

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 October 1988

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Acts Interpretation Act Amendment (No. 3),
Advances to Settlers Act Amendment,
Appropriation,
Criminal Injuries Compensation Act Amendment,
Electrical Products,
Irrigation Act Amendment,
Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment (No. 2);
Ombudsman Act Amendment,
Racing Act Amendment,
Radiation Protection and Control Act Amendment,
Rural Advances Guarantee Act Amendment.

DEATHS OF MR J.R. RYAN AND SIR LYELL
McEWIN

The **Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier)**: I move:

That this House express its regret at the recent deaths, of Mr J.R. Ryan, former member and Speaker of the House, and the Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin, a former member and President of the Legislative Council and Minister of the Crown, and place on record its appreciation of their meritorious service; and as a mark of respect to their memory the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

In the short time since the House last sat, two former members of the South Australian Parliament have died. First, on 12 September 1988, John Richard Ryan, known as Paddy Ryan to all and sundry, who was a member of this Assembly for 16 years, died at the age of 77 years. Paddy Ryan was born and raised in the district which he later represented in the State Parliament. In fact, apart from five years service in the Australian Army during the Second World War, he lived and worked in that district all his life.

Paddy Ryan entered Parliament in 1959 as member for Port Adelaide and, before winning that seat, was a licensed customs and shipping agent and a waterside worker. His activity in his union, the Waterside Workers Federation, was so comprehensive that, before 1959, he held or acted in every official position in that union, including South Australian representative on the Federal Executive and delegate to the Australian Council of Trade Unions Congress. In 1959-60, the period during which he was first elected to Parliament, he also was State President of the Australian Labor Party.

He represented the Port Adelaide electorate from 1959 to 1970 and, following the 1970 electoral redistribution, was member for Price, the district that was based on Port Adelaide, from 1970 until 1975, when he retired. Paddy Ryan was certainly one who brought to this House a strong background of concern about issues concerning people in the workplace and the community. He was involved in many issues, such as mechanisation and automation, and their impact on employment and industry. Matters concerning the Harbors Board and wharf based industries were also a particular interest of his.

He was a member of the Public Works Standing Committee from 1965 until 1971, and he was Chairman of

Committees until June 1973, when he was elected as Speaker of the House of Assembly, a position he held until his retirement in 1975. Paddy Ryan was a quiet man. He took his responsibilities to his family, his union members and his constituents very seriously indeed. In his retirement he kept active links with Parliament through the Ex-members' Association, in relation to which he played a major role in forming. He was always present at the monthly meeting that that group held. He died last month after a short illness. To his widow, Joyce, and his two children, Diane and Graham, I extend sincere condolences on behalf of the people of South Australia.

Secondly, within two weeks of the death of a former Speaker of this House, we were saddened to hear of the death of a former President of the other place. Sir Lyell McEwin presided over the Legislative Council from 1967 until 1975. His parliamentary career was extraordinary, for both its length and the range of activities in which Sir Lyell was involved. He came to Parliament following a by-election in October 1934, retiring more than 40 years later at the grand age of 78.

The son of a farming and grazing family, Sir Lyell was educated at a one teacher school at Hart and later at Prince Alfred College. Rather than going on to any higher education, he returned to the farm and involved himself very actively in agricultural related activities, firstly, in his local community, and then at State level. In 1930 Sir Lyell became a member of the State Advisory Board of Agriculture, and in 1935 its chairman. In 1934 he was producers' representative for South Australia on the Federal Advisory Committee for Export Mutton and Beef—prior to the appointment of the Australian Meat Board.

Sir Lyell McEwin entered Parliament in 1934 and he maintained throughout his parliamentary career a strong interest and involvement in primary industry. However, within five years of his election to the Legislative Council, on the coming into office of the Playford Government, Sir Lyell became Minister of Health, Minister of Mines and Chief Secretary. He held those portfolios continuously for over 25 years, a record of service in this State. The monuments to his service in all of the Playford Governments are probably those best known in the health area: Lyell McEwin Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and McEwin Building at the Royal Adelaide are all testimonies to the work that Sir Lyell did during his record term as Minister of Health, aside from those other roles that he played as Chief Secretary and Minister of Mines, during a period of great activity and development.

In 1954, Sir Lyell McEwin was knighted. As well as his parliamentary and ministerial duties, he continued active involvement with the State Rifle Association. In fact, in the 1920s he was a member of the State rifle team and was Chairman of the association over a long period of time. He was involved in the Presbyterian Church, the Freemason Lodge, and Sir Lyell is particularly well remembered as being, in his later years, an active member of the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia.

Sir Lyell's involvement with the Scottish community of South Australia, through the Adelaide Highland Games, the Scots Cronies Club and various other groups was certainly a very distinguishing mark of someone whose name constantly conveyed, of course, his ethnic origin. So, it was not just as a member of Parliament or as a Minister of the Crown but indeed as a citizen of South Australia and a member of the community that Sir Lyell served this State.

While thinking of Sir Lyell's career, one must draw attention, in particular, to the period during which he was President of the Legislative Council. In six of the eight years

that he presided over that Chamber (which had a very large Liberal Party majority), the Labor Party had a majority in the House of Assembly and was the Government of South Australia. However, Sir Lyell displayed in his role as President an ability to be totally even-handed, fair and, indeed, ensured by his demeanour that the Government of South Australia was able to continue in a proper, constructive and uninterrupted way. It is a great tribute to the skills which Sir Lyell developed over his many years as an active and professional politician.

I think that Sir Lyell's passing is certainly well worthy of note in this Parliament. It marks the severing of the last link with the Playford years and that group of Playford Ministers who came to office some 50 years ago and served for a long period. There may be Playford Ministers still alive, but Sir Lyell had a very particular place. I have referred to his range of activities and interests. It is obviously those which ensured that he lived to such an esteemed age and remained active to the end. To his daughter Cynthia, his four sons, Alex, Ken, Roland and Graeme and their families I offer sincere condolences on behalf of my Government, my Party and the people of South Australia.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to support the Premier's motion. I did not know Paddy Ryan, but my colleagues who did would endorse the comments the Premier has just made about him. He gave valuable service to the community in which he was born and brought up; to his nation, through army service; and to this House from 1959 to 1975. He owed the name 'Paddy' to his father, a well known Port Adelaide identity. He was Port Adelaide through and through all his life, and proud of it. I am sure that he was with his favourite team in spirit during their win at Football Park last Saturday.

I am told that, always the joker, Paddy's remark to the *Advertiser* when explaining his decision not to wear the Speaker's wig, breeches, silk stockings and buckled shoes was typical of the man. He asked the journalist, 'Who do you think I am—Al Grassby?' Paddy Ryan will be fondly remembered by my side of politics as a Chairman of Committees and then Speaker who was a fair but firm upholder of Standing Orders. We join the Premier in expressing our condolences at his passing to his widow, his children and his grandchildren.

This afternoon, we also pay a final tribute to the man who remains the third longest serving member of this Parliament. Alexander Lyell McEwin had a record of ministerial as well as parliamentary service which is unlikely to be surpassed. For 26 years he served in the Ministries of Sir Thomas Playford. He was the last surviving member of the first Playford Ministry. His initial ministerial appointment, in fact, came as a surprise. Playford became Premier in November 1938. Early the following year, the Chief Secretary, Sir George Ritchie, had to resign from the Ministry after a serious accident. Sir Lyell explained it in the following terms:

The Premier sent for me one wet day. The family was visiting Parliament House and I was home alone as a farmer, cook, dairy boy and everything combined. The next day I went to the city and the Premier invited me to accept the Chief Secretary's portfolio. A little stunned, I asked how long I had to consider. His prompt answer was 10 minutes. He had to report back to Cabinet at 11 o'clock. The Premier reported to Cabinet before I could report to my wife. I had better not disclose what she said.

And so began a partnership in government which was to last for a quarter of a century. Playford and McEwin were similar in many respects. Both were strong men physically. Both had left school at an early age. Both went on to succeed with only a smattering of formal education. Both created service records for their respective portfolios which endure

today. As Mines Minister, Sir Lyell McEwin was responsible for the exploration of coal at Leigh Creek which resulted in the eventual formation of the Electricity Trust. He steered the necessary legislation through the Legislative Council despite considerable opposition from within his own Party.

He was also responsible for pioneering legislation to encourage petroleum exploration. Later, he guided the opening up of the Radium Hill uranium mine and the establishment of the processing plant at Port Pirie. In health, the memorials to his service endure today—the hospital named after him at Elizabeth, the Queen Elizabeth, extensions to the Royal Adelaide and countless country hospitals. This record is all the more remarkable when it is recognised that he had never held Parliamentary aspirations before being elected. Indeed, the day he was sworn into the Legislative Council in 1934 was the first time he had ever entered a House of Parliament.

He had accepted nomination to the Legislative Council after four years of economic depression on the land. But his decision to take up a parliamentary career was not motivated by personal ambition. As he explained in an interview reported in the *News* of 8 August 1960:

Perhaps it had something to do with my parental upbringing—my brothers could support this—for we were continually reminded in our youth of our duty towards responsible citizenship and our obligation to contribute something which might leave this world the better for our having lived in it. In other words—service.

Indeed, Sir Lyell left a significant contribution towards a better way of life for many sections of the South Australian community. It is certainly a fitting epitaph to the life and work of Sir Lyell McEwin. Even after his parliamentary service of 40 years had been completed, he continued community service and involvement with those organisations and community groups with which he had contact in his parliamentary career. Indeed, in the last few years Sir Lyell was still visiting country shows and I remember the Port Pirie BHAS smelter picnic. There is no doubt that people from all political backgrounds respected Sir Lyell because of his performance and service to the community of South Australia. He was a proud man who had every right to be proud of the contribution that he made to the South Australian community. On behalf of the Liberal Party I am proud to stand in this place and acknowledge his service, for we in the Liberal Party were proud to have him as a member of the Party serving in this Parliament. To his children I express, on behalf of the Party he represented in this Parliament for more than 40 years, our condolences at his passing.

Mr De LAINE (Price): Mr Speaker, as the member for Price, I would like to place on record my sadness at the passing of the former member for Price, the Hon. Jack Ryan, who was known affectionately to everyone as 'Paddy'. Before entering Parliament, Paddy was a waterside worker and he was extremely proud of it. He was also a life member of the Waterside Workers Federation. He was a gentleman who was well respected by all people who knew him. I could say many things about Paddy but the Premier has adequately covered his many achievements. I extend my sincere condolences to Paddy's widow, Joyce, his daughter Diane and his son Graham and their families.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I rise to support the motion now before the Chair. I do so in relation to two former Parliamentary colleagues in contradistinction to two former members of Parliament. Since I have been in this House there have been a number of occasions when condolence motions have been passed in relation to members with whom one has served, but never can I recall an

occasion with respect to two persons with whom one has served over a long period where both those people have risen to the rank of Presiding Officer in their respective Houses.

Jack 'Paddy' Ryan was an inspiration to many people not only in this House but also beyond it. As a newcomer to the House in 1970 I recall the assistance that he gave to new members to better understand the parliamentary system specifically after the death of the late Sammy Lawn, when he became the Chairman of Committees, and then subsequently as Speaker. I take slight issue with the Premier when he suggested that Paddy was a quiet man. If anyone had been with Paddy on a bowling green or in a number of other places they would have recognised that—

The Hon. T. Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes, his voice boomed forward in this place also. Paddy maintained a very keen interest in the parliamentary system via his continued membership, as the Premier indicated, of the past members' group. He was also an active member of the Parliamentary Bowling Club, not only playing as a sitting member of Parliament but subsequently taking a vital role in the pioneer group which has attached itself to the interstate parliamentary carnival.

In relation to Sir Lyell, I speak not only as a person who was a former colleague in the parliamentary system but also as a person who knew him for some 54 years, having lived in the same street at Reade Park from the time Sir Lyell moved down and having grown up with his five children. Many were the times when we shared various social and other occasions, and played sport together. My involvement with the McEwin family was far greater than that directly associated with the parliamentary scene.

Sir Lyell was given fitting tribute by speakers in the debate this afternoon and during the course of the funeral service last Wednesday. Indeed, the *Advertiser* contained a frank overview of the contribution that Sir Lyell had made. If one wants further proof of the identity of Sir Lyell and the part he has played, Stewart Cockburn's book *The Patriarchs* provides that commentary. We talk of Sir Lyell and about the work he undertook back through the years with some reverence. Quite unlike a number of people who fulfil their parliamentary role and quietly move out, Sir Lyell is one person who maintained his very keen interest with those organisations that he had brought into being. As recently as last year he attended the Lyell McEwin Health Service annual general meeting, as was his normal procedure; indeed, Sir Lyell attended the fete. He also maintained his interest in the Police Association with which he had had contact as Chief Secretary over a long period of time and was a regular member at its monthly meetings. Sir Lyell is better known in many circles as 'The Chief', and I pay tribute to 'The Chief' on this occasion.

The SPEAKER: I thank members for their tributes to our two departed colleagues, tributes which leave very little more to be said. I will, however, mention that ex-Speaker Ryan as a retired member of Parliament occasionally imparted to me some very interesting advice on dealing with the House on difficult occasions, advice which I prefer not to reveal to members. I will ensure that the *Hansard* report of members' tributes is conveyed to the relatives of our two former colleagues. I ask members to stand in their places for the passage of the resolution in the usual way.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.25 to 2.35 p.m.]

PETITION: HOUSING TRUST RENTALS

A petition signed by 133 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to limit South Australian Housing Trust rental increases to once a year, in line with inflation, and not to consider the family allowance supplement and war veterans disability allowances as income was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

PETITION: HENLEY BEACH AND FULHAM SCHOOLS

A petition signed by 156 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Minister of Education to reverse the decision to amalgamate Fulham Primary School and Henley Beach Primary School was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

PETITION: BLACKWOOD POLICE STATION

A petition signed by 25 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to open the Blackwood police station for longer periods and increase police surveillance in the Blackwood area was presented by Mr S. G. Evans.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that written answers to the following questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos. 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 21, 26, 28, 33, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50 and 51; and I direct that the following answer to a question without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

COMMERCIAL TENANCIES LEGISLATION

In reply to Mr GROOM (Hartley) 18 August.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The Department of Public and Consumer Affairs is presently reviewing the commercial tenancies legislation. It is expected that the review will be completed by 31 October 1988 and that shortly after appropriate consultations will take place with interested parties.

OMBUDSMAN REPORT

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Ombudsman relating to:

Proclamation made pursuant to section 50 of the Planning Act 1982;

The lease of Department of Marine and Harbors land at Birkenhead.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—

Government Management Board—Report, 1987-88.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet—Report, 1987-88.

- By the Treasurer (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—
Parliamentary Superannuation Fund—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister for the Arts (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—
History Trust of South Australia—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Chief Secretary (Hon. D.J. Hopgood)—
Daylight Saving Act 1971—Regulations—Summer Time.
- By the Minister of Emergency Services (Hon. D.J. Hopgood)—
South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service—Report, 1987-88.
South Australian State Emergency Service—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of State Development and Technology (Hon. L.M.F. Arnold)—
Small Business Corporation of South Australia—Report, 1987-88.
Technology Park Adelaide Corporation—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Employment and Further Education (Hon. L.M.F. Arnold)—
Industrial and Commercial Training Commission—Report, 1986-87.
Office of Tertiary Education—Report, 1987-88.
Technical and Further Education Act, 1976—Regulations—College Councils.
- By the Minister of Transport (Hon. G.F. Keneally)—
Highways Department—Report, 1987-88.
West Beach Trust—Report, 1987-88.
Public Parks Act—Disposal of Land, Brickworks Museum Reserve, Beverley.
Highways Department—Approvals to Lease Departmental Property, 1987-88.
Building Act 1971—Regulations—Fees.
Dog Control Act 1979—Regulations—Crystal Brook-Redhill Area.
Corporation By-laws—
Mount Gambier—No. 5—Council Land.
Salisbury—No. 7—Poultry.
District Council By-laws—
Berri—
No. 4—Swimming Centres.
No. 6—Bees.
No. 8—Dogs.
Lower Eyre Peninsula—
No. 3—Camping Reserves.
No. 5—Foreshore.
No. 7—Bees.
No. 8—Repeal and Renumbering of By-laws.
- By the Minister of Education (Hon. G.J. Crafter)—
Equal Opportunity Act 1984—Equal Opportunity Tribunal—Rules—Proceedings.
Independent Order of Odd Fellows of South Australia Friendly Society—Variation of General Laws.
Acts Republication Act 1967—Schedule of Alterations made by the Commissioner of Statute Revision—
Barley Marketing Act 1947.
Beverage Container Act 1975.
Land Agents, Brokers and Valuers Act 1973—Regulations—Small Business Exemption Extension.
Residential Tenancies Act 1978—Regulations—Country Security Bonds.
Trade Standards Act 1979—Regulations—Leather Goods, Textile Products.
Trustee Act 1936—Regulations—Australian Guarantee Corporation Limited.
Attorney-General's Department—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Housing and Construction (Hon. T.H. Hemmings)—
Architects Board of South Australia—Report, 1987.
Housing Agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the States and the Northern Territory.
- By the Minister of Health (Hon. F.T. Blevins)—
Reports of the Administration of the Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982—1985-86, 1986-87.

- Committee Appointed to Examine and Report on Abortions Notified in South Australia—Report, 1987.
Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982—Regulations—Ionizing Radiation.
- By the Minister of Health, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. M.K. Mayes)—
Dried Fruits Board of South Australia—Report for Year Ended 29 February 1988.
Metropolitan Milk Board—Report, 1987-88.
Apiaries Act 1931—Regulations—Prescribed Diseases and Compensation.
Branding of Pigs Act 1964—Regulations—Brands, Register and Fees.
Cattle Compensation Act 1938—Regulations—Compensation.
Swine Compensation Act 1936—Regulations—Compensation.
- By the Minister of Health, on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries (Hon. M.K. Mayes)—
Fisheries Act 1982—Regulations—Coorong and Mullettway Fisheries (Amendment).
- By the Minister of Health, on behalf of the Minister of Recreation and Sport (Hon. M.K. Mayes)—
Greyhound Racing Control Board—Report, 1987-88.
Raccourses Development Board—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Lands (Hon. S.M. Lenehan)—
Department of Lands—Report, 1987-88.
Geographical Names Board—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Mines and Energy (Hon. J.H.C. Klunder)—
Pipelines Authority of South Australia—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Labour (Hon. R.J. Gregory)—
Industrial Court and Commission of S.A.—Report, 1987-88.
Promotion and Grievance Appeals Tribunal—Report, 1987-88.
- By the Minister of Marine (Hon. R.J. Gregory)—
Harbors Act 1936—Regulations—
Tonnage Rates.
Port Pirie Boat Haven—Mooring Fees.
Robe Boat Haven—Mooring Fees.
Port MacDonnell Boat Haven—Mooring Fees.
North Arm Fishing Haven—Mooring Fees.
Marine Act 1936—Regulations—Survey Fees.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The **SPEAKER** laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

- Port Lincoln Prison Alterations (final report),
 - Woolpunda Groundwater Interception Scheme (final report),
 - Port Adelaide Tanker Berths—Fire Fighting Facilities at 'M' Berth.
- Ordered that reports be printed.

QUESTION TIME

The **SPEAKER**: Before calling on questions, I advise that any questions that would otherwise be directed to the honourable Minister of Agriculture will be taken by the honourable Minister of Health.

NATIONAL CRIME AUTHORITY

Mr **OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition)**: Can the Minister of Emergency Services say whether, following its decision

to seek the establishment of a National Crime Authority office in Adelaide, the Government no longer intends to set up an anti-corruption unit as announced by the Minister in his statement to the House of 18 August? Further, because the inter-governmental committee on the NCA will not consider this request until its November meeting, making it unlikely that the office, if approved, will open before the new year, who is in the meantime investigating the matters and allegations identified in the recent NCA report as requiring further investigation in South Australia? Is the Minister concerned that this further delay in implementing the Government's anti-corruption strategy will allow suspects to cover their tracks?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: That will depend entirely on the NCA. It may well be necessary for there to be some unit along the lines recommended by the NCA in its report irrespective of whether the NCA sets up here, and that work is proceeding.

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader of the Opposition has asked his question and he does not have the right to ask any sort of supplementary question by way of interjection. The honourable Deputy Premier.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am trying to take various parts of the Leader's question, one by one.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader is out of order.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The first question that was asked of me was whether it would be necessary to set up an independent unit, along the lines recommended by the National Crime Authority, if in fact the NCA decided to set up here, anyway. I said that that would depend on advice that is tendered to us by the NCA as a result of discussions which will continue. The second question that the honourable member asked was whether the Government was concerned about the fact that we may not get a definite decision from the NCA until the date that he indicated. The answer is that, yes, we do have some concern about that. That is why we are not just sitting back on our behinds and doing nothing and waiting for Senator Tate to respond. In fact, we are continuing with the work in relation to the independent unit. We will also continue with the work in relation to the third part of the honourable member's question, relating to the further investigations that were suggested to us in the NCA report.

I remind the House of the matter to which I referred in the House several weeks ago, when I released details of chapter 12 of the National Crime Authority report, which recommended that a unit, along the lines that it has suggested, be set up, and specifically suggested that it was not necessary to look to a Royal Commission or something like that. Members would also be aware that it was silent on any suggestion about the NCA setting up in this State. People have said, 'What about the other 11 chapters?' The other 11 chapters canvassed, in part, the history of the granting of the reference for the NCA to be in this State, and then recounted a number of investigations that had been carried through to a certain point and suggested that these matters should be referred to the Commissioner of Police in this State for further investigation.

That comes to the third part of the honourable member's question about what is happening in relation to these various matters, whatever they might be. I can give the Leader, the Parliament and the people of South Australia an assurance that these matters are being further investigated, not simply by the police themselves but with further discussions being undertaken between the South Australian Police

Department and the National Crime Authority. I have had the Commissioner's deputy in my office as recently as last Friday, when he gave me an up-to-date report on the matters in relation to those inquiries which are proceeding. I have explained in the past—and I think people can understand this—why it is not possible to canvass details of those inquiries—for the very reason that the honourable member has indicated, namely, that we do not want people to be covering their tracks in relation to various matters—if in fact there are any tracks to be covered. I give the Parliament an assurance that the matter of the independent unit is still being pursued, notwithstanding our ambitions to have the NCA set up here. Secondly, the specific further allegations which were placed before the Commissioner are being followed through with the utmost vigour.

OPERATION NOAH

Mr RANN (Briggs): Will the Minister of Emergency Services say whether the Government supports a continuing role for Operation Noah, the anti-drug phone-in? What success has Noah achieved since its inception in November 1985? Operation Noah has attracted considerable public attention and support as part of the campaign by the Government and the police to involve the public in combating those who seek to peddle death to our young people. There has been speculation that Operation Noah might be discontinued following the successful prosecution and gaoling of former Drug Squad Chief, Barry Moyse.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: National Operation Noah will be conducted on Tuesday 7 February 1989 between the hours of 0900 and 2100. National coordination of the operation will be undertaken by the Australian Federal Police in Canberra, and the South Australian segment of the operation will be coordinated from central police headquarters, Angus Street. The liaison officer will be the officer-in-charge of the Drug Squad, Detective Chief Inspector D.F.C. Easom. The honourable member also asked me about the success of previous Operations Noah. I have the final collation of the figures (as at 28 February 1988) for the 1987 Operation Noah. I am sure that members will be interested in those figures.

Australia-wide there was a total of 6 527 phone calls resulting in 343 offenders for 747 charges; in South Australia there was a total of 603 phone calls resulting in 105 offenders for 146 charges. These charges varied from using cannabis to supplying heroin. The operation was obviously very important and successful, not only as an intelligence gathering operation but also for the results obtained. The last part of the honourable member's question related to the fact that a person who had been very actively involved in Operation Noah is now languishing at Her Majesty's pleasure. I want to give people an absolute assurance that, as a result of personnel changes and operational changes in the Drug Squad, there should be no problem at all with ensuring confidentiality or anything else with respect to supplying information to the police as part of Operation Noah. It would be most unfortunate if people were to feel in any way inhibited because of the successful prosecution of a particular officer. I urge everyone to cooperate to the fullest in what is, after all, part of a national campaign.

POLICE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Has the Premier or any other Minister dis-

cussed with a Federal Minister, Mr Duncan, the serious allegations relating to the South Australian Police Force which Mr Duncan made last Thursday, particularly the following. The Premier seems amused. I quote Mr Duncan's words as follows:

There are still elements in the Police Force in South Australia that are corrupt . . . Some people in the South Australian Police Force . . . have been prepared to turn a blind eye to what's been going on rather than in any way bring odium to the good name of the Police Force . . . It's got about 10, 20, 30 or so police officers who . . . are not suitable people to continue to be in the Police Force.

If so, has Mr Duncan provided evidence to justify those allegations and which can assist in the further investigation of police corruption and, if there have been no discussions, why not, and will he immediately initiate such discussions to determine whether these serious allegations have any validity?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I have not had any discussions with Mr Duncan, and I am not aware whether my colleagues have. I am not aware that any of the information Mr Duncan supplied is new information. These are matters which he has raised previously and which have been dealt with in other ways. Some of the answers given by my colleague earlier indicate what action is being taken in those areas. So, I am not aware of any new information. Obviously, if there is new information I hope that Mr Duncan will put it in the hands of the appropriate authorities. It is really up to him as to whether or not he does that. Of course, in the statement he made Mr Duncan was referring to the period during which he was a member of this House. He is no longer a member of the State Parliament; he is now a Federal Minister. His responsibilities do not cover this area so, clearly, he was recalling certain issues he raised in the past. If there is fresh material, I have every confidence that he will make sure it reaches the right quarters.

COMMERCIAL GROWTH

Ms GAYLER (Newland): In view of the recent strong growth in the State's manufacturing sector, will the Minister of State Development and Technology advise the House of the part played by specific Government policies and initiatives as well as strong and active marketing of the State's competitive advantages for business? In a recent edition of the *Australian Hotelier*, the Opposition spokesperson for industrial relations, employment and technology stated that over the next six months he will prepare a draft statement which targets areas of change to be pursued by a future State Liberal Government. He indicated that attention would be given to developing policies aimed at seven changes, including reducing costs, improving liaison, improving access to Government contracts and training arrangements.

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: I thank the honourable member for her question, because there are a number of significant areas of Government policy and action which have significantly assisted this State to reach the turnaround in manufacturing employment which we have seen over the past 12 months. It is interesting to see the member for Mitcham's comments on this matter as reported in the *Australian Hotelier*, because he indicates that by the time he has finished it will have taken the Opposition 3½ years to come up with a policy on this matter. Also, it is interesting to note that, in having the framework for its policy, all of the areas they are doing mirror the achievements of this Government in terms of developing a policy: it is simply copying the achievements of this Government in framing what it would put as an alternative policy to the electorate.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: The member for Mitcham laughs, but let me go through the points that he identified. First, he referred to a reduction in Government imposts on business. I point out to him that in the last budget there was a \$22 million reduction in Government land and payroll taxes, so that in terms of the real impost—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: Secondly, the achievements of this Government in deregulation are admired throughout the nation. The achievements in terms of removing regulations—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair has called the House to order and, although he was not specifically named, that included the member for Victoria.

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: The deregulation achievements of this Government are admired throughout the nation and go far beyond anything achieved by any former Government in South Australia. As is now known, we have a seven-year sunset clause built in to legislation and all regulations are being reviewed. The second point raised by the member for Mitcham in the article concerned improving liaison between Government and the private sector. I point out that the Manufacturing Advisory Council and its industry panels have been operating for some time, and bring a breadth of advice to Government and an interaction between industry, unions and Government on important issues facing our manufacturing sector, in addition to other joint industry, Government and union arrangements and committees. Of course, the Premier, other Ministers of the Government and I meet extensively with members of the business community to discuss matters of concern to them.

The member for Mitcham's third point was about increasing access to Government contracts by private firms. I just point out that it was this Government which established the Industrial Supplies Office and which continues to fund it at a significant amount in each budget. Of course, that is a significant achievement. Then there is the adoption by this Government of the buy Australian procurement policy, and the moves for national abolition of preferences. The fourth point concerned the removal of impediments to business expansion and the attraction of new enterprise. That is already being achieved through fast track assistance from the Department of State Development and by enhancement of the South Australian Development Fund. As recent announcements have shown, that indicates that increased initiatives are being financially supported within the State.

The next point was about improved vocational training arrangements. As I have mentioned, every year that this Government has been in power TAFE training has increased. In fact, there has been a 30 per cent increase in student hours under the Bannon Government compared with a marginal increase under the former Tonkin Government. Other efforts in terms of employment and training initiatives include the establishment of the Office of Employment and Training with the YES scheme. The honourable member also mentioned the need to accelerate the utilisation of new technologies. I point to the achievements with respect to the Centre of Manufacturing, the most successful centre of its kind in Australia, and also the Microelectronics Applications Centre. The last point related to establishing Adelaide as a science centre of Australia. However, this Government has ensured that Technology Park Adelaide Corporation has been up and running and has established South Australia as the science centre of this country—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: It was established under legislation introduced by the former Government, but the area set aside remained empty paddocks for fully 18 months after it left office. It was this Government that had it up and running as the fastest growing technology park of its kind in Australia. The Adelaide Innovation Centre—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair found it very difficult to hear the Minister's last sentence, particularly in view of the rude interjections coming from the Leader of the Opposition. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: Indeed, I am at my last sentence. I thank the shadow Minister for endorsing the initiatives of this Government. While I can appreciate that he may find it very frustrating to sit on Opposition benches for so long and to know that he will be there for so much longer, I would have thought that he might come up with something a little bit different than just simply endorsing the significant initiatives of this Government.

POLICE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE (Coles): I direct my questions to the Premier. In view of public statements made last Thursday by a Federal Minister, Mr Duncan, which strongly criticised the Police Commissioner's conduct of an investigation in 1981 and 1982 into alleged police corruption, did Mr Duncan approach the Premier following the November 1982 election seeking a review of this investigation? Was any such review undertaken before the NCA began investigating alleged police corruption in 1987? If not, does the Government reject Mr Duncan's particular charge that because the 1981-82 investigation was inadequate Mr Hunt should be dismissed?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am not aware of any such approach, but even if such an approach had been made—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Deputy Leader to order.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: —certain action took place—I think quite comprehensive action—following the election of our Government. At the time we called for a royal commission to look at seven particular issues. It was a restricted call; in other words, we were not suggesting some kind of generalised wide-ranging commission at all. We were looking specifically at that 1981 report and anything arising from it.

The points that we made were that this commission should review the findings of that internal inquiry and conduct any other inquiries as may be necessary; review the administrative procedures referred to; review the recommendations of the Mitchell committee report; consider whether the Ombudsman or some other form of authority should be established to receive and investigate complaints against police; consider proposals to establish some sort of permanent crime commission to investigate corruption and organised crime; consider existing laws particularly in relation to drugs and their effect on police corruption; and advise whether police powers were adequate. In 1982 we suggested that action on those points be taken, in light of the dereliction of the then Government.

The Hon. J.L. Cashmore interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the Premier resume his seat. I call the member for Coles to order. She has asked her question. She does not receive supplementary questions by way of interjection.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The interjection was to ask me what we are going to do.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: If the honourable member will cease interjecting I will explain exactly what we did. When we came to office those points were all dealt with in one way or another. The reassessment of the review, the internal procedures of the police and the recommendations of the Mitchell committee were in fact subjected to examination and certain changes. In fact, quite comprehensive changes took place. In relation to whether there should be an Ombudsman or someone to investigate, we have established the Police Complaints Authority. We did that; the previous Government did nothing.

In relation to the question of a permanent crime commission, at the time we came to office the National Crime Authority was being established and it was quickly apparent to us that there was no point in our duplicating the work of that national authority. It did not exist previously. The National Crime Authority was able, as it has proved in a couple of particular cases, to take on that role. In fact, that area was covered. In relation to penalties on drugs and things of that nature, we have addressed that and have in fact brought in legislation which took our penalties to the toughest in Australia. In relation to police powers, those also were reviewed in the context of that legislation.

So, I would suggest that each and every one of the points that we, when in Opposition, suggested that a royal commission should address were addressed. Having put that on the record, I do not believe that anything Mr Duncan has said recently takes this issue any further. We took the appropriate action as soon as we were in power and in the position to do so.

The Hon. J.L. Cashmore interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: We are taking further action as comprehensively outlined by the Deputy Premier and the Attorney-General on current and contemporary events. We will continue to do so. I hope that, in that, we would have the cooperation of the Opposition in this State.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: We have confidence in the Commissioner.

The SPEAKER: Order!

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Mr De LAINE (Price): Will the Minister of Employment and Further Education outline the single most important strength of the Youth Employment Program in 1988 and the benefits it will bring to South Australia?

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: The Youth Employment Program has been a significant element of the Youth Employment Scheme for the past three years. It has just finished its third year of operation and it will be continuing in 1989. It is quite different in its emphasis from other programs in the Youth Employment Scheme, being of an employment nature providing a period of employment combined with a period of training for young people. Indeed, its target audience has tended to be disinclined young people, those who have dropped out of school earlier than usual and those who have then been unemployed for a period of six months or so. Very often that is a target group; other surveys have found that, without employment and

training support, those people remain long term unemployed.

The figures for the Youth Employment Program indicate that those who have gone into that program achieve much better rates of employment or participation in further training than would have applied to the group of which they are representative. The figures seem to suggest that, for those who have been in a Youth Employment Program, the rate of employment is between 30 per cent and 40 per cent; after being part of a program, the rate of their going on to further training is between 30 per cent and 40 per cent, and those who remain without employment or without going on to further training are the balance. That is significantly better than would otherwise be the case for that group, where the vast majority remain without employment or training for lengthy periods after leaving school.

With respect to 1988, the third year of operation, there were slightly fewer projects within the Youth Employment Program: a total of nine projects employed about 160. The single most important feature of those projects in 1988 is the great significance being placed on young Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities. Over 50 per cent of the 1988 YEP intake are Aborigines including two of the nine project managers. Forty per cent of the Aboriginal participants are female. Three of the nine projects have been developed, sponsored and supported by Aboriginal communities—the Port Lincoln Aboriginal Organisation, the Kaurna Plains Aboriginal School at Elizabeth, and the Davenport Aboriginal community, I am looking forward with great pleasure to seeing the outcomes of those projects, which include landscaping, plant nursery development and playground development.

I am advised that in 1989 the Youth Employment Program will be continuing. We are now having discussions with the Commonwealth Government to see what Commonwealth funds we can access to supplement the State funds that are available so that we can increase the size of this program on its present planning for 1989.

IMMIGRATION APPLICATIONS

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I direct my question to the Minister of Emergency Services. Do Federal immigration authorities consult the South Australian police about applications made by people living in this State on a visa who seek permanent residency and, if not, does the Government consider that the police should be consulted?

This question arises from the conviction in the Supreme Court last Wednesday of Rocco Sergi for his part in a \$4 million cannabis crop at Penfield Gardens in which the former head of the Drug Squad also was involved. Sergi arrived in Adelaide in July 1986 on a six month visa. His conviction related to the growing of cannabis between 12 December 1986 and 20 May 1987. In January 1987 he applied for permanent residency. These dates indicate that South Australian police may have been aware of his involvement in the drug trade at the time he was seeking, through the Immigration Department, to become a permanent resident.

I have been informed that representations were made on Sergi's behalf to the former Immigration Minister (Mr Hurford) by a current Federal Minister (Mr Duncan) and a former Federal Minister (Mr Young). My information is that there is paper work in the Immigration Department recording these representations, including a written submission by Mr Duncan, and that two Adelaide officers of the Immigration Department who dealt with the application

gave evidence about it to the Fitzgerald Committee which advised on Australia's immigration policies.

Prior to the disbandment of the Police Special Branch in South Australia, that branch did have a role in monitoring migrant applications when it was suspected illegal drug activity might be involved. The South Australian Police Department was the only State Police Force to make a submission to the Fitzgerald Committee, although that committee's recommendations do not include any specific reference to surveillance of migrant applications by law enforcement agencies.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Part of the honourable member's explanation seems to bear very little on his two specific questions, and I note that he admits that it is hearsay as to that explanation. The reply to his second question is 'Yes, I believe that the South Australian police should be consulted.' In reply to his first question, I do not know and I will get the information.

MAXIMUM SECURITY DETENTION CENTRE

The Hon. J.W. SLATER (Gilles): Following the appearance of articles in the daily and local press claiming that the Enfield council has opposed a proposal to build a maximum security detention centre on Blacks Road, Gilles Plains, will the Minister of Community Welfare say what plans are proposed and what form the council's objections have taken?

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I thank the honourable member for his question. As members would be aware, the area referred to by the honourable member is within his electorate. Members would also be aware that the Government has for some time planned to replace both the South Australian Youth Training Centre at Magill and the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre at Enfield. I can tell members who have not visited both those centres (and I have visited both of them) that they are outdated and require high levels of maintenance and that SAYRAC at Enfield is poorly situated in the middle of a residential area with almost no buffer zone of land around it. Contrary to the report in the media that maximum security centres would be built, two small secure centres will be built by this Government over the next few years and the preferred site for the first of those centres is on land between Blacks Road and Sudholz Road, Gilles Plains.

This site has several advantages. First, unlike the land beside Yatala Prison, it has good access and is virtually level, which reduces costs considerably (and this is an important factor). Secondly, the land is zoned for institutional use and, in fact, is not near any current or proposed residential area. Thirdly, there is room for a good buffer zone of trees, car parks, and so on, around the building. So, the present proposal is very well sited. The building will not look like what we would imagine a high security centre to look like: it will look like a modern one-storey office block.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I have seen the plans. It is interesting that the honourable member finds that amusing.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Hanson to order. I ask the honourable Minister and the honourable member for Hanson not to get into debate across the floor.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I can cope with the sexist remarks of the honourable member. Indeed, I have been coping with them for six years now, and it is interesting that I am on the Government side while the honourable member remains in Opposition, where I

imagine he will remain for a long time. The member for Gilles is interested in this matter because it is in his electorate and it is important that I explain that this centre will look like a modern office building. It will not have high walls or high fences. In fact, the design—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: If you would like to listen I will explain what is proposed. This centre is a little modern for some Opposition members, but I will proceed. Its external walls will form the security perimeter, so there will not be the traditional high walls. Overall, this centre will have a modern attractive style which will be a vast improvement on the current institutions.

ABALONE POACHING

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): My question is addressed to the Minister of Emergency Services.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable Leader of the Opposition to order for the last time. I warn him that any further interjections will result in his being named.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Any reflection on the Chair will lead to the same course being followed. The honourable member for Chaffey.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Can the Minister of Emergency Services say whether police are investigating the failure of a recent helicopter blitz on abalone poaching on the West Coast because it is suspected the poachers were tipped off in advance, and as to how poachers are in possession of radio codes and other sensitive information used by Fisheries Department inspectors to pursue illegal activities? Is the Government aware of claims that a person within the Fisheries Department has sold this information to poachers and, if it is, is this a case of possible official corruption which the Government will refer to the National Crime Authority?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Eyre. In the absence of the honourable Minister of Fisheries, the honourable Minister of Health will reply.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: The honourable member for Chaffey is acting on a press report.

The Hon. J.L. Cashmore interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Coles, who has previously been called to order, not to interject and I ask the honourable Minister not to respond to interjections in a way that will provoke further interjections and make the job of the Chair more difficult.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: I apologise if I have offended you, Mr Speaker. I know nothing other than the press report. Regarding abalone fishing and abalone poachers, this is such a lucrative business because the licences are saleable as a result of the action of abalone fishermen in this State in 1979 financing a large number of newspaper advertisements against the Labor Government. As a pay-off for the financial contributions made, the member for Chaffey as Minister of Fisheries allowed, permitted and authorised the abalone fishermen to sell their licences. That is the cause of the problem here today. Those licences are now worth almost \$1 million. Is it any wonder that there is criminal activity, the genesis of which was in the pay-off from the Tonkin Government to the abalone fishermen? I note that the member for Alexandra is smiling. He was right in the thick of that decision and it was the honourable member's mates who authorised those press advertisements against

the then Labor Government and the honourable member's mates who got the enormous pay-off that has created this problem. I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring back a report.

POWER LINES

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the House, I would like to congratulate the Port Adelaide Football Club on its success last Saturday.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The football season was over two weeks ago; I ask the honourable member for Albert Park not to introduce irrelevancies.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister of Mines and Energy outline to the House what guidelines ETSA will be required to follow in carrying out its legislative responsibility to keep a safe separation between metropolitan street trees and power lines?

Members interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: The cynics can laugh, but the Minister would be aware of the recent written approach that I made on behalf of a constituent whose main concern is that the trees be treated with some care to ensure that the metropolitan environment is not spoiled.

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: I acknowledge that I have received that letter from the honourable member for Albert Park. I also acknowledge that concern has been expressed by a number of other members, including the members for Adelaide, Unley and Norwood. I welcome this opportunity to correct some of the unfounded concerns that have been expressed by a number of metropolitan councils about the principles of vegetation clearance incorporated in amendments to the Electricity Trust of South Australia Act passed earlier this year. Members will recall that this legislation was extensively debated and that it was the subject of a lengthy select committee investigation. Amongst other things, it sought for the first time to define who should be responsible for keeping vegetation clear of power lines and the extent of that clearance.

It was essential that this situation be clarified because the Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 demonstrated that no clear duty was imposed either on ETSA or tree owners to prevent dangerous contacts between power lines and vegetation. The legislation will impose a statutory duty on the trust to establish and maintain safe clearances. In recent months, work has been proceeding on the drafting of regulations.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: Where are they?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: The Government and ETSA have always acknowledged that different standards of tree trimming will apply in bushfire risk areas and in those parts of the metropolitan area where bushfires are not a danger—

Mr Becker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Hanson to order for the last time, and I call the Deputy Leader to order.

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: If we are going to talk about massive pollarding, I can think of some better places to do it than trees! The Government and ETSA have always acknowledged that different standards of tree trimming will apply in bushfire areas and in those parts of the metropolitan area where bushfires are not a danger, and the standards for trimming set out in the regulations do reflect the difference. However, even in non-bushfire risk areas some tree trimming is necessary for safety reasons and to minimise the risk of major disruption to power supplies during storm

conditions. Such trimming has been carried out for many years by agreement between councils and ETSA.

Whilst the new legislation and regulations place the onus on ETSA to maintain minimum clearances, they do not prevent ETSA from reaching agreement with councils in non-bushfire risk areas on how this is to be achieved. For example, it is quite possible for ETSA to contract out tree trimming work to councils who wish to do the work themselves. This would enable councils to trim more frequently than the five year cycle set out for ETSA in the regulations and, consequently, the clearance space around the lines would be very much smaller. Under such arrangements, ETSA could contribute to the cost of trimming an amount equal to its obligations under the regulations, and the council would need to fund the balance. Alternatively, ETSA could continue to do the work for council, and council would then meet the additional cost of more frequent trimming.

It should be noted that the legislation originally contemplated that councils would meet all the cost of trimming vegetation under their control, but this was changed because the Department of Local Government had concerns about the financial burden on local government. That would have been a quite considerable burden, because ETSA estimates that the current annual cost of tree trimming in non-bushfire areas is about \$4.5 million—so this represents a very significant saving for local government. Last Thursday, I met with a deputation from the Local Government Association to discuss the concerns about the regulations that have been raised by some metropolitan councils. I told them that it was essential to have the regulations operative by 1 November—the official start of the bushfire season. I explained that, while the legislation had been introduced in Parliament last December and that the Local Government Association had made a submission to the select committee, it was not until mid-July that some councils began expressing concern about the regulations for non-bushfire risk areas.

The SPEAKER: Order! Can the Minister wind up his remarks.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: I will do so, but this is an important matter, and I have been interrupted on several occasions by members opposite.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister should be extended the courtesy of having his reply heard.

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: We have attempted to sort out these difficulties in the working party that was established to develop the regulations, on which working party the Local Government Association was represented, and a number of technical problems have been resolved. We are now out of time, and if we are to meet the bushfire season deadline we must proceed with the regulations in their present form. However, to allow further consultation and review of the regulations with local government, I have offered to instruct ETSA to do minimal clearance work around low voltage lines in non-bushfire risk areas for a period of six months, from 1 November this year. The only exceptions to this would involve urgent safety issues which might arise and around high voltage lines, especially where high voltage lines share a pole with the lower voltage lines. We cannot afford to have youngsters climbing up trees and touching high voltage lines or, alternatively, high voltage lines breaking and sending surges of high voltage through the low voltage lines and thereby making household appliances dangerous. I was able to do this for two reasons. The

first was because the new regulations allowed vegetation to come within 10 centimetres—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: If members opposite are not interested in this, I will not proceed.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will wind up his remarks, and the Chair would appreciate the cooperation of members of the Opposition in not interjecting.

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: I will not take too much longer—if I am not interrupted. One of the reasons for my being able to allow this to happen was because the old situation required ETSA to clear to at least a minimum of one metre from power lines, while the new regulations require that for low voltage lines a minimum 10 centimetre gap only is required. The second reason is that I would prefer to have ETSA working in the bushfire risk areas for the next six months rather than having it work in places like Adelaide. So, during this six-month period a committee of review, with local government representation, will be established to develop satisfactory arrangements between councils and ETSA to minimise the impact of vegetation clearance procedures in areas where bushfires are not a problem. At the end of the review process, I have undertaken to consider any amendments to the regulations that the committee produces.

ISLAND SEAWAY

The Hon. T. CHAPMAN (Alexandra): I address my question to the Minister of Transport. Does the failure yet again of the *Island Seaway* to sail yesterday confirm that the vessel requires further major modifications before it is safe to operate the Port Adelaide, Kangaroo Island and Port Lincoln service? Has the Government received the engineer's report of the all-weather suitability of the vessel in those waters and, if so, when does the Minister expect that that report, promised last August, will be made public? My question is prompted by the cancellation of yesterday's sailing of the *Island Seaway* and by media reports last night which suggested at least one member of Parliament has seen sections of the engineer's report, which he says concludes that, after tank tests in Holland, further major modifications of the vessel are needed. Also, on radio this morning the Premier said that the Opposition was to blame for concerns on Kangaroo Island about the vessel.

My Kangaroo Island people say that they do not agree with the Premier's political assertions and that they are not interested in the grandstanding of any member of Parliament in this place or anywhere else. They say that all they are interested in in this issue is the urgent need for a return to a regular transport service for the island community. They are concerned that the *Island Seaway* has not sailed on the scheduled day or has been delayed in departing and/or berthing in the past 10 months more times than the last three ships to operate that service over the previous 76 years. Those three ships are the SS *Karatta* for 45 years, the MV *Parndana* for five years and the MV *Troubridge* for 26 years.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I responded to much of what the honourable member has asked during the Estimates Committees, but I am quite prepared again today to put that response on the record. I want to put it on record that neither I, the Premier nor the operators of the vessel are happy with the level of service currently being provided to Kangaroo Island. There is no doubt about that, and we have never said that we were happy with it. It is certainly

not a reliable service. We are waiting for a report from Howard Smiths and the expert technical advisers involved in the very extensive study which is currently taking place.

An honourable member: That is a backdown.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: It is not a backdown: we have never been happy with the level of service, nor could we be happy with a service which is not reliable and which is not providing the service which the Government expected in relation to the *Island Seaway*. However, what the Government and I have said, and what my colleagues on this side of the House have said when they have been called upon to make a comment, is that the *Island Seaway* is operating under the most difficult circumstances. Right from the outset many members of the Opposition—and they have been named; I will not go through them again today—have campaigned very vigorously against the *Island Seaway*. They have used every opportunity available to them to create an atmosphere in which it was very difficult for the *Island Seaway* to operate. That atmosphere has created the reluctance by the crew to take the *Island Seaway* out to sea, except in the most moderate of conditions.

I have expressed on a number of occasions my disagreement with the attitude the crew has taken, and I will do so again today. It is because of the campaign of fear that has been run by the Opposition that members of the crew of the *Island Seaway* have said that they will not take that vessel out to sea in adverse weather conditions, and they will not take it to Port Lincoln until this whole political point scoring exercise has been completed once and for all. That exercise, which is currently being undertaken, will cost the State Government in excess of \$100 000.

I hope that members opposite, who have been the main cause of this most extensive study, understand that at the end of the study the *Island Seaway* will be the most examined and studied vessel operating anywhere in the world. I am not aware of the member of Parliament whom the honourable member alleges has seen a copy of the report. No report has been presented to me and I am not privy to what is in the report. I am trying to get Howard Smiths to complete the report as quickly as possible. I know that it had to wait until the Marin Institute in the Netherlands, which is probably the most prestigious marine institute in the world, had completed its work; I know that it has to wait until Lloyds looks at the work done by Marins before reporting to Howard Smiths; and we must wait until Howard Smiths pools together the work of Marins, Lloyds and its own investigations in relation to what happened on 23 May before it presents its report to the Government.

I had hoped that the report could have been here some weeks ago, but it was not. I would prefer the report to take a little longer if it means that it will be the most comprehensive report possible. As soon as the report is available and Cabinet has seen it, it will be made public—and the sooner the better so that we can stop this campaign which continues even today. Members opposite cannot wait for the report. They know that it is in the offing. They know that the report has to be with the Government very shortly, yet on this occasion they cannot resist the opportunity once again to do a bit of political point scoring.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable Minister to resume his seat. He is now beginning to repeat himself. The honourable member for Adelaide.

PROSPECT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr DUGAN (Adelaide): Is the Minister of Education aware of the growing concern of parents in the Prospect

area about whether or not their children will be able to attend the Prospect Primary School, and will the Minister advise the House of the steps being taken to ensure that there is wide public debate about the boundaries of the Prospect Primary School zone prior to it coming into effect? There have been significant demographic changes in the Prospect area which have led to a revitalisation of that inner suburb and, as a consequence, there is an increasing number of young families with young children to go to primary schools.

This is having a consequential effect on the population of inner city suburbs and a number of them have had to introduce zones around their schools and limit the intake. This is happening in Prospect, and some Prospect people feel that they are being denied the opportunity to send their children to the local primary school.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for his interest in this matter. I am aware of the interest shown by residents in Prospect and nearby areas about a proposed zone of right for attendance at Prospect Primary School. The Prospect School Council formally requested that a zone be established because enrolment patterns over the past three years show a marked increase in enrolling school beginners and the small school site is limited in the extra accommodation it can provide. The School Council submitted a proposed zone and the Adelaide Area Education Office suggested some alternatives. Prospect Primary School, which serves residents in the adjoining electorates of Adelaide, Ross Smith and Spence, and several residents made submissions about the proposals for zoning. A meeting of interested parties was arranged and there was a discussion about these proposals to determine an equitable zone for the school.

The school council arranged a public meeting which was held on 24 August to provide information about its recommendations for a zone for the school. The meeting was chaired by a member of the school council and I understand that the meeting supported the establishment of a zone of right for the school. The Assistant Director of Facilities for the Adelaide area also explained a number of other possible solutions. I have been advised that the school council has considered these options and will make a final recommendation very shortly. I assure the honourable member that local residents have been kept informed and consulted during the development of the proposals, and I am confident that the school council's recommendations will take into account the needs and wishes of the local community and the best interests of the present and future students of Prospect Primary School.

PENSIONER DENTURE SCHEME

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): My question is to the Minister of Health. Is there now a wait of up to six months for replacement dentures under the Government's pensioner denture scheme? The Opposition has been contacted by a pensioner widow, Mrs Molly Seagrim, aged 68, of Morphett Vale, who has been told she will have to wait up to six months to have her broken dentures replaced under this scheme. Mrs Seagrim is an epileptic, who also suffers from double vision. She has broken her bottom set of dentures, which she has had for 20 years, and is unable to chew and therefore she is forced to live on a diet of soft food only.

Mrs Seagrim has contacted three separate clinics only to be told at each that she will have to wait about six months for new dentures. The Adelaide Dental Clinic also told her that the delay is related to Government funding. Informa-

tion obtained by the Opposition from the Estimates Committee indicates a cut of about 10 per cent in funding of the scheme in this final year.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister not to respond to the out of order interjection from the member for Coles.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: But the member for Coles wants to come in. I regret that the member for Morphett has chosen to use some apparent distress experienced by an elderly person in the way that he did in this House by—

Members interjecting:

Mr OSWALD: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My point of order is that the lady asked us to name her in the House in order to put the story forward.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: I do not see that that makes any difference. I would have thought that if there was a serious problem with that constituent, if she had rung me at my office or if she had rung the patients complaints office on the ground floor of the Health Commission building, something would have been done. I will certainly have the incident investigated and bring back a reply to the member for Morphett. I point out the pensioner dental scheme in this State is the best in Australia. It is a superb scheme.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: It is a very good example of socialism in action. We do not say to pensioners or other people—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: —if they cannot afford spectacles or dentures that that is too bad, that they will have to rely on charity or that they will have to negotiate with a dentist or optician to see whether they will provide dentures or glasses cheaply. We do something about it.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold interjecting:

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: The member for Chaffey says that the pensioner dental scheme is a disgrace. It is not a disgrace at all: it is a very fine scheme.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister of Housing and Construction is out of order.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: Indeed, it is by far the best scheme in Australia. If there are any undue delays in individual circumstances, as I have stated, I will have those incidents investigated. However, I would have thought that, if this was a particularly urgent case, the patient would have been far better coming to see me than going to the member for Morphett. I wonder how long the member for Morphett has sat on the information while his constituent apparently has experienced a problem. Nevertheless, I will look at the matter as quickly as possible.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

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

That the time allotted for—

(a) all stages of the following Bills:

- Land Tax Act Amendment,
- Pay-Roll Tax Act Amendment,
- Appropriation,
- Loans to Producers Act Amendment, and

(b) consideration of the amendments of the Legislative Council in the Unauthorised Documents Act Amendment Bill—
be until 6 p.m. on Thursday.

Motion carried.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 6 September. Page 609.)

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports this Bill. In his second reading speech, the Premier said the main reason land tax revenues had increased quite significantly in recent years was the rate at which land values had been rising. That is only partly true. In New South Wales and Victoria, where property values have risen more sharply, land tax collections have been contained below South Australian levels. This is because the Governments of those States have been prepared to make more regular adjustments to thresholds and rates to take account of rising property values. They have been less willing than this Government to cash in on property revaluations.

Taking into account this year's budget projections, land tax collections in Victoria will have risen by 93 per cent between 1982 and 1989—over the past seven years. In this State, however, they will have increased by 229 per cent. South Australia's rise has been 3½ times the rate of inflation, and again this financial year, despite the provisions of this Bill, land tax collections are estimated to rise by more in this State than in New South Wales and Victoria.

In Victoria, the budgeted rise is 6.9 per cent; in New South Wales, 10.1 per cent; and in South Australia, 12 per cent. In New South Wales, the threshold below which no land tax is payable is being increased to \$135 000 this financial year. That State also is introducing a five-year land tax holiday for investors in new rental properties. In Victoria, the threshold increases to \$150 000 this financial year. These compare with a new threshold of \$80 000 under this Bill.

The new schedules of rates still result in higher land taxes in South Australia than Victoria at lower unimproved land values. This means, clearly a disadvantage to small business in South Australia compared to Victoria. For example, with an unimproved value of \$120 000 the tax payable in South Australia will be \$300 compared with \$118 in Victoria. At \$160 000, the South Australian land tax bill is \$600 compared with \$480 in Victoria.

New South Wales has a flat rate of land tax which decreases the tax payable at lower valuations compared with Victoria and South Australia, but increases it in the middle range of valuations. Because land tax is levied on a progressive scale, property owners will still be liable for increases in their tax bills which far outstrip property revaluations, not to mention inflation. For example, property with an unimproved value of \$200 000 will attract a tax of \$900 under the new scales. But at \$220 000 the tax will be \$1 380. This means that a 10 per cent increase in value leads to a 53.3 per cent increase in tax. Bracket creep in this particular range alone could affect up to 1 000 taxpayers this financial year.

These distortions could have been reduced if the Government had considered moving towards a flat rate of tax and further increases in the threshold. The Premier would be aware from the number of representations that he has received from small business in particular (ignored to date), complaining about massive rises in land tax bills in recent years, that these distortions are only one major cause of their concerns. Another is the method of property revaluation. There is widespread criticism among individual land-

owners of the methods used by the Valuer-General's Department. The Government should be prepared to have an independent review of these methods, given the level of public concern about them. The Government also should consider a number of anomalies which exist in the application of land tax. I raise two examples in this debate in the time available to me today.

The first relates to cooperatives owning freehold land and dwellings. In some cases, their property can be used as the principal place of residence but, because the cooperative appears on the title as the owner, tax is assessed on the aggregate unimproved value held by the cooperative.

A case can be made for exempting from land tax dwellings used as principal places of residence under these arrangements. The justification is that the cooperative is holding land not to make rental profit but purely to facilitate ownership by individuals of that cooperative. If one rule is to apply across the board to all persons in relation to their principal place of residence, it is only just that those people are given exemption from land tax having designated that dwelling as their principal place of residence. That matter has been brought to the attention of the Government by different organisations on a number of occasions, and the Government has ignored those requests. Suffice to say that the Government has replied by acknowledging the problem but saying, 'Other options are being assessed.'

Well, a year or two has gone by and legislation has come before the House. That anomaly, currently affecting a number of people, is not addressed in this legislation, despite the fact that we are aware of submissions to the Government to take into account the fact that some people in the community are being unfairly, harshly and unjustly treated compared to others in having to pay land tax on their principal place of residence. This anomaly needs to be addressed, and I believe that the Government has abdicated its responsibility by not considering that matter in the legislation that is presently before the House.

I highlight the fact that a cooperative is formed in relation to freehold property which has a number of owners for the purposes of disbursement of that property into individual lots, the basis of assessing land tax is on the aggregation of the value of all the properties, and hence a higher rate of tax is applied and paid by those people to the Land Tax Department, rather than their paying land tax on the value of the property that they own. I believe that this serious anomaly has been brought to the attention of the Government on a number of occasions but again is ignored by the Government in this Bill.

Another anomaly relates to changeover of the principal place of residence in circumstances where a person is the owner of two dwellings at 30 June—the date upon which land tax liability is assessed. In circumstances where a genuine changeover from one principal place of residence to another is being made, land tax should not be payable on both properties. This anomaly has been raised with me by a number of people caught in this position, and this matter has previously been brought to the attention of the Government. Again, we see this Government ignoring that matter in this Bill.

Provided the property being sold is disposed of within a relatively short time frame, say, a month of 30 June, the liability for land tax on both properties should not be applied. Once again, the situation is unfair, unjust and discriminatory. While any tax relief in the current climate of declining living standards is welcome, this Government continues to have a greed for land tax.

Other States have been prepared to make annual adjustments to ensure the benefits of rising property values are

shared equally rather than confiscated by Government. However, in six years in office, this is only the second change in land tax schedules applied by this Government. At the very least, the Premier should have undertaken annual reviews of the impact of land tax to prevent small businesses being hit with bills which have gone up in recent years by as much as \$1 000 a month. Certainly, a Liberal Government will take that initiative. We will ensure that land tax collections do not rise annually in real terms. If we are fair dinkum and concerned about the level of unemployment in the community, particularly teenage unemployment, we need to recognise that the capacity of small business to employ and create jobs is being stifled by the removal of incentive, the removal of the capacity to make profits, and the removal of the ability to pay wages to juniors in the South Australian work force.

I highlighted a particular matter to the Government on a previous occasion, and it was also drawn to the attention of the member for Norwood (the Minister of Education). A young chap bought a supermarket on the Parade at Norwood, to which a land tax bill in the order of \$6 000 to \$8 000 applied. After being in the business about six weeks this person received the new land tax assessment, which had risen to \$14 000 to \$16 000. He contacted my office, as he contacted the member for Norwood, and said, 'I have just bought this business. I am employing a number of people. Out of the blue I get a land tax bill which has risen by thousands of dollars in a year without any notice. I cannot afford to pay it. It is unfair. How will I handle it?'

An appeal was lodged with the Government, but that appeal was rejected. The matter was referred to the local member, the member for Norwood (the Minister of Education). Again, the request for consideration was rejected. I saw that young chap in March this year and I asked him what he had done in relation to his land tax bill. He replied, 'Simple. I put 1.5 staff members off to pay the land tax bill to the Government.' That is happening in thousands of small businesses which are being choked by massive increases in land tax and a whole range of other taxes and charges of this Government.

Example after example is being brought to the attention of the Government, but blindly and philosophically it says that, because the property value has gone up, there is the ability to pay the land tax. This ignores the fact that a lot of these small business operators are leasing the facilities and those costs are passed on to them. They cannot absorb the costs; they are reducing employment opportunities as a result of it.

Mr Meier: Look at the lack of interest by Government members!

Mr OLSEN: The lack of interest is there because the Government has a philosophical approach to land tax which says, 'All property owners—capitalists—need to be trimmed down by the application of a tax of this nature.' This approach by Government in relation to land tax ignores the bottom line effect of land tax increases on small business operators in particular. As I have pointed out in my speech, a number of anomalies exist in the legislation which are affecting individuals who pay tax on their principal place of residence and who pay a greater level of land tax on freehold land because they are involved in a cooperative.

We know that this matter has been brought to the attention of the Government and I am disappointed that it has not seen fit to address it in this Bill. It needs to be recognised that the last Liberal Government abolished land tax on the principal place of residence. As I have said, the policy platform of the current Government requires it to 'maintain progressive taxation of unimproved land values'. There is

no distinction in this commitment between the principal place of residence and property used for other purposes. Given this Government's high tax record and appetite for new taxes, I trust that a future Labor Government will not reintroduce land tax on the principal place of residence merely as a revenue raising measure. The next Liberal Government will build on its record of tax relief in this area by limiting its impact on small business in particular, to give job opportunities and young South Australians who want jobs a fair go.

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): I join with the Leader of the Opposition in making some observations about land tax in this State. I reinforce what has been said. This Government is indifferent. Its interest in small business in this State is non-existent. I turn member's attention to living examples, as my Leader did. I refer to the *Messenger Press Courier* of 17 February 1988 which contained an article that stated that irate local traders had vowed to fight this year's land tax by joining a local action group. Some of the comments contained in that article reflect the feelings of thousands of small business people in the community. The Liberal Party has been besieged for some three years with complaints about the way land tax has been operating in this State. Anne Fino, who owns a snack bar on Unley Road, was reported in the *Messenger Press* as saying that she had been taxed more than \$2 000 this year. The report states:

'Really, it's incredible. It's double what it was last year,' she said. 'We have been here for more than 35 years and are in the twilight of our careers. This is the hardest period we have ever faced. We are up in arms about the way they assess the tax and will be behind the action group all the way.'

Pam Green, of Stone's Meat in Unley, thought there was nothing much traders could do about the tax. The article states:

'It will force the traders out of the area,' she said. 'I am fed up, I have been here four years and I can't just pack up my bags. I have to wait for the lease to expire. Unley Road has been dying gradually but enough is enough. The tax was \$120 three years ago, \$405 last year and \$1 917 this year.'

Philippa Greenway, a solicitor, whose offices are on Unley Road, said that although she had not been as severely struck as the retailers, she was concerned about the area's future:

'Evaluation has gone up too rapidly, for the "small man" so that there will be less custom coming into the area,' she said. 'This doesn't look good for our business. In principle the tax is fair, in practice it's prohibitive. The whole system needs an overhaul.'

Similar comments were made by Cheryl Timpano of Gran-ny's Corner, who said that the tax was affecting both owners and tenants:

'How can they honestly believe a tax drawn up in 1880 will service the people of today?' she said.

'The tax was meant for the landlord and, now it is being passed off on us. Really, we are caught. Bannon says if we can't pay the taxes we should pack up and leave, but that's impossible when we have leases to live out.'

This is just a sample of the feelings reflected in small business across the length and breadth of this State. I imagine that, if members opposite actually had their ears to the ground and visited some of their business constituents, they would have had the same reaction. Therefore, I cannot understand why they have not been banging on the Premier's door and saying, 'Enough is enough.'

We have seen the enormous bankruptcy statistics that have been a very indifferent feature of the Bannon Government's occupancy of the Treasury benches over the past 5¼ years. Now it is suggested that there is real relief in this Bill, but I assure the House that there is no such relief. In fact, there is only marginal change at the bottom end of the

scale. The majority of people in leasing arrangements where there are multiple holdings in one ownership still face the same sort of bills. I refer to the \$200 000 level because that is the level where it is really important and where most properties are actually drawn into these multiple lease arrangements. Under the old scheme, over \$200 000 there was a base rate of \$1 880 plus 24 cents for each \$10 thereafter, resulting in a marginal rate of 2.4 per cent.

Under the new scheme it is still 2.4 per cent but, with the rise in property values that we have seen this year, any relief that was to accrue to the people in this arrangement will have been dissipated altogether. So, there is no real relief to those people. This Government has simply done nothing on their behalf. It has made a farce of saying, 'We will have land tax reform and assist small business.' Certainly, for those people who have properties worth less than \$200 000—or properties that are in single ownership and are of themselves worth less than \$200 000—a certain lower payment is involved, but the vast majority of people are not in that situation, as the Premier would well understand, whether it be in commercial or retail premises. As I have said, we have been besieged by calls from many small business people. They have not said, 'We don't want to pay any tax at all.' They have not said, 'Land tax is basically unfair.' What they have said is, 'The way the Bannon Government is taxing us is completely unfair because it is the artificial rise in land values which has impacted on our land tax bills.' It is an artificial rise because anyone who travels along Unley Road today will see at least 15 shops that are vacant, and they are vacant because the people concerned have been sent broke through the lack of economic activity generated by the Bannon Government. The Premier simply has not performed—

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: The honourable member opposite suggests it is a lack of car parks, but these people were operating very well up until three or four years ago without car parks.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: My colleague the member for Eyre asks about Unley Nissan's charges: I know they ran into many thousands of dollars. The point of this is that small businesses, particularly retailing businesses, in a number of commercial areas are suffering. In that climate, they do not need larger and larger imposts such as land tax placed on them. One of the constituents of the member for Unley telephoned me and asked what she could do. She had obtained a small business grant to set up a little knick-knack shop and said she had just received the land tax bill which amounted to about half the small business venture scheme grant. She said, 'I have not paid myself a wage for six months. I have lived on bread and butter. I have not been able to go out for six months. I have tried to set up a business and then, suddenly, the land tax bill arrives. What should I do?' I said that she should go and see her local member. So, she went and saw her local member and, of course, he treated her in completely cavalier fashion and indicated that it would be unfair to give her relief if no one else got any relief.

Members interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: That was Mr Mayes, of course. I suggested that she should make an appointment with the Premier, and she received the same treatment from that source. I do not think the Government cares how many people it sends broke in this State. I would have thought, the statistics the way they are, that the Government would have a good hard look at this matter and provide sufficient relief for these people in very difficult circumstances. But no, it says it needs the revenue and does not really care whether it

sends them broke in the process. To me, that is atrocious economics, and it is typical of this Premier. Government is not just about dollars and cents: it is about people's ability to survive, especially in a State such as South Australia, which may not have the vast resources of other States or the benefit of tourist influxes such as those occurring on the eastern seaboard, as well as other advantages which may naturally accrue through locality.

It means that in South Australia we have to do a little better, and the heart and soul of South Australia is the small business community. It is not the handful of very large businesses in this State: it is the 40 000 to 50 000 small business people out there who are trying to make a living, and it is those livings which provide employment. As we are all aware, over 80 per cent of the employment in this State is provided by enterprises employing fewer than 100 people.

Any economic strategy taken by Government must take account of the impost it is having on this small business sector. Land tax happens to be one of the areas where these people have been hit hard. It is because of technicalities in the marketplace that this has occurred. For example, if premises in a large shopping centre were assessed at their market value, tenants would probably be paying one-fifth or one-sixth of what they are actually paying today. Surely that is an anomaly that must be obvious even to the Premier with his limited capacity to understand financial matters.

It is important that real relief be provided in this area for the many thousands of people struggling to make a living on the land or in the commercial, retailing or manufacturing sector. This Government should pay attention to their needs, but it has not done so. This move is a farce and the Bill provides little relief. It has been introduced to quieten some anguished voices in the small business sector. After all, there are 50 000 voices out there in the small business community and the Premier stands a good chance of being overcome by the flood of their protest at the next election.

The small business community has been presented with a piece of paper that says, in effect, 'We have given you a good deal. Somehow you will be better off because of this initiative'. However, the Treasurer knows that land values will sweep over the top of this initiative and that, instead of collecting \$54 million, he will collect \$63 million during this financial year. So, he is reckoning on collecting 12 per cent more in taxation, yet he calls that relief!

I suggest that the Premier get good economic analysts and that he talk to the small business people who are suffering. They are the real employers of this State and he should consult them to find out about their problems, including increasing tax costs. Only then, if the Government shows a modicum of understanding of the problem rather than telling the taxpayers, 'If you don't like it, get yourselves out of business,' will those who are suffering enjoy some relief.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): In speaking to the Bill, the Leader of the Opposition indicated that it would be supported in the sense that it is a Government Bill to raise funds. However, there are many difficulties associated with it. The concept of land tax sounds good to those people who believe that all land should be owned by the Government and leased from it and that no individual should own land, but land tax is often a tax on a debt.

The vast majority of people do not own outright the land on which they are obliged to pay land tax. Over the past month or two, the interest rate on an overdraft taken out by a person who did not have a contract with the bank has risen to 23 per cent in some cases. Imagine an interest rate

of 23 per cent for holding a title to a piece of land, except for the mortgage on it: one not only has to pay the interest on the mortgage but also must try to run a business and at the same time pay a substantial tax to the Bannan Government.

When presenting the budget, the Premier said that the Government was forgoing \$11 million, but I point out that the Government never had that sum. The Premier's argument is illogical, false and deceitful because the Government, under the terms of this Bill, is increasing the potential for land tax by at least 12 per cent over the next 12 months and that is higher than the inflation rate, which his Federal colleague, Mr Keating, claims will be much less than 12 per cent. So, in real terms, there is an expected increase through the budget.

I shall not go through all the figures, because the Leader has done that. However, I believe that it is ridiculous that a person owning land worth \$200 000 must pay \$900 a year in land tax, while a person owning land worth \$220 000 must pay \$1 380—\$480 more. Is that a reasonable proposition? Is the profitability on those parcels of land so much different? Of course not. This formula is illogical, unfair and deceitful. Words are used easily by those who have a glib tongue, use big adjectives, and make it sound nice, but where the buck stops and the person has to pay is where it hurts.

We talk a lot about small business. Indeed, I heard the Minister say recently, when talking to small business owners, how important small business was and what an important role it played in the State's economy. However, the very people who are knocked about by land tax are small business people. After all, some of the big businesses may be able to carry the burden because they can pass on the cost more readily. Many small business operators in the community would not earn even the average income of the work force, even though they work longer hours, carry greater financial responsibility, and suffer the trauma of not knowing what next week will offer.

For instance, I understand that the recent show week was one of the worst retail weeks in this State for five years, and I am not blaming the Royal Show for that. How does small business carry that burden? It leases shops in shopping centres or in groups of shops and the owner of the property has in the lease agreement a condition that the tenant shall pay the land tax. Tenants go into the leasing contract knowing its contents, but they cannot trust Governments that say, 'We know the plight of small business, therefore we will look at land tax and ensure that small business operators pay less to make it more equitable for them.'

The words are easy, but the actions cannot be found, and that is the truth of the matter. No doubt, the point made by the Leader of the Opposition on the method of evaluation needs to be considered and no doubt there are injustices in that area. I voice my concern about the Valuer-General and the Director of Lands being the same person. I have some respect for the person who holds those positions, as regards both his capacity and his sincerity. However, we have set a precedent: we now have an officer who is responsible to Parliament as Valuer-General and who is responsible to the Minister as Director of Lands. The method of setting valuations should concern us all. If a person is responsible to Parliament as Valuer-General, is there a conflict when the same person reports to the Minister of Lands to whom the Director of Lands is responsible?

What about the matter of making a valuation, for land tax purposes in particular, in relation to an overseas company or some group that the Premier wants to have come to South Australia? He could ask a Minister selling some

land to a company to offer it to the company at the lowest possible cost. The Director of Lands could be approached by the Minister of Lands to set the valuation at the lowest possible price in order to entice a business to come to South Australia. Such a business might even be competing with a business which is already operating here and which has its property valued at the highest possible rate for council, water, sewerage and land tax purposes.

The person who has to think about this is the Director of Lands, at the request of the Minister of Lands, with perhaps a request having come from the Premier—and this involves the same person who puts a value on it, that is, the Valuer-General. We all know that pressures can be applied, and I have already referred to this matter in another debate. I hope that the Premier will take up this matter with the Minister, because there is a problem here. I do not think one person can be responsible to two masters, and it is not fair to place a person in that position.

I believe that valuation of land for tax purposes, whether that land is owned or mortgaged, should be fair to all and should appear to be fair to all. I cite just one instance where a conflict can occur. There is no doubt that in many areas of Victoria land tax is less than in South Australia, and I refer, for instance, to the small businesses in South Australia which make fire units for the CFS and which have to compete with a business in Victoria that makes fire units. One of the reasons why the Victorian business in Ballarat can make the units more cheaply is that it has been given a considerable concession on council, water and sewerage rates, and on land tax. We must consider this matter of where advantages can be held by firms in other States, and we must look seriously at the land tax area. There might be another reason—it might have meant that the ALP could win Ballarat and perhaps it was the Federal President of the ALP who was keen to have that business there in Ballarat. However, I hope that Ballarat South falls to the Liberals, as that would be fair payment for that deal going to the eastern States.

Also in the land tax area, I refer to the .5 per cent charge on properties over \$200 000 in the metropolitan area of Adelaide. I believe that originally the .5 per cent charge was to provide for acquisition of open space land and for the care and maintenance of existing Government open space land. I know that the rules have changed a bit, but can the Premier say what that revenue is now used for? Does it go straight to general revenue or do we honour that original concept? Can the Premier outline some of the background of this matter, for instance, how much money, in rough terms, went for use on open space areas? Is this still considered today, or was that .5 per cent charge just a gimmick to make the charge originally, to bleed a bit more out of people, with no commitment to honour its original intent—although I know that some of the ground rules have changed?

I would like to see a review of the whole land tax area. I really believe that land tax is an impediment to and a frightening imposition on many small businesses. They could employ a lot more people and provide a lot more job opportunities for those people who cannot get jobs at the moment—and this relates to younger people and to people 45 years of age and over, who find it difficult to get work if they are retrenched due to automation or new technology. In the past, some small business people were able to take out of a small business their food and things like that, that privilege, which they had and which helped them to maintain their standard of living, was taken away from them a few years ago by Mr Keating. It is yet another reason why they are feeling the pinch and why quite a few, who before were just surviving, have now gone under. I do not neces-

sarily say that they should have had their food, for example, for nothing, without including it for tax purposes as part of their income, but at least it was one way that people could survive—and it appears that it was semi-lawful, if that is possible. However, the loophole was closed, and they now must carry an extra burden. I support the Bill, but only on the basis that if the Government does not institute a fair and sensible review I know that, within the next 18 months, the next Government will.

Mr D.S. BAKER (Victoria): I support the comments that have been made by speakers on this side of the House and I want to raise two or three more points. It is no secret that I am a critic of land tax generally and I am very critical of the way it is levied. I am also very critical of the cynical way that it is sold to the public of South Australia by the Premier—and I refer to his budget speech, which states:

In discussion of land tax, it is important to analyse the factors which lead to increases in the revenue raised. The most important of these by far is rising land values. Rising land values are essentially the product of demand, which is heavily influenced by perceptions about the return which can be generated from land in particular locations. Thus, the factor which gives rise to increases in land tax also influences capacity to pay land tax.

That is the first absolutely nonsensical statement made in the Premier's budget speech. The second one is:

These measures will reduce estimated land tax revenues by \$11.5 million, from about \$75 million to \$63.5 million. Overall, the land tax revenues in 1988-89 should increase at a rate closely in line with the increases in land values.

The facts are that the take from land tax, as shown in the estimates of receipts, will rise some 12 per cent this year—so the Premier is estimating that land values will rise some 12 per cent this year, and he is also estimating that people have the ability to pay. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mitcham pointed out quite clearly that people do not have the ability to pay and that they are being severely disadvantaged.

My next point concerns what has happened to land tax and how much it has gone up since 1974-75. From 1974-75 to 1978-79, land tax rose from \$12.673 million to \$22.001 million, which is an increase of \$9.3 million or 73.6 per cent. From 1978-79 to 1982-83, during the Tonkin years, land tax rose from \$22.1 million to \$23.7 million, which is an increase of \$1.7 million or 7.7 per cent. For the four years from 1982-83 to 1986-87, land tax has risen from \$23.7 million to \$44.2 million, which is an increase of \$20 million or 85.5 per cent. The total increment on estimated land tax receipts for this year is some \$91 million.

It is absolutely deceitful for the Premier to say that there has been a rebate of land tax. Someone could quite easily say that under the Playford Government we raised \$500 000 in land tax and, if the scales had not been altered, the rating today would be \$2 000 million and that that is the rebate we would give when we form Government after the next election. It is absolutely deceitful for the Premier to claim that there has been a rebate. In the second reading explanation the Premier quotes the figures of \$100 000, \$200 000, \$500 000 and \$1 million to show what the alleged saving will be but, if we take the 12 per cent which he alleges is the rise in land values in line with the 12 per cent increase in land tax (and this is all in the budget speech) and apply it to \$1 million, we find that there is not a saving of \$1 490. Because land values will rise by 12 per cent this year, there will be an increase of \$2 880 in land tax.

This is the most deceitful piece of legislation ever brought into this House by a Treasurer of this State. In fact, the Treasurer is trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the taxpayers of South Australia. The Leader and the member for Mitcham have quite clearly shown how this is affecting

small business and how it is inhibiting the growth of business in South Australia, along with payroll tax, which will be examined in the next Bill. Above all, land tax is double dipping. The people who are paying it have no chance whatsoever of avoiding it, and aggregation is further affecting it. If those same people decide that they cannot afford to pay land tax and are forced to sell their land, they pay capital gains tax. Why should there be two taxes on land? It is quite deceitful, and the Treasurer should be looking to try to get some justice back into the system.

If the Treasurer was honest and acknowledged that he will collect an extra 12 per cent this year—and he has already accepted that there will be a 12 per cent increase in land values—he would allow the exemption level of \$80 000 to go up by that 12 per cent every year so that there would be some modicum of justice in it, but he will not allow that to happen. So, the bracket creep, as the Federal Treasurer often says, will collect for the Treasury this year much more than the estimated \$63 million. I want the Treasurer to tell me why he will not allow the 12 per cent increase in land values to be put on the exemption levels each year so that this bracket creep does not affect those paying land tax in this State. Land tax is an insidious tax. It is an unfair tax and a tax on the advancement of small business in this State, and it should be amended.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier): I thank members for their contributions and the Opposition for its indication of support for the Bill, qualified in the sense that each member who spoke has made criticisms of the current structure of land tax and the amount collected under it. The Leader of the Opposition referred to some anomalies within the system, and I am happy to look at those in the overall context of land tax. As I mentioned in the second reading explanation, one of the problems we have in terms of equity in land tax is the need to deal with avoidance measures.

One of the areas that causes pain to leaseholders of small office or retail space is the aggregation of property, which means that land tax is passed on to them at a higher rate than if the property was simply stand-alone. That is recognised but it is not an easy problem to deal with. The only way of effectively dealing with it would be to reintroduce land tax across the board. While it may have sounded great and probably was welcomed in 1979 when the Tonkin Government abolished land tax on the principal place of residence, one of the problems that that created was that it substantially altered the base of land tax, making it very difficult to introduce anti-avoidance procedures except by measures such as aggregation.

The effect of that for the average householder was a rate of about \$40—not a major impost. Nonetheless, by moving the tax into that bracket through exemption, a whole lot of other problems were caused and we are still trying to live with and adjust to those problems. I still maintain that the basis of land tax is fair and reasonable. That is partly why it has persisted as long as it has. I reject the criticism that the Government is not conscious of the need to adjust land tax. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition said that this is only the second time the rates have been adjusted. That is true in terms of the scale under which land tax is applied, but it is not true in terms of land tax remissions and rebates. In each budget since 1985-86, substantial remissions and rebates have been made. That has been of considerable value, and has greatly reduced the number of persons who are liable to pay land tax.

We have heard comments about a massive increase in the amount of the South Australian collection, but I point out that last year the Queensland budget indicated that the

Government collected an increase of something like 32 per cent. This time it is expecting an increase of well over 30 per cent. That is Liberal/National conservative land tax policy. We are trying to sensitively address it and relate it to value in a flexible way. I thank members for their support of this measure because it will provide many millions of dollars of relief to a large number of taxpayers. We intend to keep this area under close review and we will make adjustments as necessary in the future, as we have in each of the past four budgets.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—'Sale of land tax.'

Mr OLSEN: What action will the Government take to provide land tax relief for those who designate their principal place of residence as being within a freehold area that is part of a cooperative? I referred to this in my second reading speech. The matter has been brought to the attention of the Government on a number of occasions. The Premier has replied personally to correspondence and Minister Blevins has replied on behalf of the Treasurer on other occasions. I will quote from one of the replies, as follows:

The only effective way currently available to deal with the problem is for lessees to be treated as owners of the land for land tax purposes.

All owners would appreciate that opportunity. The statement continues:

The Government is most reluctant to take this step since it involves a fundamental change to the basis of levying land tax. Other options are therefore presently being assessed.

What are those options and when will they be put in place?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Until we assess them, I have no particular information to give the Leader. The method of the solution proposed, as the correspondence that the Leader quoted indicates, is not an appropriate one. It will create other problems in relation to the land tax base, so we are attempting to find some other options. At this stage, we have not come up with anything on which I am in a position to advise the House. As I said in my reply, we are keeping this area under scrutiny and review and, if we can devise an appropriate means that will not open the floodgate of avoidance, we will certainly institute them.

Mr OLSEN: As the Government indicated that it was looking at other options 18 months to two years ago, how much longer will the Government require before determining a policy to give relief to people in their principal place of residence, the same as everyone else who designates a dwelling as a principal place of residence and who has its land tax exempt? Why should not these people be treated exactly the same? How much longer will it take for the anomaly to be corrected?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I hope it will not take too much longer, but it is a complex question. We are looking at a whole range of issues about land tax and its basis. We are not in a position to alter the current set-up, and that is why we have taken this approach in the current budget of a rebate and a rescaling of the rates.

Mr OLSEN: Does the Premier agree that, where there are a number of properties on a freehold area, all of which are individually owned, it is unfair for those property owners to be levied land tax on the aggregation of the value rather than on the individual value of those properties?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It would be seen as unfair, yes. It is an issue that needs to be addressed, but how we do that without destroying the basis of land tax is, as the Leader would appreciate, the problem that needs to be addressed.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Following the question asked by the Leader, the Premier acknowledged that it is unfair that the aggregation occurs. Surely, to arrive at the aggregated figure, all the individual properties on the freehold title would have to be assessed to be aggregated in the first place. If each individual property has been assessed, surely it is a simple matter, through computerisation, to levy that land tax individually based on the valuation rather than on the aggregated value.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It may seem simple, but it is not as simple as that. The question is one of ownership in relation to land. Many of the problems are caused in land tax because owners, even though they are liable to pay land tax, are not paying. In this instance the land tax is levied on that collective ownership.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The Premier has acknowledged that it is unfair. If the Government had the will to work it out with computers, it could be done simply. All that the Government and the Premier have to decide is that they intend to do it.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the Committee to order. There is too much audible conversation.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will control the Committee from the Chair. I hope that there is no reflection on the Chair.

Mr D.S. BAKER: My comments are directed toward *Hansard*.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will resume his seat. The Chair will not take a reflection on the Chair, and snide comments about remarks being made to *Hansard* will not be tolerated. If this sort of behaviour continues, you can rest assured that the Chair will take action.

Mr D.S. BAKER: It is a simple matter when lease rents are paid: everyone gets a bill which lists their leasehold number and the amount of lease rental to be paid, and at the bottom of that it is aggregated and people pay the bill. It would be perfectly simple to do this with land tax if the Treasurer had the will to do it. That is the point: he must have the will to do it. It is a backdoor method of collecting tax. It is against the best interests of many developers in this State, and it should be addressed.

Mr BECKER: I understand that the Real Estate Institute of South Australia wrote to the Premier on 24 August 1988 about proposed changes to land tax and stamp duty legislation. The letter states:

I have been asked by the Board of the Real Estate Institute of South Australia Incorporated to write concerning what has been reported as possible changes in legislation covering the payment of land tax and stamp duty related to the sale and transfer of company shares where the company's primary involvement is real estate. Members have reported on possible changes and have queried whether or not these matters have been discussed with this institute.

You will recognise that this institute has played a major role in the development of legislation relating to all aspects of real estate in the past. We would be extremely concerned if changes are now to occur which have not been given the widest possible airing amongst people who are likely to be affected by such changes.

I would welcome hearing from you in terms of what might be proposed and also receiving confirmation that we will continue to be consulted on all matters which have an impact on the industry.

Has the Premier responded to the letter from the Real Estate Institute concerning the proposed amendments to this legislation? If he has, what was his response? However, more importantly, was the Real Estate Institute finally consulted, or advised, on what is happening in relation to the impact of such changes, particularly on land tax involving companies, and the impact on company shares?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: No, I have not yet responded to that letter. It has certainly been received and is being examined by the Taxation Commissioner and Treasury. I will be furnished with a report shortly.

Mr BECKER: That letter is dated 24 August. I would have thought that six weeks was long enough to give a reply to an organisation with the standing and status of the Real Estate Institute. I am disappointed that it has not been consulted.

I have been advised that the aggregation of land tax at multiple holding rates to the development industry—that is, development companies involved in the housing industry, particularly on reasonable sized development properties—increases the typical housing allotment price by between \$550 and \$700. That is the impact that land tax has for investment companies, so that is passed on to the new home buyer. I am also told that the lack of supply of suitably zoned broadacres is forcing the price of land up within the metropolitan area and the broader metropolitan area. The Government controls a certain amount of development through the Urban Land Trust, so it has, of course, a vested interest in whether or not to bring down land tax. It still stands to make considerable sums of money in land tax on properties that are purchased by first home buyers. What relief can the Government give to the building industry, the development industry and first home buyers over and above what is proposed now?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: No land tax is levied on first home buyers once they purchase their property. Obviously, if a developer has a large parcel of land, there is a liability in that period and for us to do otherwise would be to drive a coach and four through the whole principle of land tax.

Mr S.G. EVANS: What is the position in relation to the .5 per cent that applies to properties over \$200 000 valuation within the metropolitan area? What was the original intent in relation to that money, and what happens to it now?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am not able to advise the honourable member of all the details of that. I will certainly provide him with a report.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PAY-ROLL TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 6 September. Page 610.)

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): In my speech in reply to the Estimates Committees I will illustrate how this Administration believes in governing by press release, promise and perception rather than by principle and performance. Nothing illustrates this fact more than the Premier's nine years of posturing to the issue now before the House.

I take members back to a report in the *News* of 21 January 1980—almost nine years ago. It stated:

The Opposition Leader, Mr Bannon, is ready to lead a national campaign to abolish payroll tax. He said the tax must go but an alternative revenue had to be found first.

Almost two years later, still as Opposition Leader, he put a motion before this House calling for an immediate increase in the general payroll tax exemption level to maintain the competitiveness of small business in South Australia. At the 1985 tax summit the Premier again called for the abolition of the tax. His submission stated:

In the view of the South Australian Government the major priority in business taxation reform should be the serious exam-

ination of viable options to significantly reduce or phase out payroll tax.

These quotes typify this Premier's attitude to the conduct of political affairs: put out a press release, make a promise, set the perception that you are doing something, and then forget all about it. The Premier will find no disagreement with me that this is an iniquitous tax.

But where I do part company with him is in what can and should be done to limit its impact on jobs. The outcome of all the Premier's calls to action—the promise of a national campaign, the parliamentary motions, the tax summit submissions—has been to achieve absolutely nothing. So much for his influence on the national scene!

I take him back to his days as Opposition Leader. When he was not calling for the abolition of the tax he was complaining that the former Liberal Government did not adjust South Australian rates to keep us competitive with the rest of Australia. What then is his record in Government? Remembering that the emphasis of his arguments before coming to government was that South Australia's exemption level should be at least as high as that of the other States, how do we now fare?

Even with this Bill, only Western Australia will have a lower exemption level of \$295 000. Tasmania and Queensland have moved in their latest budgets to raise their exemption levels to \$500 000. From 1 January in New South Wales the level will be \$424 000. In Victoria the threshold has been \$300 000 since 1 November last year. From 1 January next year it will become \$320 000.

Under this Bill, therefore, South Australia in regard to the threshold level will not move ahead of Victoria until 1 April next year. This will mean that for 17 months Victorian businesses with payrolls in this range will have had a competitive advantage over South Australia in terms of the threshold. And even after 1 April next year, when the South Australian threshold rises to \$330 000, South Australian businesses with payrolls of under \$2 million will pay more of this tax than their Victorian counterparts. This is because of different methods of calculating liability. For example, after 1 April next year a payroll of \$1 million will attract 2.6 per cent more tax in South Australia than in Victoria. At \$1.5 million, the disparity becomes 3.2 per cent and South Australia does not become competitive until the payroll reaches just under \$2 million. I contrast these facts with other statements the Premier has made to the House in the past about South Australia's parity with Victoria in relation to payroll tax.

I remind him in particular of his statement on 24 March 1982 when he said:

I am placing so much stress on this question of parity with Victoria because for so many years there has been an historical nexus between the exemption rates in the two States . . . the reasons for it are quite clear; particularly as far as small business is concerned in the manufacturing sector they are competing very often very directly with equivalent companies in Victoria. Those companies have the added advantage of being very close to their markets, the massive markets of the Eastern States of Australia. Our companies suffer from the disadvantage of distance, freight costs and so on. They may have some other advantages, but in terms of payroll tax it has been a well established principle since the States were granted this tax as a growth tax in 1971 that some parity of exemption level would be maintained. That has been a very important principle indeed.

This is just another example of a principle that the Premier, when he had no responsibility, was prepared to exalt. But, when the heat is on, when he is accountable, he has found it convenient to ignore that.

Far from doing anything decisive to have payroll tax eliminated, the Premier has not only made smaller South Australian businesses uncompetitive with Victoria, but also increased the burden of payroll tax on industry outside the

metropolitan area by abolishing rebates introduced by the former Liberal Government. The amount the Government expects to collect from payroll tax this financial year is equivalent to 14 700 jobs at the average wage. Budgeted collections are \$354.7 million. Even after adjusting for the removal of the exemption for Commonwealth authorities, this represents an increase of 9.4 per cent on last financial year—or well over 3 per cent in real terms.

Rather than budgeting for this real increase, the Premier should have ensured that payroll tax payable by small South Australian businesses is no greater than in Victoria. I call on him to give further consideration to the rates to apply from 1 April 1989 in view of the information I have put to the House about the continuing disparity with Victoria, which will apply after that date and the further real growth in payroll tax revenue.

While in recent years payroll tax as a proportion of total State tax collections has declined, this has been mainly because of the introduction of the financial institutions duty and increases in the rates of other taxes. However, payroll tax remains the largest single component of State taxation. It is budgeted to account for 28 per cent of total collections this financial year. Similar proportions apply in the other States. This means that no State can afford to eliminate up to one-third of its own revenue base in the short term and still maintain even basic essential services in areas like education, health and law and order.

The relatively narrow revenue base of the States is another impediment. The Federal Constitution prevents the States from spreading their tax revenues beyond payroll tax, stamp duties, property taxes, motor taxes, gambling taxes, business franchise fees and financial institutions duty. So, if payroll tax is to be eliminated, as the Premier has been saying for nine years should occur, this can be achieved only through a cooperative approach between the Commonwealth and the States.

Between early 1983 and March this year, Labor Governments were in office in Canberra and four of the States. Yet, during these five years, despite all the posturing by people such as the Premier, nothing was done to address this key issue. There were statements from time to time about putting the matter on the Premiers Conference agenda: it may have been talked about; but that is all, because Labor Governments are not interested in axing taxes. If the Premier had been really determined to lead a national campaign against payroll tax (as he said in 1980), he would have done that while Labor occupied the Treasury benches in Canberra and the majority of the States. Now that the tide is turning against Labor, it will be up to Liberal Governments to address this key question, to consider what can be done—

Mr Robertson: It stopped on Saturday.

Mr OLSEN: Talk about a fool's paradise; that is what the member for Bright is living in! We will see who has the last laugh regarding 1 October. It will be up to Liberal Governments to consider what can be done to get rid of this tax on jobs. It cannot be achieved by just making press releases and other vague gestures. What is required, first, is a common and concerted campaign to reduce Government expenditure at all levels. All the time that the Premier has talked about abolishing payroll tax he has advocated higher levels of Government spending. These goals are not mutually achievable.

Calls for a national campaign against payroll tax are just a sham if Government spending is not reduced to help fund the cut in revenue. As well, the Commonwealth must consider a more equitable sharing of tax revenues. Labor Governments, for the last five years, have had the chance to achieve this and have failed.

Now it is going to be a challenge to Liberal Federal and State Governments to consider the future of this tax on jobs. In the meantime, exemption levels must be kept under annual review to provide as much relief as possible and to re-establish parity with the eastern States, in particular, Victoria. This is the first review in two years in South Australia, and that is not good enough for small business. While we support this Bill, any marginal relief contained in it is certainly long overdue.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier): First, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for supporting this measure, as well he might because it does provide very tangible relief to businesses in this State, particularly small businesses, and it preserves a strong competitive edge in this area of taxation which, as he acknowledges, is one of the largest areas of State-based taxation. However, his address sounded as if two or three hands or minds had been at work. The Leader was quite schizophrenic in the course of that speech because, on the one hand—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: No, I think parts of it were very truthful and I appreciated the new-found candour of the Leader, with his acknowledgment of the importance of the tax and the difficulty of any State unilaterally abolishing it, and a number of the other issues that he raised. I endorse those remarks, and I am glad to see that things he has totally rejected in the past he now understands to be reasonable. However, with the other hand or mind at work in his address, there was more of the old Leader of the Opposition that we know and love so well, simply berating us by telling half the story. I have consistently been on record on this issue and have taken quite vigorous action where possible.

Reference was made to the tax summit, which was the prime opportunity to do something about this. There was not a willingness on the part of States or the Federal Government to do so. A number of very concrete propositions were put forward. For instance, a transaction tax, possibly acting as a replacement for payroll tax, would have been more broadly based and much fairer. That was actively considered but ultimately rejected. We are stuck with payroll tax, and the Leader of the Opposition acknowledged that. Therefore, if we are stuck with it, let us try to minimise its impact to the greatest possible extent, and that indeed is what the structure of our payroll tax has done.

We have the most favourable rates overall in the country. We have resisted constantly; when other States have gone into the imposition of levies on payrolls, we have not done so. It may be that, when one looks dollar by dollar through the range of rates comparison, at times ours might be slightly ahead of some other States, but overall there is no question that the advantage is very heavily in South Australia's favour. We intend to keep it that way. If the Leader of the Opposition doubts that this is having some effect, just look at the recent relocation of businesses from both New South Wales and Victoria into South Australia.

Those relocations have taken place in regional areas, and yet he is berating us for removing the country payroll tax. The reference was to a sledgehammer approach; it was actually costing jobs in regional areas. Since its abolition and recycling in terms of targeted relief, we have seen a growth in employment in many of those key areas, particularly in the South-East. Those relocations have very often taken place in regional areas. One of the chief reasons that people give for relocation is the low tax and cost structure in South Australia, and payroll tax is one of those taxes.

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I have it on record. The Minister of State Development and Technology has it on record—we are a low tax State.

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Premier to resume his seat and I ask the Leader of the Opposition to observe the courtesies of the House. He has already contributed to this debate and that was heard in relative silence. I would ask that he show the same courtesy to the Premier.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am very happy to put our record on the line anywhere. I and my colleagues do it constantly and we are getting results because of it. I know that it hurts the Leader of the Opposition because it does not tally with the story that he tries to tell in South Australia. I can assure him that the objective analysis makes the position quite clear. We are competitive and we intend to remain so. I commend the Bill to the House as further evidence of this Government's desire to maintain that competitive edge.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): I refer to the Premier's statement relating to the state of the South Australian economy. He indicated that we are a low tax State. I suppose that is why over the past seven years land tax revenues have increased in South Australia by 229 per cent, whereas in Victoria they have increased by 93 per cent! That does not seem to indicate a low tax regime in South Australia.

In relation to the state of the South Australian economy, I draw to the attention of the Premier and the House the 1988 annual report of News Corporation Ltd where on page 13 it is indicated that in Adelaide the *Advertiser* and the *Sunday Mail* performed well, despite the very sluggish South Australian economy.

When the Premier tries to talk up the economy, he ignores the reality that he does not have a low tax State, because the increases in taxes and charges that he has levied during the period that he has been in Government have been greater than at any other time in South Australia's history and greater than in any other State in Australia.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier): I must say that, as far as the Leader of the Opposition is concerned, it is a complete *non sequitur*. He quoted me out of context; I have not claimed that the South Australian economy has been booming. On the contrary, I have frequently pointed to indicators of what I would agree is sluggish performance. However, I suggest that that situation is changing very rapidly. If the Leader of the Opposition wants any indication of that change, I refer to that very organisation whose annual report he quotes. That organisation announced an investment of \$126 million in South Australia in state of the art printing facilities. That is a sign of a company which has tremendous confidence in the future of our economy.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr FERGUSON: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A, and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

Ms GAYLER (Newland): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B, and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Ms GAYLER: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B, and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): I move:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I would like to make some reference to the Committee of which I was a member and to what was nothing short of an appalling performance of new Minister Klunder.

Mr Robertson: You wouldn't know. You missed last year's.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I did not know they started early on Fridays but I would not have missed this year for quids. I would not have missed Minister Klunder, either. The fact is that two features were quite apparent in relation to Minister Klunder's performance. One was his abysmal ignorance of anything whatsoever to do with the operations of ETSA and the second was the level of his arrogance in seeking to deal with the members of that Committee. I am sorry that that well-known correspondent, Rex Jory, was not there for that day's session: he might have given a different flavour to his *Advertiser* report. I am sorry that he was not in more regular attendance, because I would refer him to the transcript, too.

We were very interested in the funny money schemes that ETSA has been promoting for the past three or four years, whereby it is raising enormous sums of money by selling its assets to unknown buyers from overseas and, I understand, some Australians—raising enormous sums of money then handing those sums over to the care and control of the South Australian Financing Authority. I sought to follow this up with the new Minister of Mines and Energy because it was this Government that put ETSA under direct ministerial control, but the Minister refused to allow any of these ETSA officers to come along and answer questions.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: And he couldn't answer them himself.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: He certainly could not, and I will refer to the *Hansard* record. The Committee began, and the first thing I asked was if we could—

Ms Gayler: You made it in time, did you?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I was in plenty of time: it was only that nobody seemed to have told me that the Committee started early on Fridays but, no, I would not miss out again. I was clobbered by the Labor Party, but I noticed that its members were too lazy to ask any questions. I had plenty of time last year to ask all the questions that I wanted to ask because after the first hour the Labor Party dried up and had no interest at all in the proceedings of the Committee. The fact that I was late did not inhibit my ability to ask questions; far from it—I had oodles of time.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: They did; they dried up, and they dried up this year, too.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Duigan): Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: They dried up again this year by about midday. So, it ill behoves them to criticise us for not showing enough interest in the estimates. I asked new Minister Klunder—

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to refer to the Minister as the Minister of Mines and Energy.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: New Minister Klunder, the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Ms GAYLER: I take a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker. On a number of occasions in the past few minutes the Deputy Leader has referred to the Minister by his name, which I understand is not in accordance with the forms of the House.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order, and I ask the Deputy Leader to refer to the Minister as the Minister of Mines and Energy.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: That is his name; that is a new Standing Order, in my book, but I do not mind calling him the Minister of Mines and Energy. The new Minister of Mines and Energy, the Hon. J. Klunder, was abysmally ignorant and arrogant. We wanted to discuss some of the ETSA references in the Auditor-General's Report, but the Minister said that we could not have ETSA people here, despite the fact that ETSA is under Ministerial control. We had Samcor, TAB, Health Commission and Superannuation Fund people here, all of whom probably have a more tenuous connection directly with Government departments than has ETSA, which is directly under Ministerial control. The Minister was prepared to have those people front up and answer questions, but we could not have representatives of ETSA here.

The Minister did not have the faintest clue when answering questions—he could not answer any of them—and the only conclusion I could draw was that the Government had something to hide in these funny money deals, where ETSA has sold off hundreds of millions of dollars worth of generating equipment to raise enormous sums of money, not for ETSA's capital requirements, as explained by the former Minister and the Premier, but so that SAFA has a large pool of funds to play with in its entrepreneurial schemes.

The Minister said that we could not have representatives from ETSA here because ETSA does not receive any money. We are talking about revenues of the State; we are talking about expenditure. He said:

This does raise from the beginning one of the difficulties that arises out of Estimates Committees; that is, Estimates Committees are supposed to deal with expenditure from the consolidated account and, of course, ETSA does not draw any money from that account.

Does the Minister not know that ETSA gets \$5.7 million from general revenue for pensioner concessions? He was not aware of the fact that ETSA draws substantial funds from the revenue account. I do not know what he was doing while he was languishing on the back bench until he managed to get into the Ministry by one vote with the support of the Premier. Does he not know that one of these budget papers is headed 'Receipts' and that it is just as legitimate to talk about the Government's income as it is to talk about the Government's expenditure? We pressed on, but we did not manage to get anyone from ETSA before the Estimates Committees.

I then sought to get some information on some of these fancy deals that ETSA has been indulging in, with particular reference to page 279 of the Auditor-General's Report.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The Minister did not have the faintest idea—he did not even understand the page. The Minister did not have the faintest notion of any question we asked. He said that it would be more appropriate if the member put his question on notice. That is here in the record. The whole idea of Estimates Committees, as I understand them—and as my colleagues understand them—is that they present an opportunity for the Government to bring their officers along to this House so that we can glean information at first hand.

The idea is that, if one wants to find out something—and this was the idea when the Estimates Committees were set up—this is one's big chance to do so. It is the opportunity, provided once a year, to quiz the Government and to get first hand information from Ministers and their officers. However, the new Minister of Mines and Energy, the Hon. Mr Klunder, was not interested in our getting the facts. The Minister was not the slightest bit interested in providing information—which is what the Estimates Committees are all about. So, following that session I am now awaiting written reports in answer to about 20 questions on these funny money financing deals of ETSA, and this is simply because the Minister was too ignorant to know any of the answers and too arrogant to bring ETSA officers along here to answer legitimate questions. The former Minister of Mines and Energy sought to come to his rescue—and I must say that, by way of comparison, my admiration for the former Minister has gone up in leaps and bounds.

The Hon. J.L. Cashmore: It is all comparisons, isn't it?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It is; this job is full of comparisons.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: More particularly since he left the Ministry he has gone up a lot in your esteem, hasn't he?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: All I have to compare him with is the new Minister, and he does front up very well by comparison. It is all about comparison, and the competence of the Ministry has taken an enormous dive as a result of this change.

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The member for Mount Gambier had the painful experience of sitting through a session of the Committee, and he has drawn to my attention something else that the Minister said. I made the statement that money was drawn from the Consolidated Account, and that I had pointed that out to the Minister. The Minister replied:

I thank the Deputy Leader for bringing up this matter, and I suppose we will have to have this battle all over again in the next part of this Estimates Committee dealing with the Woods and Forests Department, which also, except for one or two minor items, does not draw money from the Consolidated Account but from a deposit account. I suppose in order to be consistent I will have to draw that to the attention of the Committee when we have the changeover to Woods and Forests, as a result of the Deputy Leader having raised the matter in relation to ETSA.

The Minister did not even know that the Woods and Forests people had been fronting up here for years. Those officers did front up, as they have traditionally done, and they answered all the questions.

The Hon. H. Allison: Every one of them.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. The Minister was so ignorant as to what happened in the Estimates Committees that he suggested that we would go through the same circus later in the day in relation to the Woods and Forests estimates. But, of course, Peter South and his offi-

cers have been coming here since the day the Estimates Committees began and so once they had turned up I suppose the Minister thought that as they were now there the Committee would have to carry on. That is how much the Minister knew about the operation of the Estimates Committees.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order. There are 17 speakers listed in the debate and I think that we should get it off to a good start by not having interjections, please. The honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I always think that some interjections indicate a degree of interest in what is being said. I have always felt that we are not in a Sunday school class and that in Parliament a few interjections liven up the place. That is why I wonder what is biting the Speaker during Question Time most days. However, I always enjoy some interjections from the other side. It shows that members opposite are awake and that at least they are interested in what I am saying.

Mr Robertson interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I have even provoked the somnolent member for Bright. Anyway, we have this most unsatisfactory state of affairs that ETSA is involved in raising, as I say, enormous sums—and I am talking about the best part of a million dollars. This year, the Auditor-General tells us that it made a nominal profit of \$53.3 million—out of the latest funny money deal, which has raised \$555 million for SAFA. The Auditor-General says that only \$490 million is required 'for ETSA's purposes'. It is not for ETSA's purposes: it is for SAFA's purposes, because that money does not appear on ETSA's balance sheet. It has disappeared. SAFA has swallowed up that money: it controls it, and SAFA or a trust set up under it will take any risk associated with the use of that money.

The Auditor-General sounded a cautionary note back in 1986 when the Government was getting into these fancy deals. Under 'Borrowings and financing arrangements' he said:

Agreements involving the trust and the South Australian Government Financing Authority (SAFA) provide certain indemnities to the trust and certain guarantees with respect to the trust from SAFA in relation to these arrangements. The indemnity arises in the event that third parties to the various leasing arrangements are unable to secure certain financial advantages available to them on which the leasing arrangements have been based in part.

That is a fairly strong cautionary note at the very outset of these funny money deals. If one reads between the lines, the Auditor-General is saying that if the ground rules change SAFA will carry the risk which means, of course, that the South Australian public carry the risk. That is the bottom line.

I hope that some members opposite had the time or the inclination to read the article in the *Weekend Australian* by, I think, John Hyde, entitled 'Western Australia Incorporated'. It details how the taxpayers of Western Australia have been diddled as a result of the operations of a similar body which has been up and running in Western Australia for a number of years. When it comes to the bottom line, the people who have missed out in all these funny money deals—and in Western Australia they have been helping some of the Labor Party's buddies—are the taxpayers of Western Australia. In my judgment, that will become quite a major issue at the next Western Australian election. Even the member for Briggs pricks up his ears at that comment. I repeat: a major issue at the next Western Australian election, will be the funny money deals and the track down which the Labor Party has taken that State. I want to

mention one other thing in the time remaining. I asked the new Minister of Mines and Energy, the Hon. J. Klunder—

Mr ROBERTSON: On a point of order, Standing Order 152 clearly indicates that no member shall refer to any other member by name except for the purpose of distinguishing him or, presumably, her from other members returned for the same electoral district. I submit that that is not what the honourable member has been doing.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Duigan): I uphold the point of order. I ask the Deputy Leader to comply with Standing Order 152.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: That is really nitpicking. I was just trying to identify him so that there would be no mistake as to who he is. I asked about uranium enrichment, to be told that Government policy was not in favour of doing anything in relation to it. I asked the same question at the next Estimates Committee of the Minister of State Development and Technology, because the Department of State Development and Technology is in the business of further processing of minerals. I was interested to see that. That has led to an announcement today of a rare earths plant at Port Pirie. The Department of State Development and Technology has its finger in the pie, so I asked the Minister of State Development and Technology (whose name I am not allowed to mention) how we were going with respect to further development and what was the uranium enrichment policy, and I was told the same story. That indicates just how stupid the Labor Party is.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: They are consistently stupid. They do not give a darn about the development of the State or furthering debate on these major issues, which are so critical to the economy of this nation and this State. The Premier's big contribution at the Hobart conference was to sweep this question under the carpet. Some of the less timid souls in the Labor Party—Senator Walsh, Senator Button and the Prime Minister, when he screws up his courage and is not on the golf course or at the hairdresser—wanted to get the three mine policy and the question of uranium enrichment on the Labor Party agenda. It was refreshing to see someone with a bit of spirit such as Button wanting to talk about uranium enrichment at the ALP conference because this country could profit from this industry, which is demonstrably safe in terms of the uranium cycle.

However, the Premier's contribution was to send the matter to a committee so that it would not be talked about. That has been his habit for the past six or seven years since he has been in Government. A postal ballot of members was to be held, but that has now been forgotten and the issue will not be discussed at any level until the next Federal ALP conference. That is typical of the cowardice and timidity of this Administration. I affirm again—

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

Mr BECKER (Hanson): The Deputy Leader was quite right in confirming that the Government has absolutely ruined the impact and the benefit to the people of this State of the budget Estimates Committees. Estimates Committees were established to provide more detailed information to members of this Chamber, to the public and for the record in general about what is actually happening in various departments. The whole idea was for Ministers to bring along their advisers to assist them. We have now seen the demise of Estimates Committees as they were established by the Tonkin Government, the idea being to allow the Opposition to question the Minister and his or her advisers.

When we were in office, Government members sat back and allowed the Opposition free rein. Opposition members were not subject to dorothy dixers, taking up the time of the Estimates Committees. Whilst on the Committees dealing with Health, Correctional Services and, to some degree, Housing and Construction, I witnessed deliberate attempts by Ministers to waste time and to avoid the issues that they were asked about and to draw on their advisers in the same manner. Some public servants should be condemned for going along with the charade of their Ministers. In other respects, many of the public servants were only too helpful. On one occasion I noticed a Minister wave his hand and silence a public servant from giving any further information. It was absolutely disgusting. So much has been heard from the Labor Party in this State about open government and, in fact, Don Dunstan boasted about open government.

Mr S.G. Evans: So did Bannon.

Mr BECKER: As the member for Davenport quite rightly reminds me, when the Bannon Government was elected, it boasted of open government. That was back in 1982-83. As the Bannon Government wearily grinds on, with the help of the media to survive, it has become so paranoid that it is fearful of any criticism. The taxpayers of South Australia should be advised that the budget Estimates Committees cost hundreds of thousands of dollars—probably close to \$1 million—to establish, produce documents and provide information in the two weeks of sittings involving members of Parliament and public servants.

At one stage during consideration of the health budget we counted 35 advisers to the Minister of Health. At one stage when the Minister was asked a question by one of my colleagues, a public servant came to sit alongside him to answer the question and the Minister said, "Who are you?" The Minister did not even know his adviser. That was embarrassing not only to the public servant but also to the whole Committee.

There is no doubt that the Health Commission overdoes it: it brings far too many advisers. I do not know what it expects to achieve or what the idea is. If anyone has been a member of the Public Accounts Committee, they will know what the attitude of the Health Commission is. It is a bit like the Education Department—it is paranoid. It is absolutely frightened that Parliament—be it Government or Opposition members—will find out what they are doing and what their latest tactics are. These people are so paranoid that they are absolutely frightened that someone will be given the truth about the real issues of the day.

There is no doubt about what is going on with the Government at present. It is incompetent and has a group of lazy Ministers who are propped up only by the popularity and the perception has been created in the community of the Premier, who was again proven wanting this afternoon when it comes to financial matters. He has no idea or concept of the inner workings of Treasury. There is no doubt about that at all, and the Premier should be careful because he has within the groupings of the Treasury Department certain public servants whom I consider to be extremely dangerous.

Some of the new people who have been brought in from Canberra and interstate who are starting up all these little entrepreneurial organisations and fronts through the South Australian Financing Authority are, I believe, the wrong people, because they are making commitments and arranging long-term funding, including loans from overseas, and interest rates in terms and conditions which will mean that, if the world economy ever sours, South Australia will be very hard hit indeed.

Our economy is not going well in South Australia, and all the talking and whipping up that is being done by the Government and its paid entrepreneurs through the Public Service is not going to get South Australia into the situation that it should be in. We must face the facts of life: there has been poor economic management in Canberra; in fact suicidal economics are being practised by Keating and his Treasury. Now, Mr Keating is going around the world telling everyone how to run their own countries and economies. He is speaking to Western countries that have inflation rates of 1 per cent, 2 per cent or 3 per cent. It is absolutely ludicrous!

The Hon. H. Allison: They have housing interest rates of 11 per cent in the United Kingdom.

Mr BECKER: As the member for Mount Gambier says, housing interest rates are 11 per cent in England.

The Hon. H. Allison: And they are apologising for it, too.

Mr BECKER: Yes, they are apologising for it, because it is a terrible disgrace. Yet, here today we have the State Bank increasing interest rates on new home loans. It is absolutely disgraceful that we have a Treasurer swanning around the world with an ego so wide, high and mighty that this country is really floundering. It is floundering for strong management and strong leadership. Above all, unfortunately, some pretty hard decisions will have to be taken to pull the economy back into line. We will have to suffer and feel the pinch, whether we like it or not. There is no point in our doing it while the bureaucrats in Canberra and South Australia are having a ball.

It is understandable that, while things are going as they are, we can do nothing about it. It makes it hard and difficult when even the media does not bother to find out what is happening. It will take a meeting of News Corporation shareholders to wake up the media in this city. That has already happened.

Several areas in the portfolios of Housing and Construction and Correctional Services concerned me. I was disappointed that Correctional Services was lumped in with the Health portfolio. Health is extremely important to the people of South Australia. Every citizen of this State would be concerned about the delivery of health services. Probably no-one has more practical experience than I have in relation to the health portfolio. I spent the past week tracking backwards and forwards to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and I admire the way in which our public hospitals are being managed and operated, particularly at the nursing staff level where staff is not made available because of the severe cutbacks. I have never seen our hospitals reduced to such a low level of staffing as they are at present, with only one or two nurses to a floor between the hours of 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. where patients wander around and there is absolute confusion.

I made the point to the Minister of Health how I—and my experience goes back some 20 years—value and have worked to help establish and equip a country hospital, as did everyone else in the community, and that we would not allow any Government to interfere in its operation. I understand why country people feel so strongly when the Government steps in and says, 'If you do not do this or that we will cut your funding.' I support the stand taken by country people in preserving and protecting their hospitals, and I will continue to support their stand. I hope that they will win their battle and that in the not too distant future they will see a Liberal Government in this State that will reverse that situation. Country hospitals have served our family well over the decades, and I want to see them remain to serve the rural areas of the State in the future.

On occasions the Minister of Health was asked a question which he did not understand, and he would say that we had looked at the wrong line. That was absolute nonsense because he knew at which area we were directing our questions. Certain information was not made available to the Committee and questions were not answered. I hope that the shadow Minister of Health will take appropriate action in the other place in relation to the information he seeks.

In relation to the Housing and Construction portfolio, no concern was expressed at the expenditure of about \$1 million in providing first rate accommodation for the department. To hell with the maintenance requirements in our schools and other Government buildings; its own comfort and standard of accommodation came first. It disgusts me to think that the Department of Housing and Construction has been moving staff backwards and forwards on the site at Netley for four years at a huge cost to taxpayers.

The latest move, costing about \$500 000, resulted in the refurbishing of temporary office accommodation. Also, a huge air-conditioning plant was installed and that plant would make the one in this building look obsolete. All this was happening when a two-storey brick office had been vacant for 3½ years, and \$300 000 of rent was lost because it was never used by the department and the opportunity was not taken to let it as a commercial proposition.

Bricks and mortar was not good enough for the one or two high-handed bureaucrats—and I do not blame the staff—who made the decision to refurbish that prefabricated building to such a degree that it is embarrassing. Of course, we now find that the Department of Agriculture is to take the brick building and spend \$250 000 to refurbish it.

Why could not the Department of Housing and Construction spend that amount of money and save \$250 000 by painting a couple of schools in my electorate that need painting? One school has never been painted since it was built. The Lockleys Primary School has asbestos cladding and has never been painted. Plympton High School has been half painted but money ran out. Maintenance problems exist in schools and Government buildings in every electorate in this State. Millions of dollars worth of maintenance is outstanding and will not be done because the bureaucrats are looking after themselves and are putting it over the Minister, who does not seem to care. Obviously, he has not travelled around the country to look at Government buildings. It is simply not on.

This is the type of attitude we experienced during the Estimates Committees. We did not get the facts and Ministers did not give considered replies. When we did ask something that was obviously a little curly, the question was taken on notice. If we look at the Notice Paper tomorrow we will find that it is lengthy due to questions put on notice simply because Ministers would not answer questions or did not give us the time to ask questions. That feature went through the majority of portfolios. If the Opposition asked a question there was a short snappy answer. If it was a dorothy dix question or a question prepared by Government members, the Minister waffled on at great length with meaningless rhetoric to try to bat out the time. Every couple of hours we had to stop for a cup of tea or a smoke, so it was almost a waste of time.

It was disappointing that for the correctional services portfolio less than two hours was allowed, and that is an area involving the expenditure of some \$64.6 million this financial year. It costs \$58 000 a year on average to accommodate a prisoner whereas in 1981-82 the cost was \$19 900. A considerable amount of capital expenditure has been undertaken within the prison system, and no-one objects to that. It took years of planning and work to come to terms

undertaken within the prison system, and no-one objects to that. It took years of planning and work to come to terms with and agreement of what upgrading was necessary. In the previous financial year about \$72 million was spent in the correctional services area, \$13.3 million of which was capital expenditure. In the past six years something like \$75 million has been spent on capital works within the correctional services system.

The disappointing fact is that it costs between \$150 000 and \$160 000 to provide a cell for an offender in our prison system—almost three times the price of a house for a cell no bigger than the average bathroom. Of course, we have to provide all the ancillary services and staffing to go with it. It makes one wonder what would happen with future costs in the correctional services area if we did not do something worthwhile and meaningful within the rehabilitation and other programs.

Mr S.G. Evans interjecting:

Mr BECKER: I do not agree with the member for Davenport. We must have the correctional services area and we will make it work when we are in Government, even though we may have to involve the member for Davenport. We will try to get to the offenders before they are sentenced to prison terms. The Housing Trust has continued to expand and now has some 60 000 units of accommodation, but there are still 42 000 people on the waiting list. That proves again that the Government's program and the slowing down of the construction of Housing Trust accommodation is not helping those who need affordable accommodation.

Nothing of note is being done by the Housing Trust regarding high income earners who pay low rents in Housing Trust houses. In 1987-88, the average rent for Housing Trust accommodation was \$43 a week, and some of those units which are rented at \$43 a week have a capital value in the vicinity of \$120 000. So, the big problem facing the Housing Trust is that its stock will become very valuable while the return on the capital is very poor. I would not begrudge anyone who wanted to live in the City of Adelaide in Housing Trust accommodation paying rent they could afford, but asking pensioner tenants to pay 25 per cent of their income, a very high percentage, is not giving them a fair go at all.

It is disappointing that the Housing Trust is now spending, on average, \$43 million a year on maintenance. The ageing stock of the Housing Trust is costing a small fortune. When one considers that \$135 million has been spent in the past three years on maintenance, it makes one wonder whether the trust is starting to get too big and is carrying too much old stock. Perhaps it would be better to sell it off to young people, giving them an opportunity to renovate the houses. They would get the benefit of that renovation as their reward.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I was surprised at the Estimates Committees, but no more than in any other year. I have always believed that that procedure is a waste of time and money. Those members of the previous Liberal Government, which set up the system, know that I had grave doubts about the whole procedure. I am sure that the system does not work. It does not work because we are dealing with politicians and public servants. The public servants are out to protect their position, if there are any trouble spots, and the politicians are out to try to play politics. Quite often the Opposition asks questions in an attempt to embarrass the Government or to seek genuine information. Now more than ever before dorothy dix questions are set up by the Government whereby it seeks to use up as much time as possible in providing the answers, thus

decreasing the potential for more Opposition questions. Likewise, in answering Opposition questions the Government gives lectures on particular questions.

I am sure that the public servants are disgusted with the whole process. And I am sure that, if we could obtain an honest estimation of how much it costs to produce the literature as well as the parliamentary costs and the cost of *Hansard* and the Government Printer, we would have second thoughts about it. The print of the documents that are produced for us to read to try to cut costs is so small that we need three or four pairs of glasses. It is too small even for people with normal eyesight. We have imposed a cost on them; they will now have to purchase a set of spectacles. There is another disadvantage.

Under the old system all members were involved and they knew what had happened. However, under the current system, three members from each side of the political spectrum ask the Minister and his or her advisers an exhausting number of questions. Who in their right mind would read every word of the Committee process? Some people may claim to do that, but they may have a tendency to wander away from the facts or the truth. If an honourable member can be present and hear the questions and answers, they are more likely to comprehend what happened.

Ministers of today are less informed than they were previously. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hanson have commented on this problem. Ministers tend to become lazy and to rely on the public servant to produce the material during the Estimates Committee; in other words, it is a method by which to get the Minister off the hook. I hope that that is not the intention of this system and I did not hear anything to that effect during discussions in the Party structure, but that is the outcome. Rather than being better, I believe that this new system is worse than the old one.

I do not know whether or not a better system could be devised and whether, if it is a form of dorothy dix question, the prepared answers could be inserted in *Hansard*. In those circumstances, the answers could be circulated before the Committee sits so that all members know the questions and answers. As a result, time could be saved and other questions related to that matter could be encouraged. The present system wastes the taxpayers' money. If we had an open Government, it may work. In many ways the Dunstan Government was an open Government as was the Tonkin Government. Some Ministers who were learning the ropes were not perhaps as open as some of those from the Dunstan era, but the present Government is one of the most secretive and defensive Governments that I have experienced in nearly 21 years. Members can laugh at that, but I ask them to look at the record and they will find that that is the case.

Unfortunately, we do not have an investigative media; rather, they like to receive the handouts and pick out those which might be interesting, but we have to live with that. To illustrate the secrecy of this Government, I asked the Minister of Lands, who is also the Minister of Water Resources, whether her department's policy in the Hills catchment area was in conflict with the Minister of Tourism's policy.

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

Mr S.G. EVANS: Just before the evening break I was in the process of pointing out the difficulty I had getting the Minister of Water Resources to understand my question in relation to what I saw as a conflict between the policies of the Engineering and Water Supply Department and the Tourism Department. In seeking that information I was not stirring or trying to say that I disagreed with tourism in the

Hills. I was not saying that I believed there was no need to consider what pollution occurred to our water resources in the Hills; I was simply trying to show that there was a conflict, that there were double standards and that there was hypocrisy in the way the policies were implemented.

I did that because the argument of the Engineering and Water Supply Department through the Ministers over the years has been that we cannot allow more people to live in the water catchment area because human activity pollutes, or has the potential to pollute, water that is used for human consumption within the State and in particular the metropolitan area. What I have sought at other times over the years (and this argument has gone on for some 20 years to my knowledge) is to ascertain what action or what activity from human beings would pollute or have the potential to pollute. I am told it is just from living there; the waste from septic tanks, dogs excreta (pets in other words); excreta and urine from human beings; oil and grease from motor cars; and the pollution that is picked up in the run-off from concrete or hard surfaced areas.

I can understand that argument, but within the past few years we have had a massive push for tourism and it is fair to say that the Minister of Tourism is proud that more than one million visits a year are made to the Hills by tourists. I take it that those visitors use the toilets, and drive motor-cars or are taken by other people who drive motor vehicles. A lot of them take pets. In fact they enjoy taking a pet dog or cat, or sometimes both, and letting them roam through the Hills. So there is a conflict, and there are double standards.

It is very hard for a property owner who, for example, owns maybe 20 hectares (approximately 50 acres) and who would like to have one of his family build a residence and live on the property, to have one department saying, 'You cannot live there because if you do so you will pollute', while another department is saying, 'As many people as possible can come to the Hills and virtually do what they like except damage other people's property.' There is no way that anybody can walk around and make sure that visitors use the toilets provided. There is nothing to stop them walking their dogs which leave waste material on the footpaths or nearby.

In fact, the Engineering and Water Supply Department treatment works—in particular, Woodside and Hahndorf—are virtually on the main catchment stream to the Mount Bold reservoir. We all know that it is not purified to the degree that it would be in other areas where it is recycled through the reticulated system to private homes, etc. We know that it is full of nutrients, one of the real problems which cause the eutrophication of the water supplies necessitating the use of copper sulphate—or bluestone—to counteract it.

It is about time that we declared it unacceptable to have any more people living in the Hills—we have enough there now—and applied the same standard to tourism; or we could say that there is room for more people to live on some of the properties where homes can be built far enough back from the streams to have a proper septic tank system installed with several processes for the purification of the waste. It is one or the other.

I am as much pro tourism as anybody, but the way we apply standards at the moment I find to be unacceptable. It is impossible in some cases to insist that people install on their housing allotments a septic tank system at least 50 metres from a stream, we should apply our minds to the hypocrisy of that situation.

The reason why the Minister did not answer me in the Estimates Committee was that that question could not in

all honesty be answered, because there is a conflict between the two departments. I would have preferred the Minister to admit that there is a problem which we all need to examine, regardless of which side of politics we are on, instead of ducking for cover and giving me a lecture, because I know and understand the situation better than the Minister is ever likely to.

I also asked the Minister a question about computers for members' electorate offices as sums of money were mentioned for such equipment. This would include word processors, and I realise that the amount of money stated would not buy equipment for every office. I raised the point that some members have word processors—and have had them for some time—whereas others do not. I have tried to have that situation corrected by every means that I can use. I asked whether members would get colour coding with the new photocopiers with which they have been issued. I was one of the first to get one and that might have been a method to try and shut me up. If it was, bad luck, it did not work. I know the policy is to give everyone a photocopier, but that has not been done. If that is not the policy, I am quite happy for mine to be returned.

I asked the Minister about colour coding and facsimile machines. I think that all members should note the answer given by the Minister of Housing and Construction, because it is no good hiding it: it is in the Estimates Committee report. I know that as a Minister he gets all the privileges that some backbenchers will never—and could never expect to—get. He says that he believes that members should come face to face with their electors in order to get to know and solve their problems. In that respect, I do more than he has ever done. He said that members should use the generous electorate allowance that they are given to buy that equipment. I believe that he knows better than that. He knows that by the time they use the allowance for their cars and for other equipment needed in the office and for all the functions and donations, many backbenchers could prove that that was an unfair and inaccurate statement.

I do not accept that comment from the Minister. In the past I have been quite happy to acknowledge that we might be getting benefits that we should not get, but in this instance, having regard to the number of community organisations and sports that there now are, compared to the number that there used to be, I think it is unfair to say that the electorate allowance is generous enough—and I think the words used were 'very generous'—to enable us to buy our own equipment. I think we must make clear not necessarily only in this place but elsewhere that such a comment is unfair. I support the Bill.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE (Coles): As many of my colleagues have mentioned, in many respects the Estimates Committees were a disappointment to the Opposition. As far as I was concerned, the environment and planning Estimates Committee provided a quite reasonable presentation of the facts. The Minister for Environment and Planning was very relaxed about letting his officers answer questions, and information that was sought was provided. There was a harmonious spirit between those on both sides of the Chamber, and I think that the whole exercise was reasonably productive. However, I cannot say the same about the tourism Estimates Committee, which seems to deteriorate further every year.

Mr Tyler: Rubbish!

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: The member for Fisher says that that is rubbish. However, it is interesting that, in relation to the people who were sitting in the gallery that day, and who had been sitting in the galleries of both Houses

on previous days of that week and during the preceding week, at the commencement of a break, one person, who happened to be a State Transport Authority bus driver, leant over the gallery and said that he had never seen such a poor performance. That comment was heard by others who were in the Chamber, and it reflected the feelings of Opposition members who were asking questions.

For some reason or other, the Minister of Tourism seems to be quite paranoid about letting any of her officers answer questions. In the first year that she was a Minister I put it down to some degree of uncertainty and some wish on her part to take the lead and to be seen to be knowledgeable. As a consequence, she would ask each of her officers for the answers to questions and then regurgitate those answers to the Committee. That, of course, is a very time-consuming process. I would estimate that at least 10 minutes were wasted while the Committee sat in silence, during which time the Minister conducted *sotto voce* conversations with her officers, and then repeated to the Committee what her officers had said to her—presumably, edited for the Committee's benefit.

On only one occasion did the Minister permit one of her officers to answer a question, and in the two minutes or so that he addressed the Committee I believe that we learnt more and were given more factual information than had been the case in the previous two hours when the Minister had been answering questions. I think all members would admit that it is somewhat extraordinary for a Minister not to permit the Director or Director-General of a department, as the case may be, to answer any questions which properly might fall within the province of that officer.

For the second year running, the Adelaide Convention Centre was the subject of questioning and, for the second year running, the Minister was unable to answer the questions. She did not appear even to understand the questions, and she refused to permit the General Manager of the centre to respond to the questions, as he could well have done. It happens that the Managing Director of Tourism South Australia is also Chairman of the body which supervises the Convention Centre, but neither was he permitted to answer any of the questions. The result was an extremely frustrating four hours or so during which the Minister was philosophising and politicking about various aspects: if one looks through *Hansard* there is much talk and very little in the way of facts. The progress was so slow it was a bit like watching a glacier form.

The Hon. H. Allison: Or watching grass grow.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Yes, watching grass grow, as the member for Mount Gambier said. Watching a glacier form is somewhat slower, and I think the honourable member would have had to be present during the tourism Estimates Committee to obtain an idea of the very tedious time we had trying to extract information. As I say, the view of the Minister's performance was widely shared, and people were not impressed. One of the interesting bits of information that we managed to extract from the Minister is something about which the Government cannot be very proud in terms of its management.

A question I asked of the Minister about the breakdown of international marketing funds appears on page 333 of the *Hansard* report of the Estimates Committees. Earlier during the Committee the Minister said that Tourism South Australia places less emphasis on the Japanese market because of the manifest difficulties in attracting visitors from that market without the benefit of a direct flight link with Japan. However, when the Committee broke down the expenditure on the various international markets, it was clear that more is spent in Japan than in any other market.

In other words, notwithstanding the fact that Japanese visitors spend more per head than any other international visitors, I doubt that they spend sufficient per head to make it worth spending four or five times per head in attracting them compared with what we spend on attracting other visitors.

I asked the Minister to explain to the Committee how much we receive from what we spend in the Japanese market compared with what we receive for what we spend in other markets. Back came the information which, in itself, partly revealed the answer to another question I had asked as to how much influence the Premier's Department exerts on Tourism South Australia when it comes to the allocation of marketing funds. The Minister replied:

The figures for Japanese expenditure last year are somewhat distorted in a sense because they involve a one-off expenditure. The Tourism South Australia budget contributed to some of the expenses of South Australia's participation at the Okayama expo earlier this year, to the tune of, I believe, around \$100 000. That was part of an overall State Government effort to have a presence at Okayama as part of an expo which was designed to celebrate the opening of the new Seto-Ohashi bridge in the Okayama prefecture.

If the Premier's Department places such value on the celebration of the opening of a bridge in a Japanese prefecture that it believes South Australia should contribute \$100 000 towards that celebration, surely the very least that should occur is that the Premier should take that money out of his department's own budget.

It is outrageous that the Premier should plunder the marketing budget of Tourism South Australia in order to advance projects that he believes may or may not advance the economic interests of this State. It is demonstrable that there can be very little benefit to tourism in South Australia through the expenditure of \$100 000 to celebrate the opening of a bridge.

There is considerable resentment amongst the regions, particularly, but also amongst some of the major operators in Adelaide that the marketing priorities of Tourism South Australia are distorted and the Minister admitted that it was a distortion as a result of the involvement of the Premier's Department in determining priorities for Tourism South Australia.

In my electorate right now there is a great deal of distress and resentment that the State Government cannot find a sum of between \$5 000 and \$10 000—perhaps a little more—to keep open the swimming pool on the Magill campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education. That pool serves all the primary and high schoolchildren in the existing localities, the brownies, scouts and guides, the over-fifties swimming groups, the Aussie swimming group, water polo clubs and a vast range of swimming and lifesaving activities. There is every likelihood that, because of the Government's penny-pinching, the pool will lie idle with approximately \$18 000 being spent to keep it on a care and maintenance basis this season whilst somewhere down the drain in Japan the Government has poured \$100 000 into celebrating the opening of a bridge. South Australians are entitled to ask where the Government's priorities lie when that is the way in which it behaves.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: It is incredible.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: As the member for Heysen says, it is incredible. Departments should be able to determine their own budgets: the Premier should not intervene and snaffle bits and pieces here and there from his other Ministers when he wants to impress the Japanese. If we can afford to be in that league, we should allocate sums from the departments that are responsible. If we cannot afford to be in that league, we should stay out of it, and we should not plunder the tourism budget in order to fulfil the Pre-

mier's grandiose plans to impress other people with possibly dubious benefits for South Australia.

As I say, the swimming pool at the Magill campus is a matter of extreme concern to a large number of people in the eastern and north-eastern suburbs. If that pool closes—if it is forced to close—because the Government refuses to allocate funds to make up the gap between the income that the pool can raise as a result of its own management and promotion and the amount needed to keep it running effectively, the manner in which it is spending money in other areas will be taken note of by the voters in my electorate and in the electorates of the member for Hartley, the member for Todd, who is the Minister of Mines and Energy, and the member for Norwood, who is Minister of Education and who has the power to allocate funds through the primary schools and high schools budget to keep that pool going for learn-to-swim campaigns.

It is a strange and distorted set of priorities that has led to the circumstances outlined in the Estimates Committee by the Minister of Tourism. Other interesting information from that Committee, which we should scrutinise and question, was in response to a question about hotel beds in the city of Adelaide. The Minister noted that it is expected that 500 additional hotel and motel rooms will be available in Adelaide in time for the forthcoming Grand Prix. This has been brought about by the opening of the new Hyatt Hotel—a perfectly splendid hotel, as those who attended the opening can attest to—which has 369 rooms. The Minister went on to say that another four hotel and motel establishments will add to available room capacity for the forthcoming Grand Prix. A further 875 rooms are in the advanced planning stage or are actually under construction, which makes a total of more than 1 200 rooms. In addition, a further 652 rooms are in the preliminary planning stage and could very well come on stream by the early 1990s.

We are talking about something fewer than 2 000 additional hotel rooms in a city where the average occupancy of hotels is shuddering around the 50 per cent mark. This is in marked contrast to the hotel occupancy of four-star and five-star hotels in the interstate capitals of between 80 per cent, 90 per cent and sometimes reaching up to 100 per cent.

Of course, in Grand Prix week all those rooms will be taken, but can we afford to maintain room stock at that level for a once a year event or, in the case of the Festival of Arts, a once every two years event, and to have those rooms only half full for the remainder of the year? The hotel industry is clearly concerned, and equally clearly the hotel industry is constrained from speaking out. Who wants to acknowledge that occupancy rates are running only at half levels and, similarly, with the Government's big development push, who wants to make any public statement? Who in private industry wants to make any public statement which would indicate that we must scrutinise all development proposals with a view to whether they are really needed or whether we are talking about development for development's sake.

I believe that the question of hotel occupancy in this city needs much more attention than it has been given. It is true that we need that accommodation for Grand Prix week, but I do not think anyone has suggested that Rome should build sufficient hotels to accommodate all visitors during Holy Week, or that any other of the great cities of the world that have great annual events should build sufficient hotel rooms to accommodate every visitor during those great events.

Mr Duigan interjecting:

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Indeed, it is private investment decisions, which the Government is encouraging, and I would think that, if private investors scrutinised more closely the visitor figures for the past five years in South Australia and looked at the Government's record, the crazy and haphazard marketing plan and the stop-start revolving door process that has governed Tourism South Australia's Marketing Division for the past three years, they would be less inclined to have the degree of confidence that one should have in a Government, which has a stable, clearcut and vigorous marketing campaign that does not lurch from month to month and year to year, and which has a clear sense of direction and clear goals.

I now refer to the Estimates Committee on environment and planning. Several matters arose that concerned me, but I will refer to two in particular. One is the cost of sand replenishment on metropolitan beaches, and I will have to raise that issue on another occasion. The other matter was the evasiveness of replies in response to questions about the cost of infrastructure for the Wilpena development. It seems extraordinary that, if the Government is currently negotiating with the developers about the leasing costs of the proposed resort, the Government is unable to identify the capital cost of infrastructure to meet the requirements of the management plan that has been released in concert with the environmental impact statement, a procedure which has no statutory justification in so far as a management plan is clearly not an environmental impact statement. An environmental impact statement is clearly not a management plan and, to mix the two, as has been done in that statement, really results in a conglomerate which is not helpful and which may be considered by some to be *ultra vires*.

Neither the Minister nor his officers were able to estimate the cost of that infrastructure, and they kept saying that it depended on the standard of finish that was required for the various items of infrastructure. Of course it depends on the standard of the finish but, if the Government at this stage does not know the standard of the finish, how can it possibly undertake negotiations with the developer to ensure that it recoups the cost of that infrastructure over the period of the lease in a way that does not place a burden on the taxpayer? I found the answers to those questions to be unsatisfactory, and I believe that the Government has made clear a great deal to do with that development. Further questions certainly need to be asked. The Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service stated:

We would be after rental in the terms of several hundreds of thousands of dollars per annum on today's prices. We would be expecting that whatever we get would be sufficient not only to provide a works program that resulted in a progressive improvement of the quality of the park—not stability but improvement—but as well an ability to provide visitor facilities, services and seasonal ranger programs, educational programs, and so on, from those moneys that would be a significant improvement over what is there.

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

Mr BLACKER (Flinders): I, too, wish to briefly comment on the performance and conduct of the Estimates Committees, and more particularly to express some concern at the way in which the Committees appear to be heading. When the Committees were established in this format in the early 1980s I believe that they had considerable merit. Provided that Committee members, Ministers and their staff responded to that challenge, I believe that only good could have come from it. Regrettably, since that time we have seen a deterioration in both questions and answers, and I do not know that we can point the finger at anyone in particular. But

the overall effect and net gain that these Committees should give to the Parliament and the people of South Australia has been missed. I think it behoves this House not to throw out these Committees, as some members have suggested, but to look at their operations and undertake some disciplinary action in relation to all members to see that they are conducted in a way which is more meaningful and which has a much more tangible effect for the State.

I sat in on many of the Committees and, apart from those who were duly elected as Committee members, I was probably the most regular attender of any member of this Parliament. Yet, I wondered about the worth of my attendance, about whether I could gain anything out of it, and really, about the purpose of the exercise. I listened, sometimes for hours, at each of those Committees to try to gain a meaningful thread of argument or inquiry coming from Government and Opposition members. Regrettably, in most instances it took at least an hour for the turn of the respective members to come around again, which meant that there was a terrific amount of filibustering. Generally, it appeared that there was a deliberate attempt to avoid giving information to the Committees.

The main point I will raise concerns the agriculture line, and more particularly the attitude of the Government towards the drought on Eyre Peninsula. Those who can envisage what it was like yesterday with the howling north wind and the 34-plus degrees temperature in many areas will know the misery of many of those people. It has been estimated by some people that on that one day several millions of dollars of income would have been taken from the Eyre Peninsula region. That day meant that many farmers who might have had a return on their seed and perhaps a little bit of grain to sell will be further severely affected.

The imaginary line is rapidly moving south. Hundreds more farmers are being seriously affected. Last week the Minister of Agriculture visited the Eyre Peninsula, and I commend him for so doing. I expressed the wish during the budget debate that the Minister and the Premier visit Eyre Peninsula to see what is happening. The Minister did go over and prior to that he went to Canberra to try to secure a financial package that he believed would assist some of those people. The outcome of the meeting has resulted in the Government's proposals to offer additional finance basically on a loan arrangement which has the net overall effect of removing people from the land. I have problems with that principle, because it is reducing the number of young farmers and farming expertise, which has been the backbone of this State and nation, and generally winding down the agricultural areas of the State.

The argument has been that people are in a drought area and therefore they should get out. That is an absolute load of rubbish. Although there has been a string of unusually low rainfall seasons, a situation that has not occurred in this State for a long period, the tide will turn. Because the land has been rested for such a long time, when it does rain next year or the year after there will be bumper crops. It will be difficult for this State to handle the grain and get rid of it and for the grain boards to sell it.

The farmers are looking for breathing space, and a sympathetic Government would give them breathing space. I attended the meeting at Wudinna at which the Minister of Agriculture was present. A number of people gave pre-arranged speeches and were called in order by the chairperson, Mrs Betty Clift. The general thrust of all speakers was that they do not want hand-outs but rather breathing space. They want Governments to get off their backs so that they can farm, taking the risks of seasonal conditions. The Governments should get the high interest rates, high costs of

production and things over which they have some manipulative control (if they want it) off the farmer's backs so that the farmers can carry out the task of farming. I am sure that things would come good.

One of the speakers, the Director of South Australian Cooperative Bulk Handling, said that since 1982 up to the present season the grain intake in every silo on Eyre Peninsula had increased; yet since 1982 the net return to the farmers had decreased every year. So, we have escalating production but escalating costs and, therefore, deteriorating net profit or gain. Many statistics are being printed in local and State papers which clearly indicate what is happening to the farming community.

Members interjecting:

Mr BLACKER: That's got nothing to do with it. I take offence at people mocking what is one of the most serious situations which this State and my area has confronted in a long time. The only thing that lets these people, in their naivety, get away with it is that the whole State is not similarly affected. If it had been, this State would be on its knees but, because the area in question is relatively small in overall State terms, the matter is put in the too-hard basket. The Government does not want to know about it or treat it as a drought area.

They just want to say, 'Stay away; keep out of it.' That is the Government's attitude time and time again. The real concern is that these people whom the Minister went to see last week do not want hand-outs. They virtually rejected the offer of money, because they know that the only people who can take advantage of that money are those who are presently viable and who did not buy land in the past six or seven years. The offer is made so that that person can buy out the unviable person, that is, the unfortunate farmer who happened to acquire land or tried to improve his property, at the request of Governments on the farm build-up in many cases.

Present indications are that if the viable person takes on that extra money, he will become unviable if not almost immediately certainly within one or two years. The only person who will take that on is the one who will gamble that things will improve in a hurry. If they believe that, they have much more faith in Governments than I have. That is really the crux of the situation. The Government of the day is sitting by just watching this happen.

To some degree I feel sorry for the Minister who went over there because he had just come back from Canberra hoping that this financial package would save the day for him, but it did not: it had no real effect. Now we find the Minister and the Government sitting back as, it was likened to me, Nero sitting down fiddling while Rome burned. That is what is happening. Given a day like yesterday with a searing hot north wind blowing dust 100 kilometres across Boston Harbor and Yorke Peninsula, the people in those areas could well be facing those circumstances for at least another eight months before the wet season comes in. What these people need is some sort of assistance so they can move their stock to agistment areas or freight in feed. I am not suggesting that all stock should be kept on the place and feed brought in—that is unrealistic. But top breeding lines should be kept because, in many cases, generations of breeding in those lines would be lost if stock could not be agisted.

I know that it is quite okay in the lower part of Eyre Peninsula. There are some good patches and some bad patches. Generally, many of the people down south are agisting stock from up north, and it is to their credit that those enjoying good conditions are endeavouring to look after some of their colleagues in the north who are so

drastically affected. I can only express again my serious concern and implore the Government to have another look at the situation.

In my budget speech I referred to the need for the Government of the day to look at the effect of this drought (and I am focusing on this drought, but it could well happen to another area next year) on small country towns. I do not think people have really stopped to realise what is happening. However, full marks to the Victorian Government. It recognised there was a problem and commissioned a very detailed report on samples of the major and smaller towns in country areas of Victoria. Members of the inquiry went into those areas, interviewed people and considered in depth the implications of the drought in those areas. That is what is necessary in South Australia. We need that sort of inquiry so we can positively identify the responsibilities of the State Government, the Federal Government, local government and local communities.

When I look at the towns within my electorate, I see what is happening to sporting groups. Already, two football associations have had to amalgamate, and the Kimba club is looking to amalgamate with the County Jervois club because there are not enough members to maintain a football team. There is a complete reshuffle of sporting clubs and, if sport is removed from a small country town, the very lifeblood of that community is removed. The Government is not tackling those sorts of issues. It is not looking at those matters which are of serious concern to those people and, when a person is right on his uppers, so to speak, the situation is serious.

People, who have been in such dire financial straits that they have been able to qualify for unemployment benefits, have come to me. In order to qualify, they have to declare that they have absolutely no further interest in their property and they have to sign away their farms. In one case farmer had to borrow money for petrol so that he could get to Port Lincoln where, fortunately, we were able to help him obtain unemployment benefits. If he had not obtained unemployment benefits, we do not know what would have happened. A mortgage sale had already occurred and they had tried to bleed him for every last cent.

I believe that the scheme, which was known in the 1930s as the Farmers Assistance Board, should be resurrected. It should be entitled the Country Assistance Board because it should apply not only to farmers but also to the business community. Unless the business community can survive, the heart of the town and that community disappears also. The purpose of that scheme was that, before a financial institution could foreclose on a farmer or a small business, it had to appear before the Country Assistance Board to prove that the business or farmer was not being short-changed or, more particularly, that it was not an attempt to foreclose early.

Members know that a number of people have been allowed to continue on their farms this year, but at this very moment people are being threatened with the sale of their farms, because the harvest was not as good as expected. Although some people might have a shearing in the near future, they will not be allowed to continue this year. A Country Assistance Board would help to overcome these problems and at least it would guarantee that the operations would be on a 12 month rollover basis. The Government's strategies for the rural situation should not be formulated on an annual basis but, rather, they should be on at least a five year rollover basis and, in some of the more marginal areas, on a 10 year roll-over basis. Unless the Government implements policies and provides incentives which allow farmers to

provide in the good years for the bad years, we will always have this problem.

In 1983 the Income Equalisation Deposits scheme (IED) was abandoned. Since then we have had a number of quite good years and in those good years farmers should have been encouraged to set aside \$20 000 or \$50 000, which should not be taxed. However, when they need that money, it could then be classified as income for that year and, as such, it could then be taxed at that time. Various governments have put farmers in the high tax bracket and have abandoned the IED. They wanted to get as much as they could out of the farmers and, in those years of plenty, they squeezed and taxed them to the hilt. However, now that the farmers are facing difficult times, that extra income concession would allow them to continue.

I have spoken a little longer than I expected to on this issue, but I reiterate my concerns about what is happening. I do not believe that the Government understands the situation. I commend the Minister for visiting the area and I invite the Premier to have a good look at those areas and to talk to the people concerned. More particularly, he should talk to some of the ministers of religion. Last Thursday the Reverend Eric Kirkham, who is the only resident clergyman in Kimba, attended the meeting with the Minister. He was able to relate the sense of helplessness that many of these people feel, because of the droughts and frosts that they have experienced over the past two or three years, with little or no ability to help themselves, because of the bureaucracy and the severity of the taxation system. That incentive needs to be given so that the general community can help get itself back on the track.

Another tragedy is that the people who are forced to move out of the areas are in the main the young married families or the single chaps. Many of them have gone to Roxby Downs. As I said before, it is very fortunate that some of these people have been able to find employment at Roxby Downs. However, the farming expertise that is left is growing older. There will not be, and there is not a wave of new young talent coming into the rural areas. Farming is now a much more sophisticated vocation. It is no longer possible to sit on the back of a plough and to do all the accounting and budgeting in one's head. It is a highly sophisticated area. Calculations must be made about chemicals and sprays and all sorts of other things. We must have the young people coming in, and the Government can help to keep them there by applying a broad brush approach.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I was privileged to be in attendance as a participating member on three committees: the Minister of Agriculture and his associated portfolios; the Minister of Labour and his associated portfolios; and the Minister of Education with his various portfolios. I guess the responses from the Ministers varied, according to the individual Ministers. At times I was very happy with the answers forthcoming; I thought a lot of information was provided. At other times it was a little bit of a waste of time when not much information came forth. I suppose my biggest disappointment was when questions were directed at a relatively inexperienced Minister. The opportunity was there for the Minister to call on his advisers, who were all there, keyed up with their information. On quite a few occasions, the Minister decided that he would prefer to give the answer and, whilst he might have been provided with a note or two from a particular adviser, it was not nearly as comprehensive an answer as could have been gained if the Minister had decided to take second place on that occasion and let his adviser give the full details.

I feel that the Ministers need to be made aware of the fact that their advisers seem to do their homework. I know from speaking to several of the officers at various times during the two weeks of the Estimates that they were prepared and ready to give the various answers. I believe that at the end of the day on occasion they were disappointed that they had not been called upon when a question had been asked relating to their expertise. Since we have the Estimates Committees system, which has great potential for both the Opposition and the Government to get more details on the various points that are raised, why not use it to the full and use the officers so that South Australia as a whole can benefit, rather than allowing a Minister to stifle the material coming forward. I would have liked to serve on other committees, as there are many areas of interest to me in my electorate and the State as a whole. However, I am well aware that a person's commitment to a committee is limited.

I would like to raise a matter in relation to Aboriginal affairs at Point Pearce. I sought information from the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on what he was doing about the situation at Point Pearce, where there is considerable division within the community as to who makes up the governing council. This matter goes back some months, when a group of concerned residents decided that they could no longer put their confidence in the council. It appears that the council should have gone to the people earlier for an election. The residents put out a statement saying that they would take over as an alternative body to the community council.

I felt that this situation was very worrying. When I heard about it I contacted the Minister's office and sought information about what was being done. I recall that two meetings had been held, at least one of which was attended by a ministerial adviser. The second meeting was held some days later, although I do not recall whether a ministerial adviser was present. Nothing came from those meetings and nothing was done to resolve the impasse.

Mr Don Dunstan later visited Point Pearce, and it appears that little eventuated from that meeting. Whilst he made suggestions which could have been made by anyone, the Aboriginal community was no better off, because both groups felt that they were in the right. Last week the Supreme Court directed that an election be held on or about 17 October. Hopefully this will resolve the situation and a community council can be duly elected and commence operating at Point Pearce. This court decision was made as a result of an election that was held some weeks ago. I suppose one could call it a Claytons election: the election you are having when you are not having an election, because it was declared null and void because of certain irregularities in the way in which the booth was set up and how people were asked to cast their votes.

When the Minister was questioned, his general answer related to the fact that the people themselves had to sort out their own problems. In essence, I do not disagree—the people do have to sort out this matter—but surely the Minister is aware that other community bodies, such as local governments, have had their problems in the past. I can think of an example when the previous Liberal Government dissolved the council. It took over and saw that a new council was duly elected. I believe that a similar situation should have occurred at Point Pearce some time ago and that, if necessary, the State Government, in association with the Commonwealth Government, could have appointed a person in charge.

What sort of damage has occurred at Point Pearce? Unfortunately, there has been some violence, and those who live

there are concerned that this violence may increase in the next few weeks. There has been a lot of ill feeling between people, and they have no leader to go to because it is an inconclusive situation in relation to their elected leader.

Worse still, earlier this year they lost \$170 000 that was supposed to be provided for a housing program. Because of irregularities and a lack of the appropriate forms being filled out and the appropriate material being provided to the organisers of the housing program, that \$170 000 did not go to Point Pearce.

Last week I was again approached by several people from the Point Pearce community who asked me whether I was aware that that community would probably lose another \$150 000 for the housing program and also for its apprenticeship program, under the Southern Community Apprenticeship Training Scheme (SCATS), and, more importantly, whether the Government was aware of this. I telephoned the Minister's office and sought information about this. It became obvious to me that the Government did not know that that \$150 000 of Commonwealth money was about to be lost. Thankfully, due to my call, it appears that an extension has been given to enable the appropriate material to be processed and to enable the Aboriginal community to get its act together and obtain money for the renovation and restoration of various houses in the area, and also to provide employment for at least one apprentice and several other people.

This is the way that the Government is treating one of the Aboriginal communities in our State. It is displaying a 'no care' attitude. It is obvious that this community needs assistance. It needs help and it is seeking that from the Government because where else can it go? Help is not coming from people in their own community; they recognise that they need help from elsewhere. Yet during the Estimates Committee, and in my opinion since then, the Minister has abrogated his responsibilities and is trying to wash his hands of it—as Pilate did so many centuries ago—and say 'Look, it has nothing to do with me.' However, I say to the House that it has everything to do with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. The sooner he decides that he must take some responsibility and that he must initiate action, the sooner we can see Point Pearce settle back into a stable lifestyle, when people there will no longer have to fear retribution from their own ranks and when they will know that the Government is supposedly aware of their problems.

It will be interesting to see how much the Government seeks to assist the people in the lead-up to the elections, and immediately after the elections, in an endeavour to set things back on an even keel. I have been pushing for some years to have, for example, an oval at Point Pearce planted with appropriate seed, so that it can be grassed and used by the local people; yet, every time no direction from any quarter is forthcoming. The Minister of Education and the Director-General of Education were over there last year, and an important step forward was made with the Director of Education saying that the Education Department would take over the sports complex and, I believe by implication, the oval. However, again, while some repairs have been undertaken to the sports complex, the last time I saw the oval—within the past two weeks—nothing had been done to cultivate it. We are again approaching the summer season, and it is highly likely that little can be done until after the coming summer—a further six-month delay, at the very minimum, unless something occurs very soon. The Minister has not fulfilled his duties in terms of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, and it is high time that he did so.

I finish this section by saying that, according to the information given to me, Point Pearce collects something like

\$8 000 in rent from those people occupying houses, compared with Gerard in the Riverland which raises something like \$50 000 in rent collected from fewer houses than exist at Point Pearce. Again, it is a clear example of how the Government could be collecting tens of thousands of extra dollars, of how the people renting houses could be given greater responsibility and greater acceptance with respect to the need to pay something towards their accommodation, but the Minister is not doing anything about it.

A second matter I wish to raise resulting from the Estimates Committees concerns the relocation of the saleyards from the present Gepps Cross/Cavan site to a site further north. The Minister acknowledged in response to a question during the Estimates Committee that Mallala was being considered as a possible site. I understand that the local council is very much in favour of the saleyards being established in the Mallala area, and that most people associated with the saleyards would be very happy with that move. We need to make sure that the Government does not just leave it to the industry to sort out its own problems.

Here is an example of how the Government can step in very easily and offer assistance at not too great a cost to ensure that the new saleyards are set up as soon as possible. Only today I was present at Pooraka when the Premier opened the new market which replaces the East End Market. The new Pooraka complex is fully owned by the industry. While it has had to do most, if not all, of the work by itself—and this has worked out very well for Adelaide and South Australia—there were times when the Government could have given much more help, either through guidance or through financial incentives, and it could have been completed much earlier.

I think most members would appreciate that there was talk of a new market for approximately 20 years. Let us hope that the saleyards, in association with Samcor's operations, are relocated much faster, and certainly within the next five to 10 years. I believe it is important that any relocation occurs as soon as possible, because the Pooraka/Gepps Cross/Cavan area is developing quite quickly and the relocation of the saleyards further north will be an advantage to most people using those facilities. After some questioning, the Minister agreed that some services, such as roads, possibly water services and the like, would be upgraded with the relocation of the saleyards to Mallala, but he indicated that there would be no direct financial assistance from the Government. I do not want to jump in too early while negotiations are continuing, but a few things have been put to me as to what is needed. I think it would be a bit premature to put them to the Minister tonight, but if he does not act within the next couple of weeks or so I will have no option but to make suggestions which should have come from his office rather than from the local member.

I was not a member of the water resources Committee but I trust that the new Minister will be able to grapple with some of the old problems concerning water reticulation to the State's rural and metropolitan areas. One problem relates to the use of asbestos pipe, of which there are thousands of kilometres in this State. In many cases the asbestos pipe was laid incorrectly in that, if the channel was dug in rocky or clay soil, the material was put straight back on top of the newly laid pipe. It does not take an expert to understand that, in those cases, the pipes have continued to crack and break for many years. Some pipes are breaking with such regularity that the only sensible course of action is to replace those pipes.

In the past, I have taken up such examples with previous Ministers and I have a couple of examples to take up with the present Minister. I hope that she will see reason and

not waste Government funds in repairing pipes that should be replaced, even for several kilometres, so that rural people have a guaranteed water supply. The Government will save money by not wasting it on unnecessary repairs. It was my pleasure to serve on the Estimates Committees and I only wish that I had the opportunity to ask more questions.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I appreciate the opportunity of speaking to the report and to discuss some of the issues that were raised during the Estimates Committees. Much has been said by my colleagues about the workings of these Committees. I support the concept strongly, as I always have. Providing the Committees are not abused by Ministers or members of the Committees, they serve a very real purpose. I share the concern that has been expressed by a couple of my colleagues regarding the costs associated with the formation of the Committees and I refer particularly to the Committee that dealt with the Department of Health. Well over 30 officers associated with the Minister of Health attended on that particular day. That is crazy and totally irresponsible. Providing the senior officers of the Health Commission are available—and they were—there is no need for other officers to attend as well.

As has been said on a number of occasions in this debate, no shame can be heaped on a Minister who is unable to answer a question specifically. If the Minister or his Director or Director-General cannot answer the question, the information can be sought on notice. That is a very sensible concept and one that should not be abused by the Committee. I would be very surprised if the majority of questions asked by members from both sides of the House could not be answered during the Committee by the Minister or, in the case of a new Minister, by the Director or Director-General (and, in the case of the Department of Health, it would be the Chairman of the Health Commission). Information can be made available within a set period, and that is satisfactory to most members of the Committee. I hope that Estimates Committees continue. I recognise that, under the Westminster system, the Minister is responsible, but members of Parliament should have the opportunity to question senior departmental officers on a more regular basis.

Certainly, there are considerable frustrations, particularly when members of the Committee have done their homework and have got a number of questions that they would like to ask, but were confronted with abuse, as abuse occurred on a number of occasions when Dorothy Dix questions were asked by Government backbenchers. That was a great pity, because Dorothy Dix questions take up the valuable time of the Committee. I am sure that Government backbenchers have a far greater opportunity to seek information and speak with Ministers than is the case for Opposition members.

Certainly, that was the case when I was a Minister, for obvious reasons. One was closer to one's own colleagues. That opportunity was provided, and that would be the case now. I would have hoped that Government members on the Committee might be prepared to step aside on a number of occasions and allow more questions to be asked by the Opposition, but that did not happen.

There are a number of issues on which I was anxious to seek information, and in the majority of cases I was able to get that information. One matter that has concerned me over a considerable period is the direction that we are taking in South Australia and in Australia in relation to the issues regarding liability. Certainly, I was interested to obtain information from a number of Ministers whose Committees

I was fortunate enough to serve on. I was interested to determine how the various Ministers saw this problem.

Certainly, it causes me considerable concern that we seem to be going at a rate of knots down the same road that America and other countries closer to us have followed. They have made mistakes that we should have learnt from, but still we are getting bogged down, and the liability factor is a real concern. I was able to seek information from the Minister for Environment and Planning on property issues. It seems that we take such incredible precautions and many regulations are brought down to protect people and the Government.

For example, we referred to issues where people built dwellings in the flood zone. There are so many restrictions and regulations that people have to work under. The same situation applies in fire prone areas, where new regulations and severe controls have been brought down. I would have thought that, if people wanted to live in those areas, they should realise the risks associated therewith. It would be easy enough to deal with this, as happens in New South Wales, where titles are amended and where it is pointed out through a title the difficulties that may be experienced by a person building a dwelling in a certain area, be it on a flood plain, in a bushfire area or in any other area.

As to the liability factor, I was interested to have a constituent visit me the other day and relate an incredible story. Some weeks ago on a Sunday morning he came out on his property at Littlehampton and found a motorbike parked across one of the gates into his property. He left it there for a while. Although he was keen to get onto the property, he was not anxious to move the vehicle, which was expensive, and he did not know the circumstances under which it had been left.

As it was imperative that he gain access to the property through the gate, at the end of the day he rang the police, who refused to move the cycle because of the liability situation. So, it sat there. The following morning he rang his local government which also refused to move it. Next, he rang the Department of Local Government to see what he should do about it. On each occasion it was pointed out to him that if any of those authorities had moved it they would be liable for any damage caused.

Of course, if one lives in the metropolitan area and a situation like that occurs, regulations are in place to enable one to move such a vehicle. However, outside the metropolitan area those regulations do not exist. In the end, that landholder had to wait two days before the people who owned the motorcycle came back. It had broken down and they had left it on the side of the road, not realising that it had been in an inconvenient place. This matter revolves around liability and the problem that any person would have experienced if they had moved that motorcycle. It was interesting to seek out information from at least three Ministers on that case.

I found the Minister for Environment and Planning, more than any of the other Ministers, prepared to provide the opportunity for his officers to answer questions. I am not sure why that was the case, but I suspect it may have been because he had a stinking cold and did not feel crash hot in any case.

The Hon. J.L. Cashmore interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: It has been pointed out to me by the member for Coles that he was the same last year. I certainly appreciated the way in which he handled his responsibility. He was very keen for his officers to provide more detailed information than was the case with other Ministers. I was particularly interested to be able to ask questions about a matter which had given me concern only

a couple of days before and which resulted from an article that appeared in the *Advertiser* relating to a proposal to introduce a scheme to swap Hills property titles. I was concerned about that because I believe that any plan to introduce a scheme in the Hills, where environmentally sensitive land owned by developers would be exchanged with the Government for other sites suitable for development, would need to be monitored very closely.

It was impossible to obtain much detail from the press release, so I was keen to question the Minister on his responsibilities in that area. I was keen to seek information on this situation from the Director-General of the department, who was able to make the situation more acceptable to me. However, it still needs close monitoring. I was also anxious to determine whether the Government intended to amend the Planning Act 1982 in a major way. Now that we have had time to see the Act working, I believe that there is a need for substantial amendment to it.

I hear all sorts of rumours from various sectors which suggest that the Government, because it is presently on this big development kick, is anxious to streamline the legislation. There are suggestions that it is looking to dispense with third party appeals in certain parts of the legislation. I suggest that if it is going to head down that track the Government should be very careful and consult with a large number of organisations that would be concerned about that action being taken.

I for one would see some benefit in providing a situation whereby developments could be speeded up. I certainly have problems with the environmental impact assessment procedures under the Act. Regrettably those procedures have become a farce and it is important the Minister give priority to amending that section of the Act. I understand that that is to happen. The information provided by the Minister suggests that he will be giving priority to that aspect.

I was also anxious to question the Minister on the establishment of a Japanese city. Some publicity has been given to that proposal. I am aware that a number of States have been consulting with a Japanese consortium to develop a large city in one of the States. I understand that four States—Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia—have all had discussions in that area. I was interested in the information that the Minister for Environment and Planning was able to provide. Some of the material passed on to me is rather frightening, to say the least. I do not want to see a large development, certainly in the southern part of the State, without considerable consultation, which certainly has not occurred to date.

I have also had the opportunity to express to the Minister for Environment and Planning my concerns about the Mount Lofty development. I will not spend a lot of time on that topic, but I express a very real concern about a proposal currently being considered which incorporates a 30 to 35 storey or 100 to 165 metre high communications tower, two pyramid shaped black glass buildings being seven and 10 storeys high, a massive shopping centre, a 170-room motel and a 500 to 600 person tavern. As I have said on so many occasions, those responsible for that development indicate that they would need at least 850 000 visitors a year to make the development viable. I have very real concerns about it.

I also had the opportunity to question the Minister of Emergency Services and, as he is in the Chamber presently, I point out that I still do not have answers to questions that I asked of him in November last year—11 months ago. It is all very well for the Minister to shake his head and say that it is under control—I hope that it is. It is incredible that I have waited 11 months for answers to important

questions on notice on the Metropolitan Fire Service, and I will be reminding the Minister frequently if that information is not provided. I was interested to learn from the Minister that new CFS legislation will be introduced within days, and if that does not happen I will be having more to say. I expressed my concern to the Minister and officers of the CFS present before the Estimates Committee that no action was being taken by the Government to rectify problems associated with CFS funding.

It staggers me that for well over 12 months the Premier and the Ministers responsible have been sitting on a report which contains, as I have been advised (because it has not been made public), excellent recommendations regarding ways in which the funding of the CFS can be significantly improved. I was disappointed to learn from the Minister that the funding situation is not to change. It was suggested by the Minister that it would not change because the issue was too much of a political hot potato. I make the point that it is far too important an issue just to back away from because it is too important politically and because the present Government sees that it is likely to lose points as the changes could be seen by some people as another tax. If the Minister lived in the Hills, as I do, and recognised the importance of the CFS in that area, he and the Government would realise the importance of improving that funding situation as a matter of urgency.

I served also on the Estimates Committee relating to health, and again I was disgusted at the way the Minister of Health handled his responsibility. Generally, I support the concept of these Committees and hope that in the future they are not abused, because the information that can be provided to this Parliament and to the Committees can be extremely valuable.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Mount Gambier): Earlier this afternoon the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke about his attendance at the Estimates Committee relating to the mines and energy portfolio and the forests portfolio, the one Minister being responsible for both areas. However, the Deputy Leader expressed his considerable surprise that, when he attempted to raise questions right from the very outset about the Electricity Trust of South Australia and its financial affairs, the Minister was adamant in his refusal to respond to any of those questions.

I spoke with the Minister in private during the day, and I do not propose to canvass his response to me, because members would realise that that just is not appropriate. Nevertheless, I would defend the case of the Deputy Leader on the basis that he approached the session in a reasonable frame of mind and simply said that he had questions to ask regarding the operations of ETSA. He noted there were no ETSA officers present in the Chamber at the time and he doubted whether the officers who were there to assist the Minister would be able to answer the questions with regard to statements made by the Auditor-General in his annual report. In his response, the Minister said that, since the Electricity Trust did not draw funds from the Government's Current Account, he did not propose to call any officers from the trust, nor did he propose to respond in detail to any of the questions.

He then put it to the Chairman of the Committee that it was up to the Chairman to bring down a ruling, and I recall that the Chairman's response was that he could relate the Electricity Trust affairs to certain lines within the budget estimates as presented, and therefore would not exclude questions on the trust. I must confess that, given that ruling, I was amazed, as was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when the Minister subsequently, and on repeated occasions,

refused either to call officers from ETSA to assist him or to respond in detail to quite numerous questions which we persistently tried to put to him during the session.

Even more surprising was a comment made by the Minister during mid-session when we again tried to question him on ETSA's financial status. Although I cannot remember his exact words, he said, 'I suppose that I'll be faced with a similar spate of questions in my capacity as Minister of Forests later during the day. Since that authority does not draw funds from the State Government and it is mainly an examination of the affairs of the South Australian Timber Corporation and others, I suppose I will have to make the same decision later on.' Surprisingly, later in the day, in relation to the Department of Woods and Forests, the first question related to the financial status of the South Australian Timber Corporation and, without demur, the Minister immediately responded and proceeded to do so, as did his officers, for the rest of that session.

During the course of that day there was a complete *volte face* on the part of the Minister. I do not know whether or not the Premier or other Ministers spoke to him during the course of the day, but it is unfortunate that the Minister was not equally cooperative when questioned in his capacity as Minister of Mines and Energy.

Scrimber was the subject of a ministerial statement when the Minister visited Mount Gambier. Enthusiastically (and properly so) the Minister said that he hoped that the Scrimber project, which has cost about \$30 million, would turn out to be something of a flagship for the South Australian Timber Corporation and that it would turn around the affairs of the corporation. When one looks at the financial affairs of the Timber Corporation, one discovers the following facts: that it has a venture in IPL (New Zealand) which has a deficit of about \$16.5 million; that the cost of the development of scrimber itself is estimated to be \$30 million; that Shepherdson and Mewett showed a loss; and that IPL (Nangwarry) had difficulties during the past two years in selling its laminated veneer lumber, which it was stockpiling.

It is quite possible to extrapolate the figures and to arrive at an estimated liability of the South Australian Timber Corporation of about \$60 million. The principal and interest has to be repaid. One way or the other, over the next 10, 20 or 30 years, the debt has to be amortised. It is unfair of the Minister to expect the new Scrimber project to repay Satco's entire debts. I do not believe that that would be possible in three, four or five decades. It places an unfair burden on that newly established organisation. Further, when one considers that the Scrimber venture is not wholly owned by the Department of Woods and Forests but, rather, that it is jointly owned by the State Government Insurance Commission and the Department of Woods and Forests, that reduces Scrimber's ability to continue repaying the debts incurred by the South Australian Timber Corporation at a rapid rate. I speak out more in defence of Scrimber than in joining the Minister in his high expectations that Scrimber will rapidly help to turn around the Satco debt position.

On 29 July the *7.30 Report* interviewed the newly appointed General Manager of Scrimber (Mr Graham Coxon), who confirmed that at that stage there were no orders for the Scrimber product and that, whilst it was an exciting new product, it was a gamble. I believe that his words were, 'All exciting new projects are a gamble.' That is a premise with which I by no means concur. Lots of exciting new projects are certainly not gambles—Roxby Downs, another venture in South Australia, is one of them.

However, he said that all exciting new products were a gamble, and then he mentioned the possibility of franchises with royalties coming in from similar plants all over the world. He also said that scrimber could be some 10 per cent cheaper than equal sized timber sections, which means that scrimber would be competing favourably with wood sections, laminated veneer lumber or the laminated timbers currently produced by Woods and Forests.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The former Minister asks, 'Is that good?' He was in charge, and I would simply put it to him that two of those other alternatives to which I have just referred, namely, the laminated veneer lumber from IPL (Nangwarry) and the laminated beams made by Woods and Forests Department in Mount Gambier are in fact competitors in the same field. So really scrimber has been introduced to compete with two other products with similar spans, that are being made by the South Australian Timber Corporation and Woods and Forests. It is in effect, in part, competing with itself on national and international markets.

I was also under the impression that some 12 months ago in the budget Estimates Committee, we were told by the then Minister, that royalties would be payable to the Woods and Forests Department only from plants manufacturing scrimber around Asia and the Pacific rim, and that possibly royalties accruing from Europe and maybe America might be paid to a different organisation. So apparently there has been a turnaround there, and perhaps, that Woods and Forests and Satco will reap in the benefit of royalties should other plants be established around the world.

That, of course, then begs the question as to how scrimber is to be sold internationally, if in fact plants are built and royalties are paid. It simply narrows down the field over which scrimber can be sold by the Mount Gambier plant. I am not putting these points with any desire to see scrimber fail; on the contrary, we in the South-East are extremely anxious that the project should succeed because timber and all associated products are the very life blood of the South-East, along with primary industry. But if the Minister were so confident in the South-East when he made his inspection of the timber plant, I simply advise him that I will be putting a series of questions on notice. The sorts of question I will ask are: 'have any orders now been placed for scrimber? Is there any pre-ordering? Have any of the staff associated with the South Australian Timber Corporation and scrimber been engaged in preselling, if so, where and when? Who has been overseas, for example, to do the canvassing? What would be the cost of scrimber per cubic metre? Surely the costs have already been worked out, if the General Manager says that it will be 10 per cent cheaper than equal timber sections. Does that mean that there will be a strong profitability from the sale of scrimber or will it just be marginal, in which case, the chance of scrimber paying off Satco's debt in the shorter term becomes increasingly difficult?

There are some 15 or 20 other questions that I will be placing on notice with regard to the quantities of scrimber to be produced annually. I believe the Minister said it will be 15 000 cubic metres in the next 12 months, doubling up to 30 000 and then going to 45 000 cubic metres over a period of three years. That is a considerable amount of material to sell.

I wonder to what extent the profitability has already been established by the department bearing in mind the substantial cost already incurred in getting the machinery in place plus the cost of paying staff and buying timber. I also recall that in the early days of the project we were informed that scrimber would use a substantial amount of what would

normally be regarded as scrap timber—a very small section—but I understand that the tolerance of timber now required for this sophisticated project will be somewhere between about 125 mm and 150 mm, and that really means that the tolerance is very close: it is not scrap timber at all. In fact, it is a range of timber size which is already in short supply following the decimation of the pine forests in the South-East by the 1983 bushfires.

I hope that with the allocation of a considerable extra amount of small wood to the Apcel plant at Snuggery, near Millicent, there will not be a shortage of this size of timber. I understand that we have an arrangement with the Victorian Forestry Division to bring in extra timber to the South-East. As I said, we are hopeful in the South-East that the scrimber project will get under way quickly and rapidly assume profitability, but I do not agree with the Minister that the burden of reducing Satco's very substantial debt should be placed on the Scrimber Corporation.

We all recall that the Premier introduced his budget statement with some enthusiasm, and supporting statements from the South Australian Financing Authority and the State Bank in the South-East have indicated that there is an upturn in South Australia. This does not seem to be borne out by a number of factors including the steady decline in population in South Australia, our reducing share of overseas migrants and our losses to other States of mainland Australia and to other countries overseas. Some of the statistics made available by the Australian Bureau of Statistics over the past few months show that South Australia's share of overseas migrants is the lowest for 40 years.

A brake seems to have been applied to South Australia's population growth. We have 8.5 per cent of Australia's population, yet in 1987 attracted only 4.5 per cent of overseas migrants. The figure is currently 4 per cent, so we are falling further behind. Over the past three years ABS tells us that there has been a net outflow of people from South Australia—7 000 have gone to live interstate—and that South Australia has had the lowest rate of natural increase to its population of any of the six States.

Moreover, in 1987 the number of marriages in South Australia was at its lowest level for 20 years, and South Australia's share of the national population has shrunk from 9 per cent to 8.5 per cent over the past 10 years. We have now slipped behind Queensland and Western Australia as far as population is concerned. It is important that South Australia continue to encourage overseas migration if only for the fact that the overseas migrant population age is 8.2 per cent under 40, whereas the national average is 6.5 per cent under 40.

It means that, by bringing in migrants, we can raise the number of young people in South Australia. That is a very important factor when one recognises, that of all States in Australia, South Australia has the highest percentage of people over the age of 65—in fact, 11.6 per cent, compared with the national average of 10.5 per cent. That extra 1.1 per cent is really very significant when one looks at it in terms of a reduction in the work force and an increasing number of people to sustain on various forms of pensions and, of course, hospitalisation, the provision of geriatric care, and other facilities for the aged.

Another aspect of the budget to which I draw the attention of the House concerns the fact that the Premier was very keen to point out his budget surplus. However, in 1986-87 Government property worth \$44.5 million was sold, and last year, 1987-88, \$89.8 million worth of Government property was sold. So, little surprise can be expressed at the fact that the Premier was showing a surplus and that he is hoping to show another surplus in the coming year. These

are taxpayers' investments that are being sold off to meet recurrent costs, and they are one-off sales. If one adds to that the sale and lease of power stations, another \$550 million was raised by the Electricity Trust of South Australia through the South Australian Financing Authority, which has that money sitting around to be reinvested. One of the questions that we were anxious to obtain a response to was whether the Electricity Trust at present gains any benefit from the interest accruing on that investment.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): I still strongly support the concept of the Estimates Committees, and in the six or seven years that they have been operating in this Parliament I believe that they have achieved some success. However, the success or failure of each individual Committee is very much determined by the attitude of the Minister whose portfolio is being examined. We still see a number of prepared lengthy Government questions being read out, with Ministers responding with very long, prepared answers. That effectively ties up 50 per cent of the time allocated for the various portfolio areas. For a Committee examining three or four portfolios, the time allocated for each can be as little as 1½ or two hours. With Government members using half of that time to ask prepared questions, to which prepared responses are given—which could easily be incorporated in *Hansard* without being read—effectively, for some portfolio areas the Government is cutting down the time for Opposition members to ask questions to little more than an hour. Very little can be achieved in one hour of questioning, and, in fact, each Opposition member is lucky to get the opportunity to ask any more than three or four questions. It is thus very difficult to engage in any in-depth discussion or debate.

However, I still support the concept of the Estimates Committees, although, quite obviously, if the Minister answering questions takes a certain attitude, a Committee can be rendered very ineffective. Some of the answers given by Ministers to questions asked by members of the Opposition were so lengthy that one wondered when the opportunity would come to ask another question.

Earlier today the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the Minister of Mines and Energy and his attitude when answering questions relating to the Electricity Trust of South Australia. We are all well aware that the Minister flatly refused to answer any questions in relation to ETSA. ETSA is one of the vital instrumentalities of the Government in South Australia. The Auditor-General reports on it, it is under direct ministerial control and it provides an essential service to South Australia. Given that ETSA is a monopoly, it is essential that Parliament should have the opportunity to question in depth its operations and efficiency.

However, the Minister completely denied Parliament that opportunity, and I have yet to understand his reasons. Perhaps he was frightened to answer the questions put to him, or perhaps he did not have the answers or sufficient experience and knowledge of that area of responsibility. However, it is an area which affects every person in South Australia and it is vital to industry and commerce in this State. At the moment in South Australia we have a situation where ETSA is miles behind in supplying power connections to various applicants, whether they be from the commercial or industrial sector or the private sector. The average waiting time, certainly in the country, is in the vicinity of six months, which is absurd. I have taken up this matter with the Electricity Trust in my own district, and the response is that the trust does not have the resources, and it does not have sufficient trained personnel to carry out the work.

ETSA is certainly a milking cow as far as the Government is concerned: it is an enterprise which the Government is using as a form of backdoor taxation. The levy extracted from ETSA each year at the expense of ratepayers is absolutely enormous, and it appears that it does not have the resources to meet its commitments. The Government says it is serious about making South Australia competitive, but a situation where the power authority in this State just does not have the trained personnel with which to make connections and provide power will make people think twice before coming to this State and establishing a business.

Of course, new home owners looking for power connection are told that the only guarantee the Electricity Trust can give is that it will endeavour to connect the supply before they move into a completed dwelling. In many instances, builders have no power supply available to them. Often the lines go right past a building site, yet ETSA claims not to have the resources or manpower to make the simple connection to a housing allotment.

I cite one example to highlight the situation, and I refer to a letter I received from Tarawein Limited after the Chairman of that organisation visited me. The letter reads:

Further to the interview with you of this day, 27-9-88, on behalf of Tarawein Limited I request your assistance in having the power supply reinstated to the Tarawein building by ETSA without delay. In 1986 a purchase agreement was signed by the directors of Jacana Pty Ltd for the purchase of Tarawein land and buildings on allotment 109, Town of Glossop, BLA volume 3130, folio 31.

The deeds of the property were then transferred to that company. Some time after that the power supply to the premises was removed by ETSA. The Directors of Jacana Pty Ltd were unable to finance the purchase agreement and the property has been repossessed for Tarawein Ltd. The property has now been leased to four separate companies. Three of these companies require power urgently. The commencement date of their lease is 1 October 1988. I have approached the regional manager of ETSA at Barmera to have the power reinstated. He arranged an interview for me with Mr Wayne Hutchinson, who advised me that the connection of the power would be classified as a new connection. The cost of the connection would be paid by Tarawein Ltd, and the waiting time would be at least six months.

The directors of Tarawein Ltd feel that, as the power supply was removed without consultation, it should now be reconnected by ETSA at its cost and without delay. One of the tenants for the building is a transport company which operates a run to the Adelaide fruit and vegetable market and power is required urgently to run the cool room as the soft fruit season is only a matter of a month hence. Trusting you can assist us with this matter.

In that instance, because of a lack of resources, the trust is unable to provide a connection to those four businesses that wish to begin operating immediately. The trust has a monopoly. Therefore, the Government has a responsibility to meet requests for service as quickly as possible. A delay of six months is totally unacceptable. If it were not a monopoly, if there were some competition, there would not be a delay. It is like a banking system with only one bank. Fortunately, if a person is not satisfied with the service from one bank, he or she can walk down the street and seek assistance from another banking organisation. I highlight this problem, particularly in the light of the attitude that was adopted by the Minister of Mines and Energy, who was not prepared to discuss ETSA before the Estimates Committee. That absurd situation must be rectified before next year's Estimates Committee.

The next matter to which I refer concerns the Lands Department and the method by which that department or the Valuer-General determines unimproved valuations, particularly for freeholding purposes. The Valuer-General values the unimproved value of land, and the accrued assets of a person occupying that land have become part and parcel of the valuation. A confused position is developing between the department's valuing for rating and taxing purposes and determining an unimproved value for freeholding purposes.

I cite an example to highlight the problem. A letter dated 26 August 1988, addressed to the Regional Manager, Murraylands, Department of Lands, Vaughan Terrace, Berri, states:

I refer to your offer of a land grant in lieu of irrigation annual licence 4438 held by me over portion of section 1790 of section 1019 Berri Irrigation Area at a purchase price of \$8 000. It is my understanding that the purchase price is fixed at what the department considers to be the unimproved value of the land in question. I submit that the land can only be valued on the basis of grazing land value, and at its highest that could only be \$50 per acre, for the following reasons:

1. The land is subject to regular flooding; since taking control of the land in 1961 it has been subject to flooding one year in six. Twelve acres of the land has, on average, been flooded one year in six.
2. The land must be valued on its merits and not by reference to any water entitlement attaching thereto.
3. The soil is extremely poor and, since taking up the property, we have carted on to it some 4 000 cubic yards of topsoil and some 300 to 400 tonnes of gypsum.
4. Despite our attempts to upgrade the soil on the property we are now faced with having to replant the property because of deterioration in the plantings.

In view of the above I would ask that the department reassess the value placed upon the land for freeholding purposes.

The letter is signed by R.E. Caddy. The Government is including in the unimproved value of that land many of the assets that are owned outright by the lessee. The department is obviously taking into account the water entitlement that is owned by the lessee. As well as a portion of the value of the irrigation equipment, comprising the pump, the rising main, the distribution system and the plantings, all of which belong solely to the lessee. The only interest that the Crown has in that land is its unimproved value. I agree that, for grazing purposes, the value of that land would be no more than about \$50 per acre, as suggested by Mr Caddy.

If that is the case, the unimproved value determined by the department for freeholding that property should be about \$600 or \$700 and not \$8 000. If the Government is serious about freeholding and not having it on the Statute Book and then making it virtually impossible for people to freehold, the Minister should look closely at what is occurring. I have raised this matter with the Valuer-General, who is now looking at it. However, to date I have not had an opportunity of further pursuing it with him, although I will do so in the near future.

However, this is a determination of the Government. The Government determines the conditions under which it will freehold land to the people and, as such, it must give a clear direction and ensure that the valuation placed on the land is a true indication of the unimproved value and not a figure that is determined taking into account assets that are owned by the lessee. I trust that the Minister of Lands will look at this matter and make the appropriate decision.

I would now like to refer briefly to the E&WS Department. Only a few days ago a matter was brought to my attention by an E&WS ratepayer who lives in Paringa and who received an account for \$482.25 for unpaid water rates. This person does not receive water from the department on that property. When the subdivision at Paringa was established, the Government made clear to the people who were building in the subdivision that they would have to provide their own water supply at their own cost.

So, they installed a pumping plant, a rising main and a distribution system to the subdivision. Recently, for one reason or another, the Government decided to put a water main past that subdivision, and the department is now demanding the payment of water rates from the houses abutting that main.

To bring pressure to bear on the person to whom I referred, the department sent him a notice stating that it would cut off the water from his business premises in Renmark. The department was then asked on what grounds it would cut off the water from that property as no rates were outstanding, and the answer came back, 'Since you are not connected to the main at Paringa we cannot cut the water off over there, so we will cut it off from your business premises in Renmark.'

I have doubts whether that is legal and whether the department and the Minister are bluffing. It is an incredible situation for the Government to force people, in the first place, to go to enormous expense to put in their own water system and, the people involved having installed that system, for it then to decide to put in its own main and force those people to pay water rates. The Government should get its act together and decide well in advance whether or not it will put a water system into a given area. Certainly, people cannot afford to pay for two systems, and that is exactly what is being required by this Government.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr De LAINE (Price): Tonight I will speak about one of the most innovative, valuable and practical concepts that was ever implemented, that is, Meals on Wheels. I will briefly trace its history and pay tribute to its founder, Miss Doris Taylor, MBE. I am very proud to speak about this matter because Miss Taylor established this valuable concept in the electorate of Port Adelaide in 1954. The concept at that time was, and still is, to provide needy, aged people with hot three-course meals at midday or thereabouts five days per week.

Doris Taylor was born at Lameroo in 1909 and, at the age of seven years, had an unfortunate accident which injured her spine and caused her to become totally paralysed. Gradually, some of her paralysis receded, but a joint condition set in which again hospitalised her. She remained in hospital until she was 16½ years of age, at which time she was declared by doctors to be incurable. Doctors advised that she be sent to the Home for Incurables, but her mother, who was a widow and who had three other children during the midst of the Great Depression, decided that she would take young Doris home and look after her.

As Doris Taylor had been in hospital almost continuously since the accident until she was 16½ years, she was shocked when she came out of hospital to find how people were living and how they were affected by the Great Depression. Being an activist, the first thought that came to her was that she must do something about it. She became involved in a mothers' club at a preschool kindergarten at Norwood and found that the children whose parents were on rations at that time were suffering from a lack of fruit, vegetables, butter, and so on. She set about raising money not only to feed these children but also to clothe them.

It was at this time that Doris Taylor realised that she had been born with a great ability to organise. She studied the problems of people, especially the aged and young people in the community, and decided to give her life to helping those with problems. She was greatly perturbed at the lack of consideration being given in particular to the care of the

aged and infirm and the idea of these elderly people leaving their homes and going into institutions appalled her, so she decided to do something about it. She studied the Meals on Wheels concept which was at that time operating in England and, to a lesser extent, in South Melbourne, Australia. She evolved a system suitable for Adelaide conditions.

Doris Taylor called a meeting of invalid pensioners at Norwood on 6 October 1953 and asked the people what they preferred. Almost unanimously the elderly people said that they would prefer to stay in their own homes as long as they could and receive a three course meal each weekday rather than go to an institution, even though no doubt they would be looked after there. Doris Taylor called together representatives from all social and welfare organisations and interested citizens and formed a provisional committee to set up the concept. On 3 December 1953 a provisional committee was formed. It drew up a draft constitution and Meals and Wheels was born in 1953. After vainly trying for some time to get someone to take responsibility for setting up the concept in premises, she was beginning to despair when she received a phone call from the then Mayor of Port Adelaide, Mr Harold Moore. He had heard of her scheme to benefit sick and elderly people.

He invited her to address the Port council on the scheme. Doris Taylor did this and the Port council decided to give her a block of land. I remember the block well because it was next door to my wife's aunty's place. It was probably the worst block of land in South Australia. It was uneven—a terrible block—but Doris Taylor was glad to get it. She, from her wheelchair, and a band of workers hewed something out of it. The newspapers of the time gave her financial and moral support, and LeMessuriers and Sons, a timber company in Port Adelaide, donated a 37-foot Nissan hut. They set up a kitchen of sorts, although there was no drainage. They washed the plates and other equipment in a tin dish. Nevertheless, with this primitive start on 9 August 1954 Meals on Wheels began serving meals in the Port Adelaide district to eight patients—or recipients as they are now called—with 11 helpers.

Doris Taylor devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy to getting support from politicians, local government organisations and the general public. On 23 October 1954 the Port Adelaide kitchen was officially opened by the then Governor of South Australia, His Excellency Sir Robert George, and five months later the second kitchen was opened at Norwood by the Hon. Norman Makin, MHR. From 1954 until the present time additional kitchens have been opened in both the metropolitan and country areas every year except in 1959. It is not generally known, but Doris Taylor also initiated and established other valuable services such as library, home help, laundry, housekeeping and befriender services. The first country kitchen was opened in Mount Gambier in 1962.

In September 1963 the new Port kitchen was opened and a month later a housekeeping service was launched in the Port area. These services that Doris Taylor established were the forerunners of and the basis for the domiciliary care concept of later years. On 11 February 1982 the Port kitchen was extended and named the Doris Taylor Memorial Kitchen in her honour.

While still a very young lady, Doris Taylor thought deeply about the depression and its terrible effects and decided that, while help was desperately needed for people at this time, the cause of the depression must be found. She came to realise that the prevention of depression lay in political action, and she began studying and observing politics. At that time she became involved in the Labor Party and was Campaign Director for Don Dunstan, former Premier of

South Australia. She was a most dynamic person and was held in very high esteem by community leaders, politicians, church leaders, etc.

Doris Taylor died on 23 May 1968 at the age of 59 years. At that stage there were 17 Adelaide branches and four country branches of Meals on Wheels. Today in 1988, Meals on Wheels is quite a massive operation with 27 metropolitan services consisting of 19 kitchens as well as services and shuttles run from those kitchens and from hospitals. There are 54 country services consisting of eight kitchens, shuttle services and hospital services. On 30 August this year, the 17 millionth meal was served in this State, a truly remarkable effort by unpaid, dedicated voluntary people. These marvellous volunteers come from all walks of life and are involved in all facets of the service.

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

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I would like to bring one or two matters to the attention of the House. First, I respond to the attack which the Minister of Health made on the member for Alexandra and members on this side this afternoon during Question Time. The honourable Minister inferred that the Opposition was involved in some skulduggery when it amended the Fisheries Act to allow for the general transferability of fishing licences.

Mr Rann interjecting:

Mr GUNN: It is all right for the poison pen opposite. He is the member who doctored the reports when they went out of government, stamped 'Confidential' on them, pulled off the back page and leaked them to the press, so we know the honourable member's credibility. Let me return to the abalone question. The inference was not only unfair but blatantly untrue and the Labor Party, as usual, with its socialistic tendencies, wants to perpetrate grave injustices on people who have no other means of livelihood. The transferability of fishing licences, particularly abalone licences, was brought to my attention when the late Kerry Manuel was taken by a shark in Streaky Bay. He was an abalone diver and his wife was left with nothing, absolutely nothing, because everything they had or owned was invested in that boat and equipment. His widow could not even sell the boat because it was suitable for only abalone diving.

I know the difficulties, the hardship and personal trauma that that family went through because the then Minister Chatterton, supported by people in the Department of Fisheries, had no compassion and no understanding of what justice was. The ability to transfer licences in the fishing industry is no different from transferring a hotel licence. However, the Labor Party would not go out to the hoteliers of this State and advise them they are not allowed to transfer their licences because it knows that the hotel keepers would put it out of office. They would pass on the word to the people in the front bars. The Government would not say to the taxi industry that people are not allowed to transfer their licences, and they would not say it to the petrol operators, as they have to be licensed also. So it goes on.

Because the fishing industry comprises a small number of people, the Government thinks that it can disregard it. Anyone with an ounce of commonsense knows that, on health grounds alone, people should not stay in the abalone industry for ever and a day. People should be encouraged to leave the industry with some dignity. The licence is their superannuation. It is an industry which requires a great deal of effort and personal sacrifice and, therefore, at the end of the day people should be able to transfer the licence to someone else. The same applies to the scale fishery. I make no apology for taking the credit for the Liberal Party policy

of transferability being implemented. When we came to government in 1979, I was one of the strongest supporters for the implementation of that policy.

Some people have fished for 40 or 50 years, but they could not leave the industry because they did not have any superannuation. Transferability of a licence was their way of obtaining some justice and return for many years of hard work. The Minister of Health alleged that we were looking after our mates, but his colleagues took donations from the Bookmakers League and what happened? Immediately after they came into government, they reduced the fees. If that was not an arrangement, I do not know what is.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GUNN: The honourable member should not interject, because one could be uncharitable and say that he has a self-interest. I would not want to say that. I know that the honourable member agrees that bookmaking licences should be transferable. I entirely agree with that proposition, because it is commonsense.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Members of Parliament should be transferable.

Mr GUNN: I think that they are. Every three years they run the risk of being transferred in or out and that is the luck of the draw. The member for Hartley knows what happens: he was transferred out for some time, he had a period in the wilderness, and he has come back.

If ever there was a miscarriage of justice, it was in relation to what happened to Terry Manuel and his family. The transferability of licences allows people such as Mrs Manuel to get some justice when a tragedy of that nature strikes. The situation in relation to the prawn industry in Upper Eyre Peninsula is a disgrace. The prawn fishermen should also be given the right to full transferability. It is unfortunate that people who make recommendations to the Department of Fisheries have an anti-free enterprise attitude and do not want to see anyone succeed or get on in this world.

I now turn to the grave problems facing people in the Upper Eyre Peninsula and other parts of the State as a result of the drought conditions and the difficulties in agriculture in general. If one looks at the recent report of the Bureau of Agriculture, one will see that the rural indebtedness in Australia has increased from \$2 000 million in 1970 to \$8 000 million. However, in relation to the value of rural exports to this nation, it is estimated that during 1988-89 wheat will have returned about \$1 900 million; barley, about \$375 million; and wool, nearly \$1 000 million. Those statistics highlight the fact that agriculture is still the most significant, and perhaps the most important, industry in the nation. When Governments examine the difficulties, it is essential that they show a little compassion, understanding and commonsense, because it is all very well to promote new industries which may be successful but, in so doing, they should not neglect the industries which have built this country.

The agriculture and mining sector built Australia; it laid the foundation for the standard of living we have in this State and nation and, if given a fair go, it will maintain it. It will provide the export income, the employment and the funds necessary to maintain a high standard of living, create employment and general well being of the nation as a whole.

However, we should examine what happens when the downturn comes. A report in the *Australian* of 27 September stated that about 1 100 farm dealerships had gone by the board, and that accounts for some 29 000 jobs in Australia. Coupled with that, it has been estimated that between 30 000 and 40 000 jobs in the major cities have gone, too, so that over 70 000 jobs have disappeared.

In towns such as Streaky Bay, Wudinna and Ceduna, it is alarming to see the number of enterprises which have either gone out of business or are barely managing to exist. This is having an effect on sporting teams. The football and cricket associations are amalgamating. To give an example, in the little district in which I live, there has always been a cricket team. For the first time there will be amalgamation and we will have to travel about 50 kilometres. That is having an effect on school buses and local facilities. I have never, in my time as a member of Parliament, received so many complaints about the way in which the Education Department is attempting to alter and interfere with school bus routes. I know that to administer the school bus system in this State is a huge undertaking. I appreciate that. Probably nearly as many buses are involved as are run by the STA.

An honourable member: More.

Mr GUNN: Possibly. When one route is shifted problems are created elsewhere, but I appeal to the Minister, not to let anyone interfere with the routes either mid-year or mid-term, because the effects on the education of these isolated children will be horrendous.

So the problems being faced on Upper Eyre Peninsula are terrible. The people who are currently on those farms, in the overwhelming number of cases, are by far the best people to live there, and they should be encouraged to stay. The Government has the responsibility to provide not only short-term but also long-term assistance, and I intend to have a lot more to say about this during my speech on the budget.

Mr DUIGAN (Adelaide): I cannot let this opportunity go by without commenting on some of the remarks that were made this evening by the Opposition spokesperson on tourism when she was commenting on the Estimates expenditure in that area. I found it extraordinary that criticisms were being made about investment decisions being undertaken by major developers in the hotel and entertainment industry on the one hand, and in office accommodation on the other. There seemed to me to be an underlying pessimism about the future of South Australia in regard to tourist and developmental opportunities, and about the attractiveness of South Australia as a destination for conventions and for people involved in a number of pre- and post-conference tours around various parts of South Australia. There also seemed to be an extraordinary degree of pessimism about the way in which the development of office space was likely to be taken up by South Australian businesses or by other businesses that we might be able to attract here from elsewhere.

I want to repudiate that sort of pessimistic gloom about the future of the South Australian economy and indeed about the tourism industry in particular. I do not think that it is necessary, as the honourable member seems to suggest it is, for the Government to poke its nose into the investment decisions being taken by people in the hospitality, hotel and office development sectors of business.

The honourable member responded by saying that it is important for people in those areas to look at the record of the Government prior to making decisions. I suggest that that is exactly what has occurred prior to making the decision to invest in South Australia. If one looks at the Government's record of trying to provide high quality convention and tourist facilities in South Australia, one will find that the record stands up to very close analysis. Not only has the Government been involved in an extensive promotional campaign putting forward South Australia as an ideal State for investment in these growing sectors of our economy and

the whole Australian economy, but it has made a number of investment decisions, not the least of which is the investment in the Aser project.

I want to put some figures before the House, because the Convention Centre has attracted over 107 000 room nights in the period since it opened. These room nights will be catered for in the new international Hyatt and hotels that are on the drawing boards at the moment, namely the revamped Gateway across the road from Parliament House and the new international hotel that will be built as part of the East End Market development. People will not invest the massive amounts necessary in an international hotel complex unless they are guaranteed a market. Of course, there is a market, helped by the promotional work done by the Government in the area of conventions. Not only is the Convention Centre attracting a large number of conventions into the early 1990s but the exhibition hall—another investment decision of the Government—has attracted inquiries from people around the world who are interested in the growing trend of conventions sponsored by organisations which want their products exhibited during the conference.

Work on the exhibition hall will commence later this year and is expected to contribute some \$12 million to the State's economy by 1990. That is likely to rise to about \$30 million by the end of the decade. This is just one of the features which will act as a magnet to international conventions, attracting tourists to South Australia. In the first instance people will come as business delegates, but then they will be able to take advantage of a number of pre and post-conference tours to various tourist destinations in South Australia.

The other point that I want to make in relation to tourism is that the Government's role is to promote South Australia as a destination for those people visiting Australia from overseas—that is where the whole issue of the Convention Centre and convention delegates fits in—and also as an attractive centre in which people from other parts of Australia can hold their business meetings. It is identifying South Australia as the attractive venue and it is then able to promote various tourist regions of South Australia.

It is not up to the Government to act as a promoter of individual travel schemes. Not only would that run in opposition to the general Government thrust in the tourism area but it would not work and would attract, quite rightly, criticism from the Opposition about the Government's being involved in the running of specific tourist operations. Of course, the Government should not do that; individual tourist operators should do it. It is the role of the South Australian Government through Tourism South Australia to promote the travel attractions of each of our regional

areas and the packages that each of the individual, privately operated tourist agencies in those areas have on offer.

A large group of international tourists came to South Australia recently on a pre-conference tour as part of the Thirty-fourth Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference. The conference was held in Canberra, but each of the delegates was required to spend four or five days in one of the Australian States. The Parliament elected the member for Chaffey and me to host the delegates while they were in South Australia prior to escorting them to Canberra. It was a very useful and enjoyable exercise for those delegates. On behalf of those Parliamentarians from a variety of countries, including Malaysia, Canada, India, Cyprus, Kenya, Tanzania and the United Kingdom, I have pleasure in extending their thanks for the hospitality that was afforded them by Parliamentarians here in South Australia, who so generously entertained those overseas visitors at a dinner which was held here in Parliament House.

The highlight of the tour to South Australia for those international delegates was the successful trip to Moomba, in relation to which the local branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association had the substantial support of Santos. The delegates were taken to Moomba, Innamincka and Cooper Creek. It was a very typical Australian outback experience and something that the delegates who went to the other States were not able to enjoy. The trip to South Australia for these 70-odd delegates from those seven countries that I mentioned was made much more pleasurable due to the efforts put in to the visit by the staff at Parliament House. I take this opportunity to thank them for undertaking what might be described as their other duties in hosting the delegates and looking after their travel, accommodation, food and shopping needs, and so on. Staff who are not normally associated with Commonwealth parliamentary activities put in an enormous amount of work, and made the organisational task much easier for the Secretary. These officers included the table officers, parliamentary attendants, the Bills and papers clerks, and the secretaries and receptionists, all of whom made a great contribution to the success of the conference.

I want to say a few words about one of the principal issues that was involved in the conference, namely, a strong condemnation of the system of apartheid in South Africa. There is no doubt that every Commonwealth country abhors the system of apartheid in South Africa and is doing what it can to abolish that evil system.

Motion carried.

At 10.13 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 5 October at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 October 1988

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS

2. Mr BECKER (Hanson), on notice, asked the Premier:

1. Further to the answer to Question on Notice 433 in the past session, how much money now remains to be allocated, to whom, and for what reasons by the Residential Tenancies Tribunal for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless?

2. Why was this information not provided when the question was answered previously?

3. What is the total amount intended to be taken from the fund for the purposes of IYSH?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The replies are as follows:

1. No further funds will be made available by the Residential Tenancies Tribunal for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. Under the terms of the amendment to the Residential Tenancies Act, passed in December 1987, only projects recommended by the Residential Tenancies Tribunal in 1987 could be allocated funds.

2. Details of all funded projects were provided by the Minister of Housing and Construction in his response dated 12 April 1988. However, this response did not state that further funds would not be made available since it was considered to be clear that the enactment of the Residential Tenancies Act Amendment Act 1987 precluded the allocation of additional amounts from the Residential Tenancies Tribunal fund after 31 December 1987.

3. The Residential Tenancies Tribunal approved IYSH projects up to a total value of \$768 500 prior to the enactment of the sunset clause to the legislation in December 1987.

TENANCY OFFICERS

4. Mr BECKER (Hanson), on notice, asked the Minister of Housing and Construction:

1. How many tenancy officers are employed by the South Australian Housing Trust?

2. How many clients are attached to each tenancy officer?

3. What follow-up action do tenancy officers take to ensure tenants do not wilfully damage trust property and are maintaining yards and garden areas in good order?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The replies are as follows:

1. Currently the Trust employs nine senior tenancy officers, 38 tenancy officers, eight youth tenancy officers (including four in the Emergency Housing Office) and 13 tenancy assistants. These officers service rental stock in excess of 60 000 dwellings.

2. The number of dwellings for which tenancy officers are responsible varies from 800 to 2 300 depending on the type of stock and the extent of travel necessary in country regions compared with metropolitan areas.

3. Every effort is made by staff to ensure that tenants recognise their responsibilities in respect to the care and maintenance of the property allocated to them. This responsibility is reinforced through the provision of a tenant handbook and personal support where necessary. Where damage is caused to a property, beyond fair wear and tear, the tenant is responsible for the cost of repairs.

Statewide garden competitions have served to encourage a greater number of tenants to improve their gardening standards. However, the trust recognises the financial limitations of some of its tenants and is, therefore, satisfied that they maintain their yards in a reasonable manner. In instances where gardens are not properly maintained, the trust will tidy up the area and charge the tenant accordingly.

PARKS COMMUNITY CENTRE

6. Mr BECKER (Hanson), on notice, asked the Minister of Housing and Construction:

1. What caused parts of the ceilings to collapse at the Parks Community Centre in April and which rooms were affected?

2. Were the ceilings inspected three months prior to the incident and passed as safe, and if so, why was the cause of the collapse not detected?

3. What was the reason for the ceilings' collapse and what is the cost of rectifying the faults?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The replies are as follows:

1. A ceiling in classroom A17F collapsed on 22 April, 1988 because of the failure of the suspension system. Following this collapse, some other areas of the centre, with similar ceiling construction, were closed until they were thoroughly checked and repaired where necessary. Approximately 10 per cent of the centre was closed for several days immediately following the collapse. A smaller area of the centre remained closed until repair work and detailed checking was completed. All inspections and repairs were completed in six weeks.

2. A spot check was conducted for all raked ceilings in November last year. The type of suspension system was checked in a small area of each raked ceiling on the premise that a consistent type of suspension system was used in each ceiling area. All the suspension systems viewed in the spot checks were satisfactory. The ceiling that collapsed in April had several different types of suspension systems. The inspection in November last year viewed the sound suspension system only, as it was not anticipated that different suspension systems had been used in the one ceiling area. The collapse of the ceiling has been attributed to the unsatisfactory nature of some of these other suspension systems.

3. The ceiling collapsed due to a failure in the suspension system, resulting primarily from the failure of a pop rivet fastener. Pop rivets have been used to fix ceiling systems for many years and are currently used in many Government and non-government buildings. Following the ceiling failure, the strength of the various types of ceiling suspensions, as used at the Parks Community Centre, was tested by Amdel. These tests indicated that the ceiling suspensions should have been strong enough to support the ceiling provided they were properly installed and there were no abnormal loadings. It is considered that the failure probably resulted from the incorrect installation of several pop rivets in a localised area, thereby leading to the progressive collapse of the rest of the ceiling within the room. All ceilings at the Parks Community Centre were rigorously inspected in April and May of this year, with all suspension points for all ceilings examined. All ceiling areas, where the suspension system was considered to be doubtful, were rectified and the work completed in May. The cost of repairs, investigation, testing and rectification was \$105 000.

MURRAY BRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

9. Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee), on notice, asked the Premier: What *ex gratia* payment will be made to the

Murray Bridge District Council in lieu of lost rates for the Mobilong Prison which the council has to bear on the prison site compared with a situation in which the site was valued at cost and owned by a private developer?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The Government will not be making an *ex gratia* payment to the District Council of Murray Bridge, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1934, which provides that land and buildings used by the Government for a public purpose are non-ratable.

GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

11. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Housing and Construction:

1. Are the details of all government construction contracts given to the United Trades and Labor Council and, if so, why and to what extent?

2. What unions are advised of successful tenderers for Government construction and housing and why?

The Hon. T. H. HEMMINGS: The replies are as follows:

1. Yes, information on Government construction contracts is available to the UTLC and, indeed, to the major sectors of the building and construction industry. The Department of Housing and Construction attempts to maintain close association with these groups by meeting with representatives on a regular basis and providing limited access to contract and tender information. There are regular meetings (every six weeks) with representatives of the Australian Federation of Construction Contractors (AFCC) and the Master Builders Association (MBA) and separate regular meetings involving United Trades and Labor Council officials (currently every two months). At these meetings a variety of matters are discussed including current trends in the tender market and forward programs of projects which are likely to be available for tender.

A record of successful tenderers is available for public perusal in the department. Information now shown on this list includes the name of the successful tenderer, description of the project and the general cost of the project (but not the precise tender price). This information is also available to the meetings with industry representatives mentioned above. A list of significant projects let and the successful tenderers is also published by the department and distributed to the industry. The major industry sectors have sought this information to assist them in determining trends in the industry and for forward planning.

2. Unions have access to this information through the above mechanism to facilitate a better working relationship between government, industry and trade unions.

HOUSE REPAIR

21. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Housing and Construction: What action has been taken to assist Mr and Mrs G. Sawley of 6 Bergan Avenue, Ingle Farm to overcome structural damage to their house built by the South Australian Housing Trust?

The Hon. T. H. HEMMINGS: Mr and Mrs Sawley purchased the house at 6 Bergan Avenue, Ingle Farm from the Housing Trust in 1971. In late 1986, Mr Sawley sought the assistance of the Hon. T. M. McRae, MP, member for Playford, in respect to major cracking of his house. As a result of Mr McRae's request, on behalf of his constituents, the trust investigated Mr and Mrs Sawley's problems and concluded that the cracking was caused by movement of

the moisture reactive soils in the area. As an act of goodwill, the trust undertook to provide the following advice and assistance, based on its experience in such matters:

1. Prepare plans and specifications to rectify damage to the Sawley's home;

2. Provide cost estimates for work required; and

3. Obtain comments on the suitability of the proposed work from an independent engineer.

The resulting investigation recognised that soil movement was occurring beneath the house footings and that certain trees, planted by the house owners, were a contributing factor to the movement. Removal of these trees was recommended. It was also resolved to observe, for at least one full cycle of the seasons, the reaction to the removal of the offending trees. Mr Sawley did, in fact, remove the identified trees and agreed to wait approximately 12 months when the trust would re-appraise the situation and provide advice on a rectification procedure.

An independent consulting engineer has now provided a report, based on the latest information, that identifies additional factors. Underground seepage water has been detected beneath the house. This seepage became evident during the winter period and is general to the underfloor areas of the home. Test bores taken previously did not indicate such a prevalence of seepage and it was not obvious during the original survey. There is strong evidence that the seepage water is permeating from an unknown source at a higher level than Mr and Mrs Sawley's property. The trust's offer of advice still remains, and the trust has also undertaken to recommend to Mr and Mrs Sawley experienced and reliable contractors known to the trust.

GOVERNMENT MOTOR VEHICLES

26. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Transport:

1. To which Government department or agency does the Ford Falcon GL registered UQM-165 belong and was the driver on Government business at 1.30 p.m. on Sunday 24 July 1988 at the Modbury Markets?

2. Under what terms and conditions was the motor vehicle issued to the driver?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: The replies are as follows:

1. The Ford Falcon GL registered UQM-165 is owned by the Police Department. On Sunday, 24 July 1988, the vehicle was allocated to a departmental driver responsible for providing courier services to metropolitan police stations. At 1.30 p.m. on that day, the vehicle was seen at the Modbury Markets car park. The driver was, at that time, taking a lunch break at the Modbury markets/shopping centre which was en-route between two police stations being serviced on the courier rounds.

2. The terms and conditions under which the vehicle was issued to the driver were to perform his normal duties which include weekend work.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

28. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Correctional Services: Who are the members of the Community Service Order Advisory Committee and in respect to each member—

(a) what was the date of appointment;

(b) what is the duration of the appointment;

(c) what remuneration is paid; and

- (d) what academic and practical qualifications and experience for the position do they have?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The members of the Community Service Order Advisory Committee are appointed by the Minister under section 5d of the Offenders Probation Act 1913. The members are:

Mr K.H.J. Harrison
Mr G. Apap
Father J. Grealy
Mr R.J. Kidney
Mr R.M. Durant

- (a) Members were appointed in April 1982 by the then Chief Secretary, John Olsen.
(b) The appointments, in terms of length of appointment, were unspecified, and remain so: the appointments are on such terms and conditions as set by the Minister. The legislation is not specific.
(c) Messrs Harrison, Apap, Grealy and Kidney, as non-public servants, receive a sitting fee of \$93 for a full two hour session (\$111 for Mr Harrison the Chairman) and a proportion of that rate if the meeting is less than two hours.
(d) Four nominations for the advisory committee were sought by the Minister. A nomination was sought from the South Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Mr Harrison was that nominee. The South Australian Council of Social Services responded by nominating Father Grealy and the South Australian United Trades and Labor Council nominated Mr Apap. Mr Kidney was invited to be a member by the Minister, and the nominee of the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Correctional Services is Mr Durant. He is the Director, Community Corrections with the department and is a qualified social worker with 24 years experience. The legislation requires that the Minister establish the advisory committee with not less than three and not more than five members, one being a nominee of the United Trades and Labor Council and one a nominee of the Chief Executive Officer.

POLICE MOTORCYCLES

35. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Emergency Services:

- Who made the decision for the Police Department to change from Honda to BMW motorcycles, and what are the qualifications of that person for making that decision?
- What superior qualities does the BMW motorcycle have, given that it is much slower?
- How much does the BMW motorcycle cost compared to the Honda quote?
- How many quotes were sought and received for replacement motorcycles?
- How many new BMW motorcycles were purchased in the past financial year and how many are anticipated to be purchased this financial year?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The replies are as follows:

- The decision to purchase BMW motorcycles was made by the Commissioner of Police in his capacity as Chief Executive Officer.
- The BMW has a safe top speed of approximately 200 km/h. At the time of purchase, the top speed of the Honda for safe operation was considered to be well below that of the BMW. At the time of purchase, the BMW was considered to be superior in the areas of comfort and performance.

3. The BMW motorcycle was tendered at a cost of \$9 600 each. Honda did not submit an offer.

4. Purchase was arranged by a public tender call. The Police Department arranged for tender documents to be forwarded to Suzuki Australia, Honda Australia and BMW Australia. BMW only, submitted a tender.

5. 1987-88—Nil. 1988-89—three replacements.

SPORTING GRANTS

36. **Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Recreation and Sport: What grants, if any, have been awarded to, or for the benefit of, the—

- Elizabeth Downs Soccer Club;
- Elizabeth East Soccer Club;
- Elizabeth City Soccer Club; and
- Kaurna United Soccer Club,

from all Government sources in each of the past two financial years and are there any plans to award any grants to any of the clubs in the current financial year?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The replies are as follows:

- None.
- None.
- None.
- No club by this name exists.

There are no plans to award any grants to any of the clubs referred to in the current financial year.

FIREARMS

37. **Mr BLACKER** (on notice) asked the Minister of Emergency Services: How many firearm owners failed to renew their licences and how many individual firearms were not re-registered by their owners in each of the past three years?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The replies are as follows:

Firearms owners failing to renew their firearms licences:
1986— 9 727
1987— 9 755
1988—10 598

Firearms owners are required to register the firearm within 14 days of coming into possession of that firearm. Firearms are not required to be re-registered on a regular basis by their owners. The firearm remains registered to that person until such time as it is disposed of and it is registered to a new owner.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

40. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Emergency Services: When will a Neighbourhood Watch be established in West Beach for the area covered by the petition presented to the House on 11 February 1986 and what is the reason for the delay?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The replies are as follows: On present indications, the West Beach Neighbourhood Watch area is likely to be established in December 1988. The high demand for the establishment of Watch areas is being met in order of application received by the Police Department.

ETSA EMPLOYEES

41. **The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Mines

and Energy: What have been the increases in numbers of full-time and part-time ETSA employees since 1982 and in what locations and duties have these extra employees been deployed?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: The replies are as follows: During the period 1982 to 1988 there has been a net increase of 549 employees in ETSA.

The major increase was in the Distribution and Customer Services area where an additional 348 people have been employed. Of these 246 were linesmen and 60 were employees engaged as a corollary of the acquisition of Eyre Peninsula Supply Authorities. The balance were technical officers, engineers, supervisors and office support staff. The extra duties necessitating this increase include:

- 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfire mitigation work
- Tree cutting program
- Backlog maintenance work
- Introduction of new technology
- Acquisition of Eyre Peninsula Supply Authorities
- Increased housing development activity

The other variation increases and decreases are set out hereunder:

Generation Operations	— 53
Engineering	+ 9
Finance	+ 33
General Services	+ 28
Human Resources	+ 51
Information Systems	+ 43
Apprentices	+ 54
Administration	+ 36

Part-time Employees

Before 1986 few part-time employees were retained by ETSA. In 1986 a scheme was introduced to list those interested in casual employment with ETSA, and since then the need for short-term labour has generally been covered by this means. While about 130 people are currently listed as available, the hours actually worked during 1987-88 were equivalent only to about 30 full-time employees.

In addition to these, it is convenient to retain casuals at Leigh Creek for work which occurs from time to time.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

43. **Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Transport: What ongoing statistical analysis is made of the arrival and departure time of buses and trains and, if any, what trends does it reveal?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY:

Trains—

Statistical data pertaining to arrival and departure times of trains is collected on a daily basis. This information is summarised monthly.

Bus—

The authority does not record the arrival and departure time of buses. However, regular loading and schedule adherence checks are carried out by inspectorial and load checking staff. Bus operators are required to submit 'Late Running Reports' when a trip does not run to timetable and the reason why. These details are processed and the results are analysed on an ongoing basis to identify trips that should be adjusted on timetables to ensure reliable service operation.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS LOANS

44. **Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Housing and Construction: What progress has

been made towards the introduction of a 'home improvement loans proposal . . . to enable aged home owners to raise finance for home repairs and alterations . . .' (*Hansard*, 24 September 1987, page 531)?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I refer the honourable member to my letter of 9 September 1988.

CREDIT UNIONS

45. **Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General: Of the credit unions registered under the Credit Unions Act as at 30 June 1988, how many had not actively traded during that financial year and, of those, how many were subject to some sort of order by the Stabilisation Board or investigation by the Registrar and what was the nature of the order or investigation in each case?

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: All credit unions have actively traded. At 30 June 1988 three credit unions were under the supervision of the Stabilisation Board. Two of those credit unions were placed under supervision for failure to maintain adequate reserves in accordance with the regulations under the Act. They have since merged and the merged credit union is still under supervision with respect to inadequate reserves. The other credit union was placed under supervision because the affairs of the credit union were being conducted in a financially unsound manner. Subsequently an administrator has been appointed.

DAMAGES

46. **Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General: Has the Government given consideration to amending the law to ensure that Government departments, statutory authorities and other corporate entities such as local government which have perpetual existence and, in effect, unlimited capacity to pay, are only liable in legal actions for damages for that proportion of the damages for which they are directly responsible and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The simple answer to this question is 'No', and the reason for it is that the propositions advanced by the honourable member in his question are already adequately dealt with in the law of this State. It seems the question actually addresses two situations—(i) remoteness of damage and (ii) contribution or apportionment of damage.

Presumably, the question is addressing situations, like the Ash Wednesday bushfires disaster, where public authorities may be called to legal account for acts or omissions that constitute negligence. The rules governing tortious liability are the same for the Crown as they are for private citizens. In particular, the law relating to the measurement of damages is the same for both. A tortfeasor is liable for damages only to the extent that they were a reasonably foreseeable consequence of his or her negligence.

If the nature of the damage lies beyond what was reasonably foreseeable (that is, beyond the foresight of a reasonable man who is put in the place of the actual tortfeasor) then such damage is regarded by the law as being too remote. No legal liability attaches for damage that is of such a nature. So, in effect, there is already an inherent limit—like the honourable member has suggested there ought to be—to damages for which Crown, and other public authorities, can be liable at law.

In addition, the question of proportionality of responsibility is already addressed by the law. A court exercising civil jurisdiction is required to consider the nature and extent of the culpability of any party in proceedings before it. If, for example, in a negligence suit, the plaintiff or any two or more defendants contributed to the acts or omissions that constitute negligence, then the final award of damages will reflect the court's assessment of their respective liabilities (for example, it may determine the plaintiff was in no way a contributor but that defendant No. 1 was 40 per cent liable and defendant No. 2 was 60 per cent liable and so on).

Again, these rules of law are the same for public authorities as for private citizens. In summary then:

- (i) the common law rules relating to remoteness of damage are long-established, well-known, flexible and conducive to the just and equitable resolution of claims for damages; and
- (ii) the questions of contributions as between tortfeasors and the apportionment of liability in cases of contributory negligence, are already adequately addressed (see, for example, sections 24-27 and 27a-27b of the Wrongs Act 1936—an Act which binds the Crown as well as private citizens).

ASBESTOS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

50. **Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham)**, on notice, asked the Minister of Labour: When will the report on the inquiry conducted by the Asbestos Advisory Committee be made public?

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: An internal department report into the Asbestos Advisory Committee has been prepared but will not be released to the public.

SUBMARINE PROJECT

51. **Mr BECKER (Hanson)**, on notice, asked the Minister of State Development and Technology:

1. How many new jobs have been provided in all phases of construction of the submarine project?

2. How many contracts have been let and for what purposes and value and what is the number and tenure of any new jobs created by each?

3. How many more contracts are to be let and what is the estimated number and tenure of jobs to be created by each?

4. What is the total value of the project?

The Hon. L.M.F. ARNOLD: The replies are as follows:

1. ASC has advised that 200 subcontract jobs will be created during the construction of the Australian Construction Facility (ACF) at Osborne over the period December 1987 to September 1989. There are 260 staff presently engaged by ASC at Woodville and this is expected to grow to 350 staff by the time ASC moves to the ACF in 1989. A further 350 production workers will be employed when production of the submarines commences from 1990. It is not possible at this stage to estimate the number of jobs created in support and subcontracting areas.

2. ASC has placed a contract on Concrete Constructions Pty Ltd as construction managers for the ACF and it has awarded a number of subcontracts for the construction of the facility. Ninety per cent of the work including design, piling, civil, cement, steel and other building work is being done by a number of local firms.

ASC itself has awarded contracts to a number of European firms to design major subsystems for the submarines because the necessary technology did not exist in Australia. Contracts let include detailed design work, combat data system, the propulsion system, power conversion units, diesel engines, weapons launch system, ship management system and periscopes. The value of these contracts is a commercial-in-confidence matter between ASC, the Commonwealth and the contractor. About the number and tenure of any jobs resulting from the Australian industry involvement in the work, it is far too early to say.

3. Only ASC and the Commonwealth know this.

4. The project is worth \$3.9 billion in June 1986 prices.