per week	5.5	9.0
Superannuation	3.0	12.2
\$25 for Saturdays	9.0	22.3
\$6.50 1st Tier (Oct)	1.5	24.2

That assumes that we are following the Victorian line. The letter continues:

On top of which we have the impost of WorkCover and other rising charges, yet at the same time the Government persists with Price Watch. All this takes place in a frail economy which is hovering on the edge of recession—one wonders just how long the country can survive in such an unrealistic environment. One only needs to look at our current exchange rate against the pound to realise how the rest of the world views our position.

The letter then makes a couple of other points that do not relate directly to this shopping hours legislation. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Labour): I move:

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

Motion carried.

IN VITRO FERTILISATION (RESTRICTION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

The purpose of this short Bill is to extend the life of the principal Act beyond 30 November 1987. Honourable members will recall that, when the principal Act was introduced, a select committee was still deliberating on a wide range of issues related to reproductive technology.

At the same time, there were proposals by private, commercial entrepreneurs to set up private-for-profit clinics marketing IVF services in advance of any recommendations of the select committee. That was clearly an undesirable situation. The Government was concerned, not only that adequate safeguards were needed to ensure the development of such clinics did not jeopardise the quality of services delivered to South Australian patients but also that no radical changes which could affect quality assurance occurred while the select committee was deliberating.

The *In Vitro* Fertilisation (Restriction) Bill 1987 was therefore introduced to enable the existing three programs to continue to operate, but to prohibit any other person from carrying out an *in vitro* fertilisation procedure. It was intended that the legislation would operate until any legislation arising out of the select committee's report had been enacted. The date of 30 November 1987 was inserted as the sunset date. It is now quite clear that the Reproductive Technology Bill will not be enacted by that date. This Bill therefore seeks to extend the moratorium date until 31 March 1988.

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2 amends section 6 of the principal Act to extend the operation of the Act to 31 March 1988.

Mr S.J. BAKER secured the adjournment of the debate.

SHOP TRADING HOURS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading debate resumed.

Mr BLACKER: My electorate totally opposes this legislation, as does the business community. I cannot support this Bill. There is no consumer, business or union demand for the legislation. Therefore, why is the Government pandering to the issue in this way? It is obvious: the Government is supporting big business in its quest for big government and big unions, and one cannot help but believe that in so doing there must be an ulterior motive for the Government to act in the way it has.

There has been no lobbying from consumers and, as I say, the only hint of support for or tolerance of this legislation comes from the tourist industry. Of course, that minimal support is tempered by the fact that penalty rates in the tourist industry make the industry unworkable. If the Government was genuine about the 38 or 37½ hour week, it would allow the hours to be worked irrespective of the

days of the week before penalty rates apply; then we could be talking commonsense and providing tangible support for the tourist industry.

With penalty rates applying as they do, with time and a half on Saturday and double time and sometimes triple time on weekends, obviously the industry will be penalised as well. Unless extended trading hours are accompanied by equal rates per hour wages, the extension of shopping hours can do no more than increase the price to consumers and thus make the cost of living to every man, woman and child in this State that much higher.

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): If shops and strip shopping centres are allowed to operate on Saturday afternoon, it will allow more families to shop together, it will help increase the number of working mothers and single parents who can use those shops and it will encourage more spending in South Australia by interstate and overseas visitors. From that point of view, I do not have any great difficulty. What we really need to analyse in this debate is the type of shops that will be allowed to open and the impact that those opening hours will have on various owners.

I represent the electorate of Morphett, which contains many small businesses operating from strip shopping centres. I imagine that in their district every honourable member has a shopping centre of some sort similar to the shops in Jetty Road Glenelg, or perhaps on a minor scale. It is a fact that if this Bill is passed and Marion shopping centre and the like with their large department stores are allowed to operate on Saturday afternoon, we will be presiding over the demise of strip shopping centres such as at Glenelg. That is a reality.

The expenses in opening a business in such a shopping centre at Glenelg are astronomical. There are small properties the size of postage stamps attracting rents of \$450 or \$500 or more and small specialty shops struggle to keep their doors open. Already they have to compete with Marion type shopping centres and, if the Marion shopping centre opens on Saturday, Jetty Road shops will have to open in competition, but they will not compete. That is the reality.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: The consumer is king.

Mr OSWALD: The Minister claims that the consumer is king. Perhaps the Government is concerned only about consumers, but I have not heard anyone in my district beating a path to my door asking for shops to stay open in that area. Many business people in Glenelg are desperately worried about the direction in which the Government is going, because they know that, with the astronomical overheads that they face, coupled with the fact that the nearby shoppingtown in Marion is allowed to open, we will see the demise of these shops.

I was going to say a moment ago that the South Australian Mixed Business Association predicted that in Adelaide we will lose 20 per cent of the small convenience stores within five years. I can see that happening in my electorate and there is no way that I will support any type of legislation like that.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr OSWALD: It is not a question of supporting the consumers but of supporting a balance. At the moment consumers in my district are served well. If we are to follow that track, we will see reductions in the types of shops in Jetty Road. We will see an escalation in costs, and we will see the owners of shops and their families having to come back on Saturday afternoon to man the shops because they will not be able to afford to pay penalty rates to staff to keep their doors open. Already, they are being ripped blind

in many cases by oppressive rents plus all the other Government charges imposed upon businesses.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr OSWALD: I know the Minister is anti-capitalist and is probably anti anyone out there in business who is struggling to try to make ends meet, but I remind the Minister and the Government that it is employers in shops such as those in Jetty Road, Glenelg, who are providing employment. Not only do they provide employment, they also provide a service so that people who live in the district can shop locally. Not everyone can travel in buses to Marion and the city. Many local people rely on local shopping centres such as that in Glenelg for their regular shopping and proprietors in Glenelg desperately try to provide that service.

They will not be able to provide the service if the Government goes ahead with what it is doing through the Industrial Commission. It is totally supporting this new increase in penalty rates for staff. Small business will not be able to survive. I would like members with strip shopping centres in their districts to realise that support for this type of legislation when coupled with massive increases in costs to employers and will result in their presiding over the demise of many small businesses in members' districts.

We have heard *ad nauseam* from the Government that it supports small business. It pays lip service to the Small Business Corporation and we have heard the Government wax long on its support for small businesses, but I submit to the House that the Government's only interest in small business is as a source of tax revenue and as a source of employment. I wonder how interested the Government is in small business. If the Government came out with some scheme whereby small business could employ labour at a realistic figure to trade through on Saturday afternoon, it probably would not get a great argument from me.

However, the Government comes out with this package as a trade-off for Saturday afternoon trading involving an automatic \$25 a week increase to shop assistants, plus the 3 per cent superannuation payment and penalty rates at time and a half. Is this how the Bannon Government supports small business through this claim? Certainly, the Government is not interested in small business. I could extend the argument to the Federal sphere and say that once again the Federal Labor Government is interested in small business only as a means of generating tax revenue. Let me cite the example of a large shopping complex which was established in a country town and its impact on the small shopping strip. Some years ago in Port Pirie a K-Mart centre was built some distance from the main street. It was allowed to open on Saturday afternoon. It was only a matter of months before that impact was felt in the main street and within a year shops were closing left, right and centre.

The similarity of that example and what is happening in Glenelg is something that cannot go without comment. If the Marion shopping centre is allowed to open, then the Glenelg shopping centre will suffer the same fate as in my example. I, for one, cannot support that. I have the greatest sympathy for the argument that has been put up by the retail traders in that strip shopping centre. I know that I am harping on Glenelg all the time, because I am familiar with it, but I am sure that the same argument would apply to the Brighton, Norwood Parade and Enfield shopping centres, and right across the board. The reality is that the shop traders do not want this legislation thrust upon them and it behoves us in this House, if we genuinely support small business, to say that we will not have a bar of this type of legislation.

If members opposite want this side of the House to support legislation so that the consumer can have access to shops on Saturday afternoon and so that it does become a convenience to them to shop, they must be realistic and do away with the union deal that the Government has done for this massive increase in costs to the employer, and either come up with the *status quo* in wages or reduce wages and get rid of penalty rates.

To bring this Bill into the House before the matter is concluded in the courts is not the way to go. In my view, the most sensible approach would have been to adjourn this debate and allow the matter to be resolved in the courts so that we know the rates that will apply. But the Government is pushing it through and it is just not on. One other type of business has approached me in my district—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr OSWALD: I will come back to that. I am not against the Liberal Party's retail policy. I have stated quite clearly and repeated *ad nauseam* in this debate that I would like to see, at some time, shopping available so that families can have access to extended shopping hours, but not under the conditions the Government is trying to foist upon us.

I have had approaches made to me by a major motor vehicle retailing outlet in my district. The proprietor of that business has said, 'Please—no way do we move down this track of opening on Saturday afternoon.' It will not increase his business. He has to bring in staff and open up sections of his premises. Business will not increase at all, but additional members of the family will have to be brought in. It is a classic example of how a family business ends up having to be run by the family because of additional costs. There are only a certain number of spending dollars to go round, and those dollars are quite conveniently being spent now with the existing shopping hours.

I do not know that I can add much more. I summarise by making it quite clear that at least 90 per cent of the business proprietors whom I represent do not want to go along with this legislation. It will be a disaster of great magnitude if the big stores, represented by the RTA, are allowed to open in my district or in its vicinity. I ask the House not to support this legislation if it includes the deal currently being worked out between the Labor Government and the union movement.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I want to deal only briefly with this legislation, but I feel that I should speak to it because I have received a considerable number of representations from my own electorate. There is no way in which I can support this legislation, but I would like to put on record that I am supportive of those extended shopping hours if it is the wish of the proprietors of those businesses to have the hours of business extended, but certainly not under the conditions laid down in this legislation. A number of small business people have contacted me, and not only small business people, most of my colleagues who have spoken on this side of the House have referred to representations received from small business, but I have also received some representation from larger retailers, and not necessarily those in my own electorate.

Most of them are opposed to the legislation because of the Victorian situation, to which I will refer a little later. I am of the opinion that, if a family business wants to open on Saturday afternoon, it should be able to do so. I do not believe that it should be made compulsory. I recognise some of the problems that are experienced, particularly in smaller towns where there is limited competition. I think that it is generally felt that if one chemist in a town opens then, for business purposes, there is some pressure on the others;

perhaps a chemist is not a good example. Let us take a small shop of some description. If one is open, then the opposition feels duty bound to open as well, because of business—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I realise that. I am not arguing against that. I recognise that that is a problem for those people who do not want to open. But that is part of the free market system, and that is a policy I support very strongly. The major problem—and I know that it has been said repeatedly on this side of the House—concerns the conditions under which people are forced to employ if they do not have family members to carry out the work for them. There is considerable concern in regard to penalty rates and so forth. Certainly, the examples that have been brought to my attention have made it very clear indeed that there is no way in which the small family business can operate if people are forced to pay the wages which are being put forward and considered by the unions.

I, too, support the concept of awaiting the findings of the court before this legislation is finalised. It makes sense to me that we delay this Bill. I am hoping that the Minister will explain to the House, when he replies to the second reading debate, the urgency of the situation. I cannot recognise that urgency. I do not believe that small business is looking for it. Some pressure may be coming from some of the larger retailers. Perhaps the unions want this legislation put through post haste: I do not know. But it certainly seems more sensible to delay the legislation, having introduced it, to enable more consultation, then resume debate on the Bill when the Parliament resumes next year.

I see no reason why there should be any panic in getting this legislation through, but it is quite obvious that the Government is in bed with the unions. The Government has listened to its union friends. I am sure that the Government has not listened to small business generally—but that is something that we have come to expect of this Government. It is very selective in the people to whom it wishes to listen and of whom it wants to take note. I would have thought that for proper government it would have been appropriate to consult everyone and not just make it a one-sided argument, but the Government obviously has listened to the unions, and that is where they are going to leave it.

The other concern of small business and business generally relates to the pressures resulting from WorkCover. I know that WorkCover has nothing to do with this Bill, but it is another burden forced onto people with employees. I could spend a lot of time on this subject, as well. A considerable number of small businesses in my electorate are very concerned about the ramifications of WorkCover. When the legislation was being debated, members on this side tried to inform the Minister of Labour (he was also responsible for that legislation) of some of the detrimental ramifications in the WorkCover legislation. However, the Minister refused to listen and instead listened to the selective views of a few people, particularly unionists. The Minister did not want to listen to those people who are now quite rightly voicing their many objections to the WorkCover legislation.

Another concern, which has been mentioned by a number of members, is the pressure being applied to small business by the larger stores, particularly chain stores, and we have seen glaring examples. For instance, enormous pressure has been applied to the business sector in the Mount Barker regional area in my electorate. Recently there was added pressure when interstate interests tried very hard to purchase a vast amount of land in the Mount Barker area to establish what was to have been one of the largest retail

stores outside the metropolitan area. Fortunately—and I say 'fortunately' on behalf of the small business people who were opposed to that development—it is now not to proceed. I can understand that attitude of small business people very clearly.

Earlier I mentioned the concerns that have been expressed about the situation in Victoria, and I will refer now to some of those concerns in detail. I have received representations from one family business in my electorate. It is not a large business but it does employ some people. These people are concerned about the introduction of Saturday afternoon trading and at the thought of being forced to operate under terms similar to those introduced in Victoria, and they describe those terms as an absolute disaster. They point out that Victorian shop assistants have been awarded (and I am not quite sure whether that is the right terminology in this situation) a flat increase of some \$25 per week whether or not they work Saturdays. They also receive a 3 per cent superannuation payment and time and a half for the time they work, and work on a voluntary basis only. Of course, during the year the reduction in working hours by some two hours a week has resulted in a 5.5 per cent effective increase, which is on top of the 3.3 per cent increase awarded in March.

Members of this family business have suggested to me that it would be very irresponsible if this Government proceeded down the track that Victoria is following. They suggest that if that were to occur they would experience an increase in wage costs. They suggest that as a result of the first tier award in March there would have been an increase of 3.3 per cent (a cumulative increase of 3.3 per cent); in relation to the reduction of two hours per week, the increase would have been 5.5 per cent (with a cumulative increase of 9 per cent); superannuation would have seen a 3 per cent increase (with a cumulative increase of 12.2 per cent); the \$25 payment for Saturdays would have been 9 per cent (with a cumulative increase of 22.3 per cent); and the \$6.50 first tier award in October would have resulted in a 1.5 per cent increase (with a cumulative increase of 24.2 per cent). So those increases would have cost this company over \$50 000 a year in extra wage costs alone and, on top of that, there is the WorkCover cost (which I mentioned earlier), which is causing considerable concern because it has effectively doubled workers compensation premiums for that business.

I could mention a number of examples with similar statistics, but I do not intend to take up any more of the time of the House. I urge the Minister to say why there is this haste in relation to this legislation. Why can we not wait for the findings of the court before we proceed further? I recommend that debate on this Bill be adjourned, that there be further consultation with small business particularly—consultation which is absolutely necessary—and that we should pick up the debate when the House resumes next year. By that time we would be much more aware of what is required in relation to legislative change in this State in this area. I oppose the Bill in its present form.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): The issue of extended trading hours seems harmless enough when we look at it very quickly. The Bill proposes to extend shop trading hours until 5 p.m. on Saturday afternoons in the central metropolitan area and in all country shopping districts. However, butcher shops are omitted. I think that all members would be aware of the concern that I have expressed over the years for butchers and the impact that I personally believe that late trading would have on butcher shops. There is no doubt that many people in the community feel that extended

trading hours for butcher shops would help to improve red meat sales. However, I have not seen any evidence of that occurring, nor is it likely to occur. Further, we have not seen any growth in the number of butcher shops. In fact, the reverse has occurred, and not only in my electorate: family butcher shops in many shopping centres have suffered to such an extent that many have closed down.

I refer also to the long debate on extended trading hours for service stations. If ever I have seen something occur that was predictable, it was the demise of a number of service station proprietors as a result of the impact of open trading hours. I was fortunate enough to serve on a select committee with the then Minister of Labour (Hon. Jack Wright) which visited Perth to look at the roster system used there for petrol stations. I was quick to advise the Minister that I felt that we should leave service station trading hours alone in South Australia, because I saw nothing in Perth to convince me that a roster system would work, let alone a need for an extension of trading hours. I thought that the predictable figure of something like one third of service stations closing down would be reached, certainly in the inner metropolitan area. I once had a good number of service stations in my electorate, but I now have to drive around to find one. Previously I would often pass several over a short distance.

So, in relation to extended trading hours it is a tragedy that it is not a viable proposition for a person who starts a business in this State to trade when and for as long as that person wants to. I think the Government has raised the issue of extended trading hours in South Australia at a time when we can least afford it. The Stock Exchange crash has yet to be truly felt throughout the whole community. Whilst only a very small percentage of people are involved in share dealing, the prediction is that by April-May next year the economy will take a turn for the worse. If that happens, everyone will feel the impact. It is a matter of whether the State and Federal Governments will consider mini-budgets because of a downturn and loss of business in certain areas.

I think extended trading hours is not warranted at present. I think the timing of the whole issue is a tragedy. It is a tragedy for those people who are employed in the industry and for those who conduct businesses in the retail industry, whether large organisations or supermarkets, the size of Woolworths, Coles, Myer, Target, K-Mart, Arrow or Foodland. Those large organisations will find it difficult enough to survive in the next six to seven months, let alone any longer, under extended trading hours. So, I can understand the difficulties that small business proprietors will face.

The return on the investment needed to establish a small business is, of course, very small. Coles, Myer and Woolworths, for example, are sometimes lucky to make 1 per cent on their turnover. The profit ratio of those businesses is extremely small indeed. There is no big money to be made in retailing and, of course, any adverse impact flows down to smaller businesses. Often, family businesses survive only because the children of the proprietor work for very little reward, although if they work for their parents they might one day inherit the business and what profits there are. That is how a lot of small businesses have been able to survive. In the true and strict sense of good industrial relations those types of arrangement are simply not on, but they have had to be made to enable small businesses to survive.

I was more than concerned at some of the comments made by the Minister when he introduced the Bill. His speech was very short indeed for legislation that will have such a wide impact on the community. The Minister said, in part (*Hansard* of 10 November 1987, page 1804):

... the Government is of course concerned with the interests and attitudes of the general public, particularly in their capacity as purchasers and consumers. In this regard, members would be aware of the many polls that have been published over recent times reflecting strong support for Saturday afternoon trading, particularly in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

When my Party was going to conduct a poll in the metropolitan area, I decided that I would do a letter poll in my own electorate. So, I wrote to a considerable number of constituents and posed a number of questions. The letter has only been in the hands of these constituents for two days but I have already received an almost 60 per cent response, so I think that is a pretty good effort. First, I asked:

Do you approve or disapprove of the idea of retail stores and supermarkets being open until 5 p.m. on Saturdays?

To that question 34.5 per cent indicated approval, 63.6 per cent disapproval, and 1.8 per cent indicated that they did not know. The second question I asked was:

If you have indicated that you disapprove in question 1, why? Some 26 per cent said that they were happy with existing arrangements; 21 per cent indicated that they were worried about small retailers; 11 per cent were worried about impact on sport and other activities; 24 per cent were worried about cost; some 15 per cent were concerned about shop assistants; and 3 per cent gave other reasons. The third question was:

Whether or not you support change, if shopping hours were extended to Saturday afternoons would you shop on Saturday afternoons?

Some 10 per cent of the respondents said that they would shop on Saturday afternoons regularly; 48 per cent said that they would do that occasionally; 35 per cent said that they would not do it at all; while 7 per cent did not know. My fourth question was:

Do you support the Bannon Government's support of the union's view that Saturday afternoon trading should depend on shop assistants receiving a pay rise of \$25 per week, irrespective of whether they work on Saturday afternoons, plus 50 per cent penalty rates for all of Saturday and 3 per cent superannuation?

To that question 11 per cent responded 'Yes', 80 per cent said 'No', while 9 per cent said that they did not know. So, 80 per cent of the respondents to my survey said that they were opposed to any increase in remuneration to shop assistants. In many cases they said that because they were afraid that those costs would be passed on to the consumer. There is no guarantee that that will not be the case, and so one can understand the public's attitude. Very little has been said on the matter of the weekly income of shop assistants. I am advised that an adult shop assistant receives a weekly wage of \$284.20 a week. The *Australian* of 2 September 1987 carried an article which stated:

Poverty line moves to \$274 a week—The average Australian family now needs an income of \$274 a week to stay above the poverty line, a national economic study has found. The study by Melbourne University's Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research found the income needed to support the basic needs of a single income family of two adults and two children rose by \$6.70 in the last quarter to \$274.30 a week. The poverty line ranged from \$195.40 per week for a childless couple to \$353.40 for a family with four children. Where that line is drawn is based on an income of \$62.70 a week established by the 1973 Henderson Poverty Inquiry.

Of course, that inquiry has always been taken as a benchmark and assumed to be an extremely reliable statistical base. So, the poverty line is \$274 a week while the adult wage for people employed in the retail trade is \$284.20 a week—so, shop assistants get \$10 a week above the poverty line.

The Hon. T.M. McRae: That is disgraceful.

Mr BECKER: Of course it is disgraceful, and that situation has been allowed to occur in probably one of the most buoyant economic times in the history of Australia, through

the 1970s and this part of the 1980s. However, the shop assistants have really missed out. No wonder we can see some retailers like David Jones reaping very large profits as a result of smart entrepreneurial efforts, while the large supermarkets make a very small percentage profit in terms of their turnover.

The Hon. T.M. McRae interjecting:

Mr BECKER: That is correct. As the member for Playford said, \$5 million is being spent on the ground floor entrance to David Jones. I have not been there. I have been told it is all mirrors, and if it is like John Martin's it would not be too good, but Coles Myers entrepreneurs intend to spend \$500 million on the redevelopment in Rundle Mall, so one wonders about the economics of those types of developments even though one can see the reasons for them.

The Hon. T.M. McRae interjecting:

Mr BECKER: I think that over the years the shop assistants have missed out and this has been allowed to go right through the industry. What this will do to prices is another question, but I still think that, in retailing, management has a long way to go before it can start raising prices. I think it is worth recording some of the comments that I have received from my constituents. One stated:

Seven-day supermarkets are available now if needed.

Of course, this whole issue of shop trading hours goes back to my electorate where a supermarket at West Beach traded seven days a week from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. The approval for it to do that was granted by the Hon. David McKee when he was the Minister of Labour, but that approval was quashed by Jack Wright when he became Minister.

It was a tragedy, because that small supermarket employed 14 permanent people and about 118 (certainly around the 110 mark) part-time people, mainly students who depended on the casual income to assist them through teachers college, as it was known in those days, and university studies. It benefited the community and it benefited a lot of people. When that business was forced to close, it had an economic impact on the area. What we now know as super delis or some smaller supermarkets have been established in the surrounding areas, and their services are satisfactory. Some of them discount their prices and maintain those prices during the weekends and after hours. The assumption that seven-day supermarkets are available if needed is correct.

Then there is the other area of acceptance. I find that if I need something during the weekend it is from the hardware store, and these stores have been allowed to trade, thanks basically to Dean Brown, who always found that he wanted a paint brush or something after hours. He had a great feeling for Harry's, if I remember rightly. Harry's certainly made a lot of money by trading over the weekend, and really that has been the lifeblood of their business, as it has been also for Epic Hardware and one or two others that are well known on my side of town. So one can be satisfied by things that are needed in an emergency. Continuing with the comments I received from my survey:

Disapprove—only adds to the cost cause inflation, then increase CPI.

Will create cost cutting by the big employer which means staff therefore added unemployment.

Cost for shopping is high enough now. Why add more, with higher wages and longer working hours? People can manage with what we have now.

Disapprove—totally unnecessary—media (basically the *News*) responsible for proposed extension.

I have no doubt that colossal trading by Harry's on Saturday afternoon and Sunday really upset Rundle Mall traders (except DJ's) and wanted a piece of the action. If the extension goes ahead, they as well as suburban shopping centres and small retailers will lose out.

Another constituent stated:

I may be prejudiced against longer hours but being retired I can shop any time. I also fear higher cost will eat more out of my pension, and as you are well aware as I am, pension payments are at the moment running nine months behind schedule.

In other words, the pension catch-up to the cost of living takes about nine months and I know that at the present time a lot of pensioners are feeling the pinch. Another person stated:

I feel frustrated that Adelaide should compete with everywhere else. The community spirit, the 'large country town' feeling is rapidly being lost.

Approve if additional labour is employed. The system would be good if more people were employed.

Obviously, somebody was looking for the opportunity to create more jobs. Another person stated:

To me (and immediate family members), extending hours is a push from the larger monopoly type stores—not Mr Average and smaller retailers. I am a shop assistant and I feel if there is extended hours—those who work these hours should apply for the union pay rise, etc.—not every shop assistant.

Saturday afternoon shopping would be a good idea during Christmas, but not always as it isn't necessary.

Another person stated:

My view on Question 4 is that, if \$25 rise were given, then prices would increase during normal hours to compensate for this, and this would mean that we the consumer would pay more.

A further comment was:

Disapproval—not necessary—will increase need. Saturday afternoons needed at home to keep home in order.

Another person stated:

Use—very occasionally.

This relates to whether he would shop on a regular basis if shops opened, and he further stated:

The consumer's dollar can only be spent once and extended hours will only increase retailers' overheads even if the proposed pay rise and penalty rates are not granted. With the increase in the number of shopping centres in latter years, the dollar is being spread even more thinly. An increase in shopping hours is going to cause this to become even thinner and will undoubtedly increase the number of bankruptcies of which we already have a record number.

That gives the general feeling of citizens and constituents in relation to shop trading hours in South Australia. Returning to the remark made by the Minister in his speech, the Government is concerned with—

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

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I oppose the Bill. I could support a Bill like this, because I believe in open trading. However, in our society we zone land and, when we do so, in some cases those who are rich virtually buy all of the town, as is the case in one village near my electorate, or they buy the main areas and then they exploit the community, not by working, but by their capital investment, and they charge high rents for properties. That places the operators in the position of having to charge higher prices, except those operators who have the financial clout to fight for a more moderate rent and to use corporate advertising, and I will come to that later.

I do not suppose that anybody here has worked much harder in the field of competition than I worked in my earlier years. I know what the big boys can do to the small boys. Further, I know how little mercy they have, and I know they argue that, if we have a free market operation, one has to suffer it. I believe that there have to be some scuples also. There is a difference between free market and private enterprise. The corporate power has become so powerful now that, in some cases, we have almost a monopolistic society which I feel is just as offensive as a communist

society. We have not quite reached that stage, but that is the way we are going.

If we talk about opening shops on Saturday afternoons, some individuals will have signed contracts that bind them to open when the main store opens. If they conduct a pharmacy, for example, and then they are forced to open on Saturday afternoon because the main operator does (and also they are forced to have a pharmacist on the premises), it means that in a small individual operated business the person is bound to work that extra half day or to pay a person a higher rate than is likely to be recouped from the business. That was the experience in recent times when Saturday afternoon trading was allowed.

It is easy for us to say that many people want Saturday afternoon trading. Some of us might want to shop at 2 o'clock in the morning. However, we have established a society where most things that we want to buy for normal living such as foodstuffs are available until about 9 p.m. most nights of the week and on Saturday afternoon and Sunday through small convenience stores and delicatessens. Most people have refrigerators and deep freezers and, with modern packaging methods, it means that people can buy foodstuffs in advance.

We have a society that is educated and supposedly people are able to manage a home and buy enough to see them through for a week in nearly any circumstance. Indeed, it is only because motor cars are convenient that people have become lazy minded and do not plan their shopping that they shop so frequently. I can remember my mother boarding nine men and looking after five children shopping locally once a week; she had no refrigerator or deep freeze, and no-one in her charge died, nor was there any more illness than we get today. There were no complaints.

What about people playing pennant sport? Immediately they are wiped out of that sport if we open up on Saturday afternoons and if they want to work as a shop assistant. It is not just selling food or clothes, because this goes through the whole employment spectrum. People with great skills who are forced or who wish to work in those fields at higher levels than shop assistants would have to attend work and would be denied a sporting opportunity, which is something that people in Australia are so proud of.

At the same time the Government comes out with a report, which I believe reflects the hypocrisy of business, government and people who say they want to open on Saturday afternoons. The Government has a report claiming that our society has greater consumer debt than we have had for a long time, yet we have many people in poverty situations who cannot manage their affairs and who have too much borrowed money, yet we are opening shops so that they can buy more. People in the community will be conned by smart advertising to buy more. I do not blame or condemn the advertisers—it is smart advertising. It is the same as politicians trying to hold seats and win government through the same devices.

Where is the standard of thinking, the fairness, the commonsense when the Parliament or the Government says, 'We are concerned because too many people are getting into debt, but we want to open up the shops because retailers tell us that people can or will buy more'. The bigger shopkeepers, not the smaller ones, tell us that. They say that they will sell more and increase the sales volume in this State, yet our society is already borrowing too much. What about the hypocrisy there?

The big operators are not concerned about small business, nor is this Parliament, particularly the ALP, if it passes such legislation. Let me give an example. There was much praise for the Minister of Labour when he extended petrol

retailing hours. What happens now? On average petrol increased by 5c immediately hours were extended. Has petrol come down in price? Even when it is discounted it still stays 5c or more higher than the old price. Where is the benefit to society in that change, other than in convenience? Where was the convenience if people could not buy petrol a day in advance, yet there were other places such as coin operated machines where petrol could be obtained.

The Government went further than that and sent out letters to people operating company owned service stations saying that the Commonwealth agreement for the three lots of three-year terms that fixed the contracts so that they could not bleed the operators expires in 1989. They have been told, 'You will have to come up with the franchise money or else.' In one case in my area that involved \$16 000. The principal, the petrol company, says to the operator, 'You have done a great job and increased the custom from one-third of what it is now. You have increased it by 200 per cent and now we are charging you \$16 000 for the franchise if you want to extend the lease beyond 1989.' Great!

The brewery practised the same thing. I have not looked at that recently; perhaps it still does. I am a private enterprise person, yet I have had to go through all of that fight and I know what it is like. I turn now to the corporate advertising area where the big operators in food (if not in other areas) approach manufacturers or processors and say, 'We will take X number of article X from you, but you will send us a cheque every three months for the full page advertisements whenever your item appears. You will pay for that.'

In other words, the manufacturer or the processor pays the advertising of the big business operator. Indeed, the manufacturer even sets up the store display; the big operator does not pay that cost. What happens to the little operator? He does not get as good a price, he has to pay his own advertising and he has to set up his own retail display and outlet. So, if we say in society that that is fair and just, at the same time we are trying to extend shopping hours on Saturday afternoon and small operators will be virtually forced to work themselves or with one employee to try to compete. Yet we know that they cannot compete; we know that they are gone; we know that they can go and work for the big stores for \$285 or \$300 a week plus some overtime. That is the rate. I do not condemn that either.

We know that people can do that, but that is not what our society is about. We might as well have all big operators and let the Government own it. There is no difference in that. It is exactly the same process, because the opportunity for an individual to use his own entrepreneurial skills is destroyed because the market place is no longer a fair place in which to compete.

I know that the situation will not change, because Parliamentarians generally have not got the intestinal fortitude to take up such a challenge, and the situation will never change until that occurs. What can we not buy in the time available to us that is important for the home? People can buy food and there is no-one that I know of who regularly works five days a week, Thursday night, Friday night and Saturday morning who does not have time to shop in that period. Further, some food items and other everyday needs are available from the small corner store and so on. We can talk about some areas of furniture or specialty clothing where a couple—if there are such things nowadays—go out shopping together, but they have the Saturday morning, the Friday night or the Thursday night opportunity the same as other people. That is the very area in which we do not need to encourage people to spend more money.

The food area is one where, in the main, no credit is given. One has to pay when one comes out of the supermarket. The poor old corner store might give a bit of credit at times because sometimes, when people spend all their cash and cannot get credit at the supermarket, the convenience store really becomes the convenience store, and people ask whether they can tie their dog up there for a couple of weeks and owe a bit to the storekeeper. Unfortunately, storekeepers who do that usually find that those people do not come back for a while until they get their dogs tied up all over the town and go back to the store which has the cheapest dog tied up. Some people in the furniture trade and similar areas say that it will increase trade or give people a greater opportunity to select goods. I believe that there is enough opportunity now. How often do we buy furniture? We have four weeks a year annual leave and we get six days or more a year sick leave, and much of that time is taken in normal work time when people can go and buy major items if they want to plan their lives.

We in the Government sector also have flexitime, which in some cases is more flexible than in others. It is flexible enough so that people can have a day off, and a significant percentage of our society is in that section of the work force. So why do those people need Saturday afternoon trading? There has been talk of tourists wanting to shop. Do tourists come in on Friday night and fly out on Monday morning? How often does that happen, and what are they looking to buy? Are they looking to buy a caravan, a boat or a furniture suite?

My colleague alongside me mentioned some section of the human species—I will not mention that, because that would be improper. What does a tourist come to look at? Perhaps in the area of jewellery there might be some buying, although we are horribly expensive in that field. People might look at our local opal, but that can be purchased outside normal hours in certain areas. I do not say that it is available in the inner city. In the main, there are no items that a tourist cannot buy on the weekend. Tourists will not buy a car, lounge suite or dining suite or a whole wardrobe of clothes. Clothes are dearer here than in many other parts of the world. If tourists got drowned under a sprinkler, fell into the Torrens on a night walk, or something, they might want to replace some clothes, but otherwise what do they want to buy? All the tourist type shops are open anyway, so that argument does not hold water, and we know that.

Do we believe that individuals should have the right to open when they like? If we believe that, then we have to cancel most of the contracts which force people to open when the main stores want to open. Has anyone in the Government got the courage to stand up and say 'Yes, we'll do that'? Of course they have not. They would not make them illegal as from 1990: they would not have the courage to do it. We know that that is one of the dangers for many small operators; they be forced to operate when there is no business around. If we drag a lot of people away from our sporting events—and I am talking now of the observers,

those who pay to attend—to go shopping on Saturday afternoon, if the argument is valid that a lot of people will go shopping (and I say that it is not valid), how much more will we knock back sporting events when we have whacked them with WorkCover which has virtually destroyed them. And it will not open on Saturday afternoon so that people can go along and talk about their problems.

What will happen to those groups in the sporting field, in the racing game, if you like? I am not a great patron of racing, and it does not thrill me that much, but what happens to them when they are already struggling? Let us come back to sheer economics. If we open for more hours, it costs more money. If it costs more money for groups to make the same amount of profit, they have to sell more goods. They use more electricity and everything. If they are arguing (as they are) that they will sell more goods, where does the Government stand in relation to the debt of the people of this State and the concern about people being over committed? I come back to the subject of furniture. Furniture is one of the fields in which people use credit cards and borrow money. Is that one of the danger fields? Is the motor car area one of the danger fields? Is the caravan area one of the danger fields? We all know in our hearts that they are. We are all saying that, on the one hand, we are concerned about debt and about people getting too far into debt but, on the other hand, we are giving the opportunity to those who can advertise to encourage people to spend more. That is a double standard if ever there was one.

I would like to sit down with any person, male or female, who says that in their lifestyle it is impossible to plan to shop during the hours that are now available. There are very few who could not do it if they organised themselves and wanted to do it that way. So many people will have their lifestyles destroyed—shop assistants, those associated with them, their families and their kids—if we force them to work Saturday afternoons. Let us say that we have a good system and we will stick to it.

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

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK secured the adjournment of the debate.

EXPIATION OF OFFENCES BILL

The Legislative Council intimated that it did not insist on its amendment No.3 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed and had agreed to the alternative amendment made by the House of Assembly without any amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.8 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 26 November at 11 a.m.