

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 5 October 1988

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

QUESTION

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

WORKCOVER

In reply to Mr **S.J. BAKER (Mitcham)** (25 August).

The **Hon. R.J. GREGORY**: The reply is as follows:

1. Software Development Costs.

	\$
Total cost for software development to date	2 600 000
Cost of software licence and associated costs	551 045
	\$3 151 045

2. Expected Date of System being Fully Functional.

It should be noted that the WorkCover computer system has been developed in stages which coincides with the developmental aspects of the scheme. From that perspective, that is, the processing of employer registration, levy collection and claims management, the system is fully functional.

PETITION: HOUSING TRUST RENTS

A petition signed by 125 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: NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A petition signed by 218 residents of Lockleys praying that the House urge the Government to establish a neighbourhood watch scheme for the Lockleys area was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

PETITION: NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

A petition signed by 91 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to provide additional staff and resources for the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service was presented by Mr Ferguson.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister of Health (Hon. F.T. Blevins)—

Medical Board of South Australia—Report 1987-88.
Dental Board of South Australia—Report 1987-88.

By the Minister of Transport (Hon. G.F. Keneally)—
Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Board—Report 1987-88.
Department of Transport—Report 1987-88.
State Transport Authority—Report 1987-88.

OMBUDSMAN REPORT

The **SPEAKER** laid on the table the 16th annual report of the Ombudsman.

Ordered that report be printed.

QUESTION TIME

INDUSTRIAL LAWS

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Minister of Labour say whether the Government has estimated how much it will cost taxpayers to implement in the public sector the major changes to the South Australian industrial laws contained in the draft Bill circulated by the Minister, including the increased costs of giving employees paid time off to cash their pay cheques, which will cost taxpayers an additional \$19 million a year? Is he prepared to accept changes to the Bill to ensure that it does not impose additional, unreasonable and unnecessary costs like this on employers and does not discriminate unfairly against people who are not members of a union?

The **Hon. R.J. GREGORY**: The answer to the first question is 'No'. I think it is reasonable that people who are paid and who are expected to work when banks are closed should have some access to the money. In respect of the third question, the answer is 'No.'

HENLEY AND GRANGE POLLUTION

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): Will the Minister for Environment and Planning say whether the Department of Environment and Planning has given any consideration to a solution of the problem of pollution in the sea at Henley and Grange? I have been approached by the Mayor of the Henley and Grange council in respect of the pollution which is occurring at the Henley and Grange seaside. The water is discoloured for a distance of 120 metres from the shoreline out to sea with what appears to be alluvial mud. The discolouration is occurring along the beach front as far as the Patawalonga outlet. It would appear that the recent flushing of the Patawalonga River has caused the pollution of the beachside. I understand that much of the pollution occurring in the Patawalonga starts at the Sturt Creek.

The **Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD**: I am not sure that alluvium is in fact pollution. It is a natural thing, and it is to be expected that from time to time such material will be washed into the gulf. There is a bit of a mystery here, in that there are no factors really operating at present which would suggest that there should be a higher alluvial load going into the gulf from either the Sturt Creek-Patawalonga system or from the Torrens outlet than would be normal for this time of the year. My officers were down there yesterday having a look at the problem. I have not yet had an opportunity to obtain a report from them, but I will get one as soon as I possibly can.

Just briefly adverting to the whole question of things that we put into the gulf, we must remember that, of course, the drainage of the suburbs has meant that any rain that falls

in the Adelaide metropolitan area is almost immediately transported into the gulf environment, whereas, historically, it was absorbed and it was allowed to settle in the swamps around Lockleys. This added pollution is one of the problems that is leading to some regression of seagrass meadows in the gulf, and eventually that will probably be a very expensive matter for this society to redress, if it wants to do so. However, I will get the information from my officers, because, as I say, they were there looking at the problem yesterday.

SUBMARINE PROJECT

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): Will the Minister of Labour confirm that the submarine construction site was shut down by union action last Friday and again on Monday, on the ground that windy conditions presented safety problems for those people working with steel sheeting, when many other jobs on the site could have proceeded? Will he investigate the role of the BLF to determine whether that union now has total control of the site and is continually harassing a number of contractors providing construction materials, as I have been told the union is doing?

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I am not aware of the matters that the member for Mitcham has raised. I will have them investigated and I will subsequently advise the House of the outcome.

CHILD-CARE SERVICES

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Will the Minister of Education say what action has been taken by the State Government to provide quality child-care services, particularly for working parents? I am very concerned about the views expressed in the letters to the Editor column in yesterday morning's newspaper. The writers were obviously angry about the suggestion in a previous article that working mothers were abandoning the needs of their children by going out to work. I am aware that the State Government has been working closely with the Commonwealth Government to provide child-care places in the community. One correspondent, a constituent of mine, said that the allegations and the article raised the issue of whether quality child-care was a fundamental right. I am informed that since 1983 the Federal and State Governments have provided in excess of 80 per cent of child-care places in this State.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for raising this issue because it is of concern that there are still some people in our community who hold very negative views with respect to the provision of children's services. It is understandable that some people working in human services agencies form certain conclusions after seeing only a small section of the community who are often in tragic circumstances. I must say that in South Australia we can be very proud of the children's services that are provided to families. We spend about 50 per cent more than the national average in the provision of services for pre-school children. In fact, in recent years, particularly since the Commonwealth Government strategy developed in 1983 to provide additional child-care places across the country, an additional \$15 million has been expended in this State in the provision of child-care services, some \$10.7 million of which has been contributed from State Government funds. That has provided 39 community child-care centres throughout this State.

No member could deny that there is a huge need for the provision of such services in the community but, in addition to that, we have also provided additional family day care places and, indeed, a range of other children's services. The Children's Services Office, which was established by this Parliament and which came into being about three years ago, has been a very real success in the planning and provision of children's services throughout this State. The provision of accessible, affordable and high quality child-care brings many benefits to parents and children in our community, but it cannot simply be seen as something that is employment related, because it does provide additional educational opportunities, particularly for women, and indeed a whole range of new opportunities outside the home that are important for quality of life for particular families, and often families facing real social and economic difficulties.

I am pleased to say that in South Australia we are embarking on a substantial children's services program that will improve and strengthen family life in this community, and it will give children new skills and opportunities that will stay with them throughout their lives. However, it will not bring about the negatives which, unfortunately, a few people in the community suggest.

JEWELLERY EXHIBITION

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Did the Premier personally request the Art Gallery Board to cancel the De Beers/Voivodich exhibition and, if so, why did he do it? This exhibition of international jewellery design has travelled through 11 countries, and has been displayed in 10 major cities without any incident whatever. In Adelaide, the United Trades and Labor Council forced the Art Gallery to reconsider its position after threatening a strike of all gallery security guards during the holiday long weekend.

Information to hand shows the first complaints about the exhibition came not from any apartheid concerns but from the professional jealousy of an Underdale campus college lecturer, aimed at local award-winning designer, Meg Benbow. The Premier has been misled and the unions to which he so readily capitulated have themselves been fooled. Considering that De Beers gets less than 15 per cent of its diamonds from South Africa, there is nothing to back the claims of the unions.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The last bit of the explanation was an attempt to debate, and not ask, the question. I noticed in this morning's paper the headline 'Bannon bowed to unions, says Olsen'. I could easily respond, 'Olsen backs apartheid'. That is the headline we ought to have. There is an absolute shemozzle in the Liberal Party. It has thrown out the window 20 years of work on the multicultural concept in Australia; it has scratched the ugly sore of racism in the community. We have crocodile tears wept by those opposite who say, 'Oh no, it is not us, don't blame us', but no statement attacking Mr Howard, who has begun to back down, and nothing about Senator Stone.

As I say, the Leader of the Opposition gets his little headline, 'Bannon backs the unions'. I would like to see some balance there and an indication of just what is involved. I appreciate the Deputy Leader's question. This is a very sensitive area. His specific question was whether I directed the Art Gallery Board to cancel the De Beers display, and the answer to that is, 'No, I did not.' However, I did ask the Art Gallery Board to reconsider its decision.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the Premier resume his seat. If a member of the House believes that a matter is serious enough to warrant asking a question, one would expect that his or her colleagues would treat the matter seriously enough to listen to the answer.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I quite properly passed on to the gallery concerns that had been expressed to my office about this display. It would have been irresponsible of me to do otherwise. In the light of the concerns that were expressed I said that perhaps the board should look at the implications of holding that display. I have said publicly that it is very much an arguable situation. The whole point in having the display was not to promote South Africa, South African diamonds or the De Beers company but was, in fact, to pay tribute to the work of a particular South Australian craftsperson. That was the basis on which the gallery undertook to house the display. It was not some massive exhibition; it was a display that would have been on the basement floor of the gallery.

In fact, the other day I looked at where the display was to have been held and it was not going to be any big deal. If in fact that was all that was involved and if in fact that was all that was perceived, there probably would have been no problem. However, a large number of people felt that, if the official Art Gallery of South Australia held this display, it could be seen to be in some way impliedly supporting apartheid or its implications.

Mr Olsen: Rubbish!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: 'Rubbish', says the Leader. He knows all about doublespeak on racism because he has been indulging in it for a long time.

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I think it was quite legitimate for the Art Gallery to consider the implications. There is presently—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: —a major exhibit by Fred Williams. The Art Gallery receives, communicates and exchanges exhibitions, and so on, all around the world. We certainly did not want the Art Gallery adversely affected by that sort of agitation on such a minor matter, and it really was a minor matter. Nonetheless, the Art Gallery Board came to that decision, which I happen to support. I think it is a sensible decision. Incidentally, when members say 'Bannon backs unions', that is all very well, but what about the letter I received from the Australian ANC/SWAPO Solidarity Committee? I think that the ANC has reasonable standing in this area. In fact, I think that members opposite have actually attended one or two of its meetings.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Well, not everyone. The letter I received states—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask members on both sides to cease interjecting so that the House can hear the conclusion of the Premier's reply.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The letter states:

I write to you on behalf of the ANC/SWAPO Solidarity Committee, in your capacity as Minister for the Arts in this State, to protest at the exhibition of De Beers 'Diamond International Award' at the South Australian Art Gallery in October. It is particularly distressing that as a Labor leader you have not intervened to ensure that this exhibition does not take place as the Labor Party supports the sporting and cultural boycott of South Africa and also economic sanctions.

Well, that nonetheless referred to me as Minister for the Arts. Naturally, those sorts of complaints should be passed on. The letter concluded:

We request that you intervene to ensure that the Art Gallery is not used to promote De Beers in this way. We notify you that should the exhibition go ahead we will picket it and that we will be seeking support from other South Australian politicians and the United Trades and Labor Council, in an attempt to have the exhibition stopped.

Again, that is something that legitimately should be in the knowledge of those involved in the Art Gallery. Let me come back to the core of the case. Once this had been identified as an issue in which there was active support or implied active support for apartheid, that abhorrent regime, I do not think there was very much choice. I am absolutely amazed—although not surprised—at the cheek of the Opposition in trying to pick up this matter and run with it, thus further muddying the waters. That is the decision that was made and I think it is a reasonable one on the part of the board.

OLYMPIC COMPETITORS

Mr RANN (Briggs): Can the Premier inform the House whether or not any plans are being made to welcome home South Australia's competitors at the Seoul Olympics?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I thank the honourable member for his question. In fact, he is probably recalling that in 1984 when we saw singular success, that is, a number of gold medals won by South Australian competitors, a major reception was held. I am pleased to say that plans are under way for such a welcome again. South Australia in fact had 30 competitors at the 1988 Olympics, three of whom were medal winners: Sandra Pisani was a member of the hockey team which won a gold medal; Lisa Martin's silver medal in the marathon was one of the great opening events of the Games, a fantastic effort; and our cycling team did very well indeed, trained as it is at the South Australian Sports Institute under Charlie Walsh, with Dean Woods winning a silver medal and the pursuit team picking up a bronze medal.

We had a fair share of medals. On a national basis (if South Australia was a country instead of a State) we would figure fairly high on the table, interestingly enough. I have been in touch with Foundation South Australia, the sports and cultural foundation, which informed me that it is planning a reception for olympians within the next fortnight. It is most appropriate that it should host such a reception because, as members will recall, the foundation sponsored Olympic competitors for more than \$100 000, a large sponsorship which made a tremendous difference to our ability to cope financially with the representation at those very successful Seoul Olympics.

YOUTH MURDERS

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE (Coles): My question is directed to the Minister of Emergency Services. In view of public statements by senior police officers that a group called 'The Family' abducted, raped and killed five young Adelaide men between 1979 and 1983, and that this group includes nine 'highly placed and eminent South Australian people' who, according to police 'know they are suspects', has the Government sought advice from the police to determine whether any of these suspects hold sensitive public positions?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: No. I have not done that. The investigation is proceeding. I have not sought to involve myself at all in relation to the investigation. It is being regarded as a normal police function and will continue to be so regarded. In any event, I really do not know what action would be open to the Government in relation to this matter until such time as the police were in a position to lay charges.

I am not sure what the honourable member is suggesting. If I were to go to the Police Commissioner and if he were to tell me that one of these people was alleged to be, say, a captain of industry but that there was no basis at that stage for laying a charge, what would I be supposed to do about it? Nothing at all! The honourable member must understand that there is a due process of law and that we will follow that matter through. All South Australians find all these suggestions abhorrent, if those suggestions have a basis in fact, and it is incumbent on all responsible citizens who think that they may know anything at all about this matter to place that information before the police officers making that investigation.

If it is possible to bring people to justice in relation to that matter, that will be a marvellous thing for this State. So long as there is any suspicion or so long as these murders remain unsolved, we are demeaned as a society. Our police officers are working as hard as they can, but they rely on the community for information and it is incumbent on the community to make that information available. Clearly, more is to be told because the police have received anonymous phone calls, but those people have not been prepared to come forward, to identify themselves, and to give further information. I appeal to those people to do so.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr ROBERTSON (Bright): Can the Minister of Education say whether his department intends to take action to strengthen the link between South Australian secondary schools and South Australian industry? The Inquiry Into Immediate Post-Compulsory Education, which was set up 18 months ago, established a joint employer-union reference group last year. In its report that group states:

Teachers . . . should have more opportunities (via work experience programs) to learn about the work force and senior students should spend time in the work force as part of their upper secondary education. In addition, employers would like to be involved in the business of identifying prerequisites for successful transition into the work force.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for his question, which raises an important issue that the Government and I regard as vital to the outcome of education in this State. The Minister of State Development and Technology and I announced on Monday that 1988-89 had been declared a special Year of School and Industry and during that year we would highlight action being taken to educate young people for the world of work. Already there is much cooperation between a number of schools and industry in this State. That has been proven to be successful and we want to extend that to every school in the State. Indeed, we want to bring employers much more into the education process, so that they have a realistic understanding of the nature of our education processes and the outcomes of our schools. We also want our schools, students, teachers and parents (indeed, all those who support our schools) to have a realistic understanding of the world of work and the needs of employers in our community.

Next year, we will target every school in the State to strengthen the links between education, business and industry. We want to urge local businesses and industries to adopt their neighbourhood school and to work with teachers to further strengthen the skills and knowledge of students. We want to promote study activities that enable young people to gain practical knowledge about the world of work and foster skills that education and business see as important for work and further education. Further, we want to develop the skills of teachers and other educators in knowing more about today's business and industry.

We want to encourage business and trade unions to gain first-hand experience of the achievements and needs of South Australian schools. We have been very fortunate to obtain the services of a retired Principal (Mr Joe Laslett, former Principal of Morialta High School) and a key executive of the South Australian Gas Company (Mr Paul Rosser, who has a well established commitment to education in this State) to advise the Government on the special year designated for 1989. I am very excited about the climate in which we are operating; there has never been more cooperation between industry, commerce and schools in this State. There is a great well of support within industry and business circles in this State to assist in our education process and *vice versa*.

There is a good deal of commitment on the part of principals, parents and senior students in our schools to work very closely with industry and commerce to develop the opportunities we all want for young people in this State. I look forward to the direction the consultancy will give our education system and the partnership we will commence next year which will grow in future years, thus ensuring that every opportunity is given to young people in this State to become effective, efficient and responsible members of the work force.

POLICE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I direct my question to the Minister of Emergency Services. Have police interviewed the former head of the Drug Squad (Mr Moyse) since his imprisonment, as was suggested by a Federal Minister (Mr Duncan) last Thursday? If so, has Mr Moyse been able to provide any information on alleged police corruption involving other officers; and, if not, can the Minister say whether Mr Moyse is to be interviewed for this purpose?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I will obtain that information for the House.

REPATRIATION HOSPITALS

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE (Mitchell): Will the Minister of Health say at what stage is the Federal Government proposal to transfer repatriation general hospitals to State Governments and, in particular, what is the position of RGH Daw Park, which is located in my electorate, and the South Australian Government's stance on this proposal?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I've had a lot of letters on this.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: The member for Spence points out that he has had letters on this topic. In common with many members, I have received a number of letters of concern at the proposal from ex-servicemen constituents. Some, although not all, are *pro forma* type letters, but I will read briefly from one which particularly touches me, as follows:

I seek your personal assistance that you will oppose any premature handover of the Repatriation General Hospital to the State Government.

That letter is signed 'Yours bitterly, ex POW—what fools we were.'

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: I thank the honourable member for his question. His concern in this area and in the area of veterans in general has been ongoing, and I know that when he retires from this place veterans will have lost a great advocate for their cause. I am very happy to be able to tell the honourable member that the State Government has no intention of taking over the Repatriation Hospital's role without certain conditions which we have made very clear to the Commonwealth. In discussions with Ben Humphreys, the present Minister of Veterans Affairs, I have made our position perfectly clear, that is, that if our pre-conditions are met we will be happy to take over the facility. However, we will do that only with the substantial agreement of returned service personnel themselves, because this Government, whilst recognising the advantages to returned service personnel in the State Government's taking over the facility, feels that it would not be to our advantage to take it over while there is substantial opposition to the move.

The Commonwealth has announced by a press release, which I read, that it intends to achieve integration by 1 July 1995. That certainly is a long lead time in which discussions can take place between the various ex-service organisations at the State and Federal Government levels. The Returned Services League has been advised by the previous Minister of Health that this State Government's position is as follows. Veterans must be given access to comprehensive health and hospital services at the same special level which they have always enjoyed. I stress 'at the same special level', because we do treat our veterans differently from the way that we treat the general population, and quite properly so, because they served this nation during periods of war which put them at very special risk. They were given promises by the Governments of the day regarding the special treatment that they would receive when they returned, and I think it is absolutely essential that the nation honours those promises.

A further condition of the State Government is that we insist on a guarantee from the Commonwealth that all funds will be transferred and indexed for inflation and that the Commonwealth must complete a comprehensive upgrading of physical facilities at Daw Park before the date of transfer. There is already extensive cooperation between the Flinders Medical Centre and the Repatriation General Hospital. I will be happy to supply all the details of that cooperation to any member who wishes to receive them.

In the State health system there are many special services that are not available at the Repatriation General Hospital at Daw Park, and veterans are dependent on State health services for cardiothoracic surgery, neurosurgery, organ imaging services such as CT scans, magnetic resonance imaging, nuclear medicine scans, some pathology tests and domiciliary nursing. That will give the House an idea of the amount of cooperation that takes place at present.

Of course, veterans are all getting much older and require more and more specialised services, and those services are not available in the repatriation system; they are dependent on State Government services. I am sure that an agreement can be worked out between the State and the Commonwealth that will enable the upgrading of those services to veterans. I stress to all members of the House, particularly the member for Mitchell, that this Government has no intention of taking over the role without the substantial agreement of the veterans, and I believe that that agreement will be forthcoming when the advantages are spelt out very clearly to the veterans from both the Commonwealth and from the State.

ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): My question is directed to the Minister of Emergency Services. Because the Government's decision to seek the establishment of an NCA office in Adelaide means that it has rejected recommendations by the Police Commissioner in his proposal for an anti-corruption strategy, tabled in the House on 16 August, that the Police Force should be the main anti-corruption institution in South Australia and that 'the role and operation of other organisations such as the NCA should be complementary to the police role and should not displace crime investigation by police', was the decision to establish an NCA office made by the ministerial committee comprising the Minister, the Attorney-General and the Police Commissioner a unanimous decision of the committee and, if so, why has the Police Commissioner changed his mind?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I suggest that the member should re-read that report because it says nothing of the sort at all. I will refer to what the various documents that have been made available say. First, there was the report that was prepared for the Police Commissioner. That was a statement of broad general philosophy in relation not simply to police corruption but to corruption generally. The point which surely the Commissioner was making, and which remains completely valid, is that, irrespective of who undertakes the investigation, eventually, if there is anything there, charges will have to be laid and the matter has got to be placed before the courts, and that has all to be done by the Police Department.

Mr Olsen: There is no argument about that.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition agrees with me. Of course there is no argument about that, and that is all the Commissioner was saying at that time. We then received the National Crime Authority report, which suggests the setting up of a unit. I indicated to the House yesterday that it may be that some sort of special unit will still be needed, even if the NCA is prepared to set up here in South Australia, because there will obviously have to be a very high degree of liaison between the NCA and our South Australian Police Department. In fact, the recommendation that we should front the NCA came from the officers' committee which had been set up to advise the Commissioner, the Attorney and me. As a result of that, the Attorney conveyed that request to the Special Minister of State, Senator Tate, some time during the week ending 23 September. As I explained yesterday, we are awaiting the response. The Commissioner has been on leave for the past few days. I noticed that he was at the luncheon today for the German Chancellor. So far as I am aware, he fully supports all the actions that have been taken.

INNER CITY HOUSING

Mr DUIGAN (Adelaide): Will the Minister of Housing and Construction advise the House of the efforts that have been undertaken by the South Australian Housing Trust to develop more inner city public rental housing? In particular, will the Minister provide the House with information on when the Department of Housing and Construction depot in Carrington Street might be relocated, thus enabling the land there to be made available for further inner city housing development? The demand for inner city housing, as evidenced by approaches made to the Adelaide electorate office, is enormous. Many recent housing developments have been privately undertaken, although there have been some exceptions. The Adelaide City Council has recently

announced its intention to relocate its works depot to Thebarton, which would thereby free up the land in Halifax Street for public housing use. I have been continually asked by inner city residents about the future of the land in Carrington Street which has been the site of a Department of Housing and Construction depot.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The Government, through the South Australian Housing Trust, is always willing to work in partnership with another agency, whether it be the Adelaide City Council or any other body, to provide inner city housing in Adelaide. The Carrington Street depot site was sold to the South Australian Housing Trust in June 1987 for \$1.3 million, on the condition that the Department of Housing and Construction continue to occupy the property, rent free, from June 1987 to September of that year. The Department of Housing and Construction leased the property from the trust as from October 1987 until May 1988, at a rental of \$99 996 per annum. The trust is now about to call tenders for the demolition of the buildings on the site, and this will commence after November 1988.

The property is currently leased to Kinhill Engineers Pty Ltd, contractors for the Australian Formula One Grand Prix. The lease applies from September 1988 until November 1988 and will take in the time of the Grand Prix. The land will then be used for inner city housing development. This development will involve 27 units, with a mixture of single, two-storey and three-storey buildings, with construction scheduled to commence in July or August of 1989. Some 65 other units are under construction or are at the tender stage at present, and these are located in Princess, Vinrace and Russell Streets, in the inner Adelaide area.

POLICE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

Mr D.S. BAKER (Victoria): My question is to the Minister of Emergency Services. Following the Police Commissioner's revelation in a memorandum last month to other commissioned officers that in 1983 he had initiated and facilitated a number of investigations into police corruption, did the Commissioner advise the Government that he had taken this action and, if so, what was the nature of the allegations investigated, who conducted the investigations, what was their outcome, and was the Government satisfied that the investigations were conducted fully and properly?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I point out that 1983 was a little bit before my time in this portfolio. My understanding is that there was some considerable change in procedures in the department as a result of those investigations. However, before going any further, and to ensure that I am not in any way misleading the House, I will obtain advice on the matter so that I can give a proper answer.

RAILWAY SLEEPERS

Mr De LAINE (Price): Can the Minister of Transport inform the House whether the STA is proposing any change in the traditional timber sleepers laid down in the metropolitan rail network? Australian National is involved in a massive re-sleeping program, where timber sleepers are being replaced by concrete sleepers.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question. The STA is involved in a program of testing steel sleepers. I understand that last year it put down 12 000 steel sleepers in locations where the conditions were appropriate to test their effectiveness, and this year it will put down 25 000 steel sleepers. As a former purchasing

officer for the Commonwealth Railways (now Australian National) I was responsible for the purchase of millions of railway sleepers. My recollection is that at that time they were mostly jarrah, kauri and wandoo from Western Australia. From there we moved into concrete sleepers, which are now very much part of Australian National's rail system. If my recollection is correct, the then South Australian Railways used red gum sleepers. Many members would be aware—

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: The Bridgewater line is still there. If the member for Heysen wanders down the railway track, he will see that the railway line is still there. That may come as a surprise to the local member. Everyone else in South Australia knows about that, but the member for Heysen does not. I suggest that if the member for Heysen wanders down to the Bridgewater Railway Station he will be surprised to see the shining steel tracks passing by that railway station, as they have seemingly since time immemorial. The decision of the STA to trial steel sleepers is sensible. As members would know, we must determine how long these sleepers are likely to last, so the trial period could continue for a number of years. It is appropriate to say that steel sleepers do not need the number of fittings required by old timber sleepers, including dog spikes and steel plates, etc. However, I am quite happy to talk to the STA and obtain an up-to-date report for the honourable member on how that trial is progressing.

POLICE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): Can the Minister of Emergency Services say what is the Government's estimate of the cost of establishing and operating an NCA office in Adelaide and how much does the South Australian Government propose to contribute to its establishment and ongoing operation? If the Federal Government refuses to approve its establishment, what fall-back action does South Australia have to investigate allegations of police and other official corruption?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Fall back action is what is in chapter 12 of the NCA report, that which has been fully conveyed to the House and the people of South Australia and on which we are working anyhow, without prejudice to the approach of the NCA. The cost is still being determined. All I can say is that at this stage it is believed that the unit cost of the NCA setting up here in South Australia would be lower than if we had to set up our own separate show.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Fisher.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair calls on the honourable member for Newland.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to order. Under strict protocol the call goes to whoever gets the eye of the Chair. The honourable member for Newland has the eye of the Chair.

FOUNDATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ms GAYLER (Newland): Will the Minister of Health advise the House of today's news from Foundation South Australia's Chairman, Mr David David, regarding sponsorship of the South Australian National Football League?

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: I am absolutely delighted at today's announcement that Foundation South Australia has

entered into an agreement with the South Australian National Football League to become a major sponsor for the next three years to the value of \$1 million. A number of aspects particularly please me. The first one is that it is quite voluntary. The National Football League had a contract with a well-known tobacco company and, of the league's own volition, it decided that it would prefer to be associated with Foundation South Australia rather than with the tobacco company. One cannot blame the league of course, there are no hassles with obtaining replacement sponsorship from Foundation South Australia, and one does not have to kowtow to the tobacco companies or anybody else. Obviously, an indexation factor is built into the agreement. More importantly, the South Australian National Football League is one of the most successful sporting organisations not only in South Australia but in the whole of Australia. For Foundation South Australia to be associated with it is a very great honour.

I commend the South Australian National Football League on its association with Foundation South Australia because that will enable many health messages to be relayed, particularly to children. As Minister of Health I agree that the evidence is quite conclusive that smoking is harmful. I do not think that anyone, other than the tobacco companies, would argue with that. The most important thing is to stop children from starting to smoke in the first place. For an association such as the South Australian National Football League to want to be associated with Foundation South Australia and to want to portray the aims and ideals of sport, healthy living and healthy competition is, I think, first class.

I congratulate those from Foundation South Australia, particularly under the chairmanship of David David. I want to congratulate the Chairman of the South Australian National Football League, Mr Max Basheer, and everyone involved in negotiating this agreement which will be not only to the benefit of the league but also to the benefit of the health of the youth of this State. The league, as everyone knows, attracts about one million spectators a year, as well as a huge Australian television audience.

For the healthy lifestyle messages to be relayed to that audience through the medium of the footballers is something that we can only commend. I must, however, enter a sour note: I cannot avoid it. It was a great pity that, when this legislation passed through this House, it was subjected to the most bitter opposition that I have seen in my almost 14 years in Parliament. I could not understand how anyone could have taken the position that the Opposition took. Over the next 12 months and the years beyond we will see the way in which sport and the health of the entire community will benefit.

I am sorry; I exclude the member for Coles who took a principled position. I apologise to the honourable lady. She, of course, dissociated herself from her Party. That situation was particularly appalling when we know that the Liberal Party in Victoria was firmly behind this legislation as was the Government in Victoria. In this State, irrespective of what is put up by the Government, regardless of the merits, it will be opposed by the Liberal Party, with some notable exceptions. I congratulate the SANFL, I also congratulate David David and Foundation South Australia. I think it is a wonderful move.

JEWELLERY EXHIBITION

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): How can the Premier support a ban on the

Voivodich exhibition featuring an award-winning piece made in South Australia on the basis of its association with South Africa and, at the same time, give strong support for the Coles-Myer group which has strong trading ties with South Africa?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The Deputy Leader has drawn an extraordinarily long bow in this case. I wish he had listened to the answer that I gave. I was talking about the reaction to this exhibition, the link that was being made, the agitation that would surround it and the sensible way to deal with it. It is as simple as that.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Fisher.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

PENSIONER DENTURE SCHEME

Mr TYLER (Fisher): In light of the question yesterday by the member for Morphett, can the Minister of Health give details to the House on the pensioner denture scheme? In this House yesterday, the member for Morphett named a constituent of the Minister of Community Welfare who had contacted the Opposition claiming that she had to wait up to six months to have her broken dentures replaced under this pensioner denture scheme. Mrs Seagrim, the pensioner concerned, claimed that she had contacted three separate clinics, only to be told at each that she would have to wait for about six months for new dentures.

The Hon. F.T. BLEVINS: I was concerned yesterday when the member for Morphett came into the House with his weekly atrocity, and I was particularly pleased to see that the media is awake up to the member for Morphett, reserved judgment on the story and did not publish anything until it had heard the response. Experience tells us that the member for Morphett, not to mention the member for Bragg and a number of others, come into this House telling half the story, blackening the names of good officers in the public sector and, upon investigation, we find that the position is not quite as is stated.

The position of Mrs Molly Seagrim of Unit 4, 16 Godfrey Court, Morphett Vale 5162, is as follows. From our records Mrs Seagrim attended the Noarlunga Dental Clinic on 8 September 1988 where her dentures were assessed as worn and loose. The dentures required replacement and she was placed on the pensioner denture scheme waiting list from that date. The pensioner denture scheme waiting list is approximately five months for routine replacement of dentures. Patients who need urgent treatment, such as broken dentures (the member for Morphett alleged that the dentures were broken, that the woman could not eat and had to live on milk shakes) are not placed on the waiting list but are treated immediately.

If Mrs Seagrim's dentures have been broken since her last visit she should return to the Noarlunga clinic where arrangements would be made to issue an urgent PDS letter which would enable her to have her dentures commenced without delay. If in the meantime Mrs Seagrim wishes to have her dentures repaired—that is, if the procedure of attending the Noarlunga clinic is too slow—she could attend her local dental practitioner or clinical dental technician who can obtain approval, by telephone, to undertake the repair at our expense. That is the standard procedure.

There is absolutely no need for the histrionics of the member for Morphett. If the dentures have been broken since her last visit to the pensioner dental service all she

has to do is go to a local private dentist who can telephone the dental service, get approval by telephone, and effect the repairs immediately. The whole procedure would take only five minutes. That is the kind of service that this Government gives to our pensioners and it is no more than they are entitled to.

PATAWALONGA POLLUTION

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): Will the Minister for Environment and Planning, in consultation with the Minister of Water Resources, call together the Patawalonga Trash Abatement Committee to start deliberations on what the Government is going to do about the high levels of water borne pollution in the Patawalonga River which has resulted in the council ban on all types of water sports? The Patawalonga Trash Abatement Committee was founded initially to do something about the floating trash coming down the Sturt and Keswick Creeks.

As a secondary task, the committee was asked some time ago to address the question of water pollution, including the *E. coli* levels and the heavy metals suspected to be in the water. I have been informed by local residents who are involved with the committee that the committee has not yet met to discuss this secondary task, namely, the actual condition of the water. As summer is approaching and already organisations that regularly use the lake are starting to ask the council and me when the waterway will be available, will the Minister say when the committee will meet to consider this task and when the Government is likely to announce what it will do as regards pollution of the lake?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: It seems a little strange that a Minister should have to require a committee to meet but, if that is necessary, I will do it, and I give the honourable member that assurance. What he has said is not altogether divorced from the matters raised by the member for Henley Beach earlier when, by way of reply, I indicated that we had, in effect, interfered with the natural drainage patterns of the metropolitan area and the effect of that is some of the things that we observe: that, plus the fact that we put pollutants (leaving alluvium aside) into these streams and, again, they are either released into the marine environment or in some cases concentrated in waterways, which are partly artificial, along the coast, whether it be the Patawalonga or West Lakes waterway. That has been part of the problems that we have experienced for some time, and one of the things being investigated is a more efficient water exchange process between the ocean and the waterways.

That would address the problem to a degree, but it would be very expensive. The honourable member is probably fortunate in that ultimately, I imagine, the problems of the Patawalonga may be a little cheaper to address than those of the West Lakes waterway. However, that is being looked at. I have also been given to understand that the trash racks have not been altogether successful and that it may be necessary to change what is happening there. The trash racks only remove gross materials from the streams and can have very little effect on micro-organisms, silt, or anything like that. If it is necessary for me to exercise some ministerial muscle to get the committee together, I shall be happy to do so.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: SUBMARINE PROJECT

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY (Minister of Labour): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: During Question Time today the member for Mitcham asked a question about work on the submarine site. My office has investigated the honourable member's claims and I have been advised that work on the submarine site did stop on Friday and Monday of last week. The reason for the stoppage was the unsafe working conditions resulting from the very strong winds blowing on those days. The construction manager of Concrete Constructions has advised me that, because of inclement weather, other work on the site was not possible.

The site managers advised that they were satisfied that conditions constituted a safety hazard, and that the decision to stop work was in line with normal industrial practices in this State. I draw to the member for Mitcham's attention the fact that if sheets of iron are lifted by gale force winds, such as those experienced at the time, and become airborne they can and will cause serious injury to people. If the member for Mitcham understood that, he would not ask some of these stupid questions he asks in this House demonstrating his lack of knowledge of industrial matters.

CULTURAL TRUSTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Minister for the Arts) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Cultural Trusts Act 1976. Read a first time.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

Its purpose is to amend the Cultural Trusts Act 1976. The principal object of this Bill is to enable the regional Cultural Trusts to implement aspects of the new organisational structure for regional cultural management and artistic programming adopted by the Government after extensive study and consultation.

The responsibilities of the Arts Council of South Australia and the four regional Cultural Trusts are being combined to establish a 'balanced structure' which will provide both stability and effective management for arts activities in the non metropolitan areas of the State. The structure adopted retains all four existing regions and addresses the needs of the 'central region' which includes the Fleurieu Peninsula, the outer metropolitan area and Kangaroo Island. Most importantly, it provides for direct local involvement in decisions concerning activities and funding recommendations and is co-ordinated by a central body, called the Regional Cultural Council, which has a policy development, funding and monitoring role. The central body also has responsibility for servicing the central region and co-ordinating state wide tours of cultural activities.

Specifically, this Bill amends the Cultural Trusts Act to provide arts groups, community organisations and interested individuals in regional communities with the opportunity of becoming members of the cultural trusts and of nominating, by the elective process, members for appointment as trustees. The amendment provides for the appoint-

ment of eight trustees for each region, all of whom must be residents of the relevant proclaimed trust region and four of whom will be nominated from persons elected by trust members. The terms of those appointments are specified and the expanded powers of cultural trusts are clearly defined for the first time.

The Bill also provides for the making of additional regulations to prescribe the manner in which persons or organisations can become members of a trust, the fees for such membership and the holding of elections to nominate members for appointment as trustees. The new structure has been widely discussed and has been accepted by the Arts Council of South Australia which has resolved to continue as a non funded, voluntary network organisation. Similarly the amendments contained in this Bill have been developed in consultation with the present regional cultural trusts. I commend the Bill to members.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides for commencement on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Clause 3 amends section 3 of the principal Act which is an interpretation provision. The amendment inserts a definition of 'subscriber'. Clause 4 repeals section 6 of the principal Act and substitutes a new provision. This deals with the membership of cultural trusts. Trusts are to consist of eight trustees appointed by the Governor. One is to be nominated by the local council or councils. Seven are to be nominated by the Minister. Of those chosen by the Minister, four must be chosen from persons elected by the subscribers. Subscriber trustees are to be elected annually. Other members of a trust can hold office for up to three years. Trustees may be reappointed but not so that any person is a trustee of the same Trust for more than six consecutive years. By-elections must be held to fill casual vacancies in the case of subscriber trustees if the next general election of trustees is not due for at least four months. All nominees must be local residents. One must be representative of local business. The section also provides for the removal of trustees by the Governor and specifies when a trustee's office becomes vacant.

Clause 5 amends section 8 of the principal Act which sets out the powers of a trust. Clause 6 repeals section 17 of the principal Act and substitutes a new provision. This is the regulation-making power. The amendment includes power to make regulations with respect to subscriber membership of trusts and the holding of elections and by-elections for appointment of subscriber trustees.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on the question:

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

(Continued from 4 October. Page 817.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): In supporting the motion I would like to make some brief references to the conduct of the Committees. There was one magic moment during one of the breaks when we were fortunate enough to see on television the final of the women's marathon, when Lisa Martin ran second.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: The lovely girl from Gawler!

Mr S.J. BAKER: The lovely girl from Gawler, as the member for that area so rightly points out. That was a highlight of the week for me and, I think, for other mem-

bers. My observation of the Committees with which I was connected is that the Ministers involved conducted themselves very well. I must admit that I cannot say the same for some other Committees which were reported to me. I wish to give some credit to the Attorney-General for the way in which he conducted himself throughout the proceedings of the Committee. He was forthcoming on all issues and, if he could not answer a question, he would hand over the matter to his advisers. He would not waste the time of the Committee: if a ministerial or departmental officer could not answer a question, the Minister would undertake to obtain the answers. We did not waste time and, in fact, completed an enormous amount of work. It was a very successful Committee.

I believe the Minister of State Development and Technology also performed exceptionally well during his Committee proceedings. He was indeed far more succinct than I have ever heard him before. He gave answers in the best possible fashion and called on his officers when appropriate. I have sat on a number of Department of State Development and Technology Estimates Committees, but I believe that this year we certainly saw one of the Minister's better performances. The Minister of Labour, while not quite as smooth as his two other colleagues, I believe also assisted the conduct of his Committee by answering questions. There was a low point during the Committee when some questions that had been organised previously by the Minister received lengthy replies, but overall I believe that I received straightforward replies. If he did not agree with a proposition, he said, 'No'. If he could provide the information requested he did so. Those three Ministers did assist their respective Committees.

I would also like to pay some credit to the Government members of those Estimates Committees. They facilitated the workings of those Committees, allowing them to get through an enormous amount of work in a very limited time. However, as a point of criticism a number of the questions asked about finances, which is really one of the most important aspects of the Committees, were blunted because the Government continues to change the accounting procedures that are used in the budget papers. Time and again when I highlighted an anomaly between the 1987-88 estimates and 1987-88 actual achievements, and then again in the 1988-89 estimates, I was told that it was due to accounting changes.

It is about time that the Government got its act together so that when we compare estimates we do so on the same basis. On most occasions—although not all—there was a fairly reasonable explanation as to why there had been overruns, and certainly the items were not as different as we first thought. The way in which accommodation, salaries and some other overheads were handled within the budgetary lines had changed so significantly that they caused members on this side of the House considerable problems when it came to comparing like with like.

The Estimates Committees made a number of interesting findings. I was pleased to see that the Minister of State Development and Technology actually took responsibility for the mess with respect to the computer technology, computer purchasing and software development process within Government. There is the one Minister, finally, who says that he is responsible. He did not quite admit to the mess that is there today, but I hope that, as a result of our questioning and, indeed, the comments by the Auditor-General and the Public Accounts Committee, he will lift his game in this area and provide proper vetting of computer contracts in this State. We cannot afford the enormous overruns that exist at the moment. The system is out of

control. There was a Data Processing Board which, during the Tonkin Government, provided a meaningful way of assessing computer applications, but that is no longer with us. The Technology Unit within the Government Management Board has simply not done its job. That unit reports to the Minister of State Development and Technology and it is about time that he got his act together and demanded that that unit performs.

We have yet to receive certain information requested of the Committee. One of the interesting aspects of the information we expect to receive is the extent to which the demands of the submarine project for skilled labour will impact on the South Australian work force. Putting my estimate of the demand together with information I have received from various firms, around Adelaide, and remembering the low level of output from some of the affected apprenticeship areas, one can assume that there will be a dire shortage of skills and, in fact, remedial action should have been well in place long before now.

I believe we will go through a very difficult period in relation to supplying skilled labour in the metals area, and I note that there will be a high demand for toolmakers, metal machinists and workers involved in two other trades. The Government must devise a strategy to overcome this shortage. That does not mean that we should embark on a wholesale immigration program to top up the number of skilled persons in certain areas. It means that we will have to attract back into the metals industry (which is going through a period of strong growth) the people with these skills who have left that industry.

I find it disappointing that we still have not seen a final statement on the new Technology Park proposal. We were expecting some movement on that front, particularly with respect to attracting firms with a biotechnology base. I understand that negotiations are continuing but I was quite hopeful that we would see some development in the Sturt triangle by now.

Interestingly enough, the Government will not do any export promotion in the United States during the forthcoming year; instead, it will concentrate its efforts in a number of other areas, including trips to Sweden. I question the validity and the priorities of the Government in this area, because the United States, whilst it is a very different market in which to operate, given its diversity and the fact that it does not have one centre in which to concentrate activities, is certainly an area where we should have a presence more than we have today, and that presence should be facilitated through an agent. However, the budget dollar does not stretch very far and the Government has put its efforts into other areas.

I have been a strong proponent of traineeships for about five or six years, but the State has not progressed very far with respect to their promotion. I have just received an ICTC report on this matter, and it indicates that in 1986-87 there were only 213 traineeships. This is far short of the level of 1 000 that was supposed to be achieved by 1986-87. Therefore, the Government has simply failed to generate the confidence in that scheme which I believe it deserves. Part of the blame can go directly back to the union movement which has made it difficult for traineeships to get mobile in the way that we would all wish. An interesting revelation was the fact that the Community Employment Program—the billion dollar scheme to help long-term unemployed people—has not been a startling success. South Australia has consumed \$150 million in that scheme and it is doubtful, when it is analysed and we get down to the bottom line of how much South Australia has benefited

from it whether there has been any real advantage to this State at all.

Certainly, \$150 million has been spent, of which \$101 million came from the Commonwealth Government and about \$6 million from the State Government. But that is an enormous price to pay. On reflection, I suppose one could say that there would be many better ways to spend a billion dollars. For example, the Alice Springs to Darwin railway would have been a more important priority rather than throwing the money at a problem.

It is interesting to note that prior to the last election we discussed with a group of unemployed people strategies to meaningfully assist the unemployed. One person who had been involved in the re-greening of Monarto, in terms of planting trees, said quite candidly, 'Well, we really have treated that as an income top-up process.' The people involved had a gang of 20 people, both males and females, who were responsible for planting trees along the roadside strip adjacent to the road to Murray Bridge at Monarto. Two people would work on that program while 18 would be off, and that was considered to be fair, because they did not earn a great deal of money. It was not fair—in fact, I think it was a gross waste of money, and the State Government must bear some responsibility for not properly managing the scheme and ensuring that progress was fully monitored.

A number of aspects of the technology and employment portfolios were interesting, and further details will come to light when more information is provided. Some 21 items relating to questions to which the Minister has promised a response are still outstanding. I will not comment on the Attorney-General's portfolio, because that matter lies within the province of my colleague the Hon. Trevor Griffin. As far as the labour portfolio is concerned, the Minister of Labour said that he is not contemplating reforms to the unfair dismissal procedures, currently applicable under section 31 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Interestingly, I had a telephone call last week from a rather distressed lady who asked me what she should do about the situation she was in. She said that she was caught in a cleft stick. One of her employees had defrauded her, and that was one of the reasons why her premises had to be closed down. The person concerned was dismissed, but had brought an unfair dismissal case and had demanded recompense for being dismissed—despite the fact that fraud charges were pending. The advice that this woman received was that she should pay up because it would cost her a lot more to take the proceedings to the Industrial Court. It is a disgrace. However, the Minister of Labour said that there would be no reform in this area.

I have publicly commented on the matter of workplace registrations as being an area of rort by the Government, involving duplication by the Government and causing increased aggravation for employers. This area has not reached the level that the Government would desire. We learnt that 20 000 premises remained unregistered as at 30 June 1988. I am pleased to note that the Minister gave an undertaking that those people who had failed to register their workplaces—unless this was done deliberately—would not be subject to the heavy fines and penalties described under the Act. At least the Minister seems to have taken a reasonable stance on this matter. However, I wonder why it was ever contemplated in the first place. It is not only a revenue raising process but also a source of greater aggravation for the employing community, because they have to fill out more forms and provide more details, when all the details are in the WorkCover files. Such a demand is ludicrous, and it is expensive for employers. To have this

stupidity continue does not assist those many employers who are under great pressure at the moment from paper-work and economic problems.

One matter that the Minister refuses to take action on concerns the training of safety representatives. The Minister believes that it is quite appropriate to fund union training schemes but that it is not appropriate to fund employer organisations that are also training safety representatives. I can assure the Minister that on attaining Government the Liberals will change that situation quite dramatically—and this relates also to the embargo placed by the UTLC on unionists being trained in other than union-run courses. We have all heard that Don Dunstan will receive \$25 000 for 33 days of consultation. It is not just the money involved that intrigues me in this situation, but given the reputation of the man—

Mr Lewis: With sleezy principles.

Mr S.J. BAKER: That's right. In relation to a person whom I believe contributed more than any other person to the demise of this State, a person of considerable controversy, a person who during his period as head of the Tourism Department in Victoria was noted to have made a large number of rather questionable decisions, how indeed could any community accept the results of a report from such a man?

Ms Gayler: That is scurrilous.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The member for Newland says that it is scurrilous. I would say, irrespective of whose political affiliations are involved in these circumstances, credibility happens to be the most important aspect.

Ms Gayler: His work with the Aboriginal community is very sound.

Mr S.J. BAKER: It may be among some, but amongst others it certainly is not. The member for Newland should perhaps go out and speak to a few of them.

Ms Gayler: I have.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Well, I'm sure the honourable member did not ask how Don's rating these days. Further on the labour portfolio, there was a pleasing revelation that the State Government is working towards a smoke-free environment in its offices, in line with the Commonwealth decision. An area of concern in the labour portfolio at the moment must indeed be the proposal to remove gender differences that apply in relation to the safe handling of materials. If handling of materials is to be based on the capacity of the lowest common denominator, we will never move any goods in this State and we will need a fork-lift truck to pick up a package of very small proportions.

A whole lot of other interesting aspects came out of the Estimates Committee hearings. I found them to be a very valuable exercise. Perhaps they were not as good as they could have been, had indeed correct information been provided in the first place, to allow a direct comparison with the various figures, all dealt with under the same accounting procedures.

Mr M.J. EVANS (Elizabeth): This afternoon I want to discuss briefly some aspects of the Estimates Committee procedures and some matters in relation to which I believe bipartisan support would be appropriate for a different method of undertaking some of our work in this Parliament and for a reassessment of the attitude of Governments of both political colours, as to future control and accountability of statutory authorities by this Parliament. I say that because I believe that the role of the statutory authority in the South Australian economy is bound to increase in future years. As the activities of Government become more technologically and technically complex, and as the finances of

the State grow more complex in their overall management requirements, I am sure that we will make substantial use of those statutory authorities that we already have and of others that we have yet to create.

Members of the House would be well aware of the importance of statutory authorities like the Health Commission, the Housing Trust, the Electricity Trust of South Australia, the recently-created and substantially important South Australian Government Financing Authority and, of course, its parallel in the Local Government Finance Authority.

That is to name but a few of the statutory authorities which abound in South Australia and which have come to assume an important place in the overall government and management of the assets of the State. Of course, many of them have important roles in service delivery to individual constituents and consumers and in many ways the public is as aware of the importance of those statutory authorities as they are of Government as a whole.

The public rarely makes a distinction between a statutory authority such as the STA, the Housing Trust or ETSA, which just about every member of the public would use on a daily basis in one way or another—probably all three in many cases—and of course they attribute the provision of all those services to Government. They simply regard that as the province of the Government of South Australia in which the Parliament is strongly involved. But the legal technicalities are somewhat different from that, as members would know.

Day-to-day management of statutory authorities is of course in the hands of the board of management of each authority and that is the purpose for which they were created: they were intended to create a distance between the day-to-day political affairs of the State and the day-to-day management of those business-like organisations.

Naturally, over time, Ministers of the Crown have come to exert greater and greater influence over those statutory authorities as their importance in day-to-day life has increased. While they operate a commercial service at arms length from the public there is little need for day-to-day ministerial intervention. The STA (not to single it out for any purpose other than to make a point) has a massive deficit of about \$100 million or more. It is likely to increase and the Government can do nothing but take an active interest in the affairs of such an organisation, especially when on its shoulders rests the day-to-day management and operation of the public transport network of metropolitan Adelaide.

The importance of these organisations cannot be overstated, and the Government does not do so, but takes an active interest in their affairs. Government Ministers are in effect spokespersons for these organisations and they are called upon to justify their actions and fare increases and, of course, Cabinet itself meets to discuss fare increases, Housing Trust rent increases and the like. It can no longer be said that those statutory authorities maintain an independent role quite separate from Government when Cabinet itself is often called upon to decide the actual extent of the pricing and financial accommodation which is available to those organisations.

In this context we must examine the role of Parliament in relation to all statutory authorities. It can be said that Parliament has the ultimate say in as much as, if it is dissatisfied with the way in which a statutory authority is acting, it can amend the enabling legislation which established that authority. It could even dismiss the Minister concerned if it felt strongly enough about the issue.

Of course, we would then have to confront the problem that I would like to discuss today, that is, the accountability

of Ministers for their statutory authorities and the role that Parliament might play in relation to them. Given that a statutory authority is vested with powers of the day-to-day management of that authority, is it reasonable to hold a Minister accountable for the performance or lack thereof of that statutory authority? That is the question that the Parliament as a whole and the Government as a leading participant in this Parliament should address in this kind of debate.

We have also seen the issue of statutory authorities and their accountability through their Minister come before the Estimates Committees in recent days, and other members have canvassed that more specifically than I intend to do. All I would like to raise is the question of the dual role of Parliament in this area. Parliament is well provided with information on the historical activities of statutory authorities and Government departments; an endless flow of reports and Auditor-General's comments, financial statements and retrospective analyses some months after the end of the financial year regularly comes before this Parliament. One could not say that we were anything but well served in that context. Indeed, the amount of paperwork is almost too great to handle, and some would say that we were over-served in that respect.

However, that surplus of information is very useful. It provides a public database for interested members of Parliament and the public to access information on an historical basis as to what the statutory authorities and the Government have done with taxpayers' funds in the previous 12 months. That is one important role of Parliament: to hold the Government and statutory authorities accountable for the way in which they administer the funds entrusted to them and the way in which they perform their duties pursuant to their enabling Act.

However, Parliament has an important function running parallel with that, but it is a quite separate function, and this unfortunately is an area that has become somewhat confused in recent years. We also have a responsibility on behalf of the people to allocate funds to the Crown. We have a responsibility to tax the people of the State to ensure that adequate funds are available for use by the Crown in running the annual services of the State. That is quite a separate function.

It is that latter function that the Estimates Committees are all about. In my view, the Estimates Committees are not particularly a means of achieving accountability for last year's activities. That is a broader role of the Parliament from day to day, which takes in Question Time, motions, private members' time, general debate, and no-confidence motions. Of course, that role is an important and historic role for the Parliament but, unfortunately, to some extent it has become confused with the question of the allocation of tax moneys to the Government for the current year's services and the proposals which the Government places before the House in the Appropriation Bill for the annual services of Government.

Unfortunately, in those areas where statutory authorities have the principal responsibility for service provision, it is their last year's activities which have become the subject of major debate at Estimates Committees. Because members have no information, or almost no information, about the proposed activities of these statutory authorities for the budget year in respect of which we are currently debating, naturally they fall back on the only information which is available and, detailed as it is, it is quite useful. They are therefore able to direct questions to Ministers based on last year's information.

That is not an adequate way, in my view, to handle the question of how much money should be allocated for this year's activities. Last year's information is a useful guide. It is a pointer to future trends, and it is important in terms of accountability. What I would like to see discussed is the question of allocations for the next year's funding. How appropriate are the measures which the Government of the day has brought before the House for the allocation of funds for this year? That is where we are severely lacking at this time.

In some cases Ministers have simply refused to bring forward budget details for the statutory authorities for which they are responsible, and I cite the Housing Trust in relation to which, for example, there is simply a one or two line allocation involving substantial amounts of money—hundreds of millions of dollars—yet in response to questions and letters the Minister of Housing and Construction refuses to table any information about the trust's forthcoming budget. That is the only way in which the Parliament can properly exercise its function of determining the appropriateness and adequacy of allocations for this year. We have plenty of information about what the trust did last year.

That is not the difficulty, but that is gone; it is history. That is the other part of our function. That involves accountability for what has occurred in past years. What we need to discuss now in the context of the Estimates Committees is not what mistakes or successes occurred last year; we need to discuss the allocation of the estimates for this year and, therefore, it is essential that the Government address in this Parliament the way in which it intends to make information on forthcoming budgets available to the House.

During the Estimates Committees some Ministers, and I cite the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education, provided members with useful information about institutions in the health and education fields.

Mr Becker interjecting:

MR M.J. EVANS: If the honourable member had listened to the earlier part of my speech, he would understand that point. The Health Commission provides excellent detailed information in its blue book on Health Commission institutions, hospitals and the like. The Minister of Education provides a detailed breakdown for each school in the State. Of course, in both those cases that information is largely historical and, although it is useful, it is nothing like as useful as future oriented information would be in this context.

As the member for Hanson said, the Minister of Housing and Construction makes absolutely nothing available in that context, and that is regrettable. But it is important that the Government as a whole address the question of the provision of information on statutory authorities in the Estimates Committees. Ministers are increasingly in a position to control those authorities, so to what extent are they as divorced from day-to-day management as they were?

In recent times I have supported in this House, and in fact this Parliament has unanimously supported, provisions which give Ministers direct control over statutory authorities, as they should have; and, with that control goes accountability and the future provision of information. When Ministers have the right to control and direct a statutory authority, this Parliament must remain the focal point for financial debate in this State. Given the importance of statutory authorities in the day-to-day lives of our constituents, I hope that the Government will address that point and ensure that we have as much information about the future activities of statutory authorities, especially where

Ministers have that control, as we have about the historical position and about Government departments.

I know that some statutory authorities—and I suppose one would cite the Woods and Forests Department in this context, or the Technology Park Corporation—have a commercial role to play, and some information would be confidential. I respect that. It might be necessary to give that information in confidence at the Committee stage, or it might be necessary, as in the case of ASIO in the Federal sphere, to incorporate some things in a one line statement and, therefore, not disclose important commercial information which might give others an advantage. I respect that.

But, that is not relevant to the vast bulk of the activities of the majority of statutory authorities. I am sure that, given goodwill on both sides, the Government could devise an appropriate strategy for keeping the Parliament informed about these very important activities, and the future trends, not the historic trends. That has been the focus to date; we have fallen back on that because nothing else is available. That has filled the vacuum of information available in that context. I hope that the Government will review that so that the two functions of accountability for last year's activities and the importance of assessing the merits of this year's proposals can again be separated and Parliament can fulfil its correct role as the focal point of financial debate in this State.

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): The budget Estimates Committees are now in their ninth year. More particularly, most of the Ministers in the present Government have had six years experience with these important Committees. In the circumstances, it is legitimate to assume that there should be some consistency of approach by Ministers to the Committees. There should be, by now, established conventions as to how information is sought through the Committees and how it is given.

Regrettably, however, from the point of view of the Parliament and the taxpaying public, no such consistency or conventions are recognised by all members of the present Government. Rather, there is a great variance of approach to the Committees. At the outset let me, on behalf of the Opposition, recognise the constructive way in which some Ministers approached the Committees this year. I cite the Attorney-General as a particular example. He answered, in all, 208 questions during the examination of his various portfolios. Information was given freely where it was immediately available; where it was not, the Attorney agreed, promptly and politely, to ensure that it was provided on notice.

Other commendable contributions to the Committees were made by the Minister of Education, the Deputy Premier and, particularly given that it was his first appearance as a Minister, the Minister of Labour. Each largely followed the example of the Attorney-General in providing short and precise answers to the questions asked. There was no attempt to make political points by having Government members of the Committee ask blatantly dorothea dix questions.

However, I contrast this approach with that of the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Health. The Minister of Agriculture, in all his portfolio areas, answered only 80 questions in the same time the Attorney-General answered more than 200. The Minister of Health's performance was only slightly better. He took 89 questions. Put another way, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Health took, on average, six minutes to answer each question.

There were attempts by other Ministers to defeat the purpose of the Estimates Committees in other ways. In

some cases, the same questions were asked by Government members of different Ministers. For example, the member for Fisher asked the Minister of Tourism about public response to the South Australian stand at Expo. The member for Albert Park sought exactly the same information from the Premier. The member for Briggs asked both the Premier and the Minister of Tourism about accommodation for the Grand Prix.

On another occasion, with the Minister of Tourism, the member for Fisher asked a question about the marketing activities of Tourism South Australia. The question had already been asked by the Opposition, and the Minister noted this. She began her reply as follows:

That question was asked by the member for Coles.

But, she then went on to give a long and repetitive reply. The work of some Committees was further frustrated by Government members asking questions totally unrelated to specific budget lines. The member for Briggs wanted to know from the Premier:

How many jobs have been generated since the November 1982 election?

The member for Albert Park asked the Premier:

The budget papers indicate that taxation collections will increase by 8.8 per cent in 1988-89. Will this impact on our position as a low tax State?

Notwithstanding that the honourable member's percentage was deliberately understated, questions like these were not consistent with the original intention of the Estimates Committees. The questions were set up to give the Government a platform to attempt to score cheap political points rather than to inform the Parliament and the public about the detail of the Government's financial policies.

There were, in fact, many examples of questions from Government backbenchers designed for this purpose only, and the member for Albert Park was a prominent player in this game. He offered the Minister of Education the opportunity to talk at some length, in general terms, about public criticism of the Government's attitude to school discipline, while he invited the Attorney-General to give policy speeches about Government attitudes to court sentencing and rape offenders.

In the same fashion, the member for Fisher set up a ten minute reply from the Minister of Health to a question about waiting lists. The honourable member's question was as follows:

The number of people on booking lists at public hospitals has often been used by the Opposition as an indication of alleged difficulties facing the health system. Can the Minister comment on the recently released Coster review of booking lists?

The point about this question is that the Minister had already made this comment to the media at a press conference a fortnight before. The information was already on the public record. There was no reason to take up the time of the Estimates Committee by repeating the public statements made by the Minister.

I raise for the consideration of the House other examples of questions asked, where the information sought was already on the public record. The member for Fisher again asked the Minister of Correctional Services:

What new initiatives have been provided for in the Correctional Services budget allocation for this financial year?

This information could have been obtained from a reading of the budget papers. It also had been repeated in a long introductory statement the Minister had made to the Estimates Committee.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Who was that honourable member?

Mr OLSEN: It was the member for Fisher who, with the member for Briggs and the member for Albert Park, figures prominently in this Dorothy Dix back-up to Ministers.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Rann): Order! There is too much chatter amongst members. The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Mr OLSEN: That information had also been repeated in a long introductory statement and, therefore, there was no reason for the honourable member to ask the question again. In fact, the member for Briggs asked:

Can the Premier advise on the levels of Public Service and public sector employment in South Australia?

The Premier was asked by the member for Albert Park:

Can the Premier advise what level of borrowing will be required with the Consolidated Account for 1988-89?

These were further examples where all the information sought was already on the public record and contained in the budget papers tabled in this House. The member for Briggs seemed to have been chosen by the Government as a resident irrelevant questioner-in-chief. He also asked—

Mr Meier interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: Indeed he did. He also asked:

Can the Premier outline arrangements for ticket sales and so on for this year's Grand Prix?

And he asked the Minister of State Development and Technology:

Will the Minister outline the success that the department has achieved in attracting new investment to South Australia in recent months?

Arrangements for Grand Prix ticket sales have been the subject of extensive media reporting and advertising while the Minister of State Development and the Premier both have made a number of public statements recently about investment in South Australia, trying desperately to pump it up, I might add. These questions and, more particularly, the long answers they encouraged were as irrelevant to the original purpose of the Estimates Committees as the member for Mitchell's revelation during the examination of the Recreation and Sport budget that he was a former soccer player of 17 years experience and was now patron of the Cumberland United Soccer Club. I can inform the member for Mitchell that we are totally disinterested in that gem of information that he provided to the Estimates Committee.

I could cite many more examples of deliberate efforts orchestrated by certain Ministers, with the willing collusion of some Government backbenchers, to limit the number of relevant questions able to be put to Estimates Committees. In this context, it is also necessary to comment on the attitude of the Minister of Mines and Energy to his Estimates Committee.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: I am just pleased that it happens to be the turn on the roster for the Minister of Mines and Energy to be in the Chamber at the moment. The Minister has ministerial responsibility for the Electricity Trust. The Government put the trust under his direct ministerial control. The trust also impacts on the Consolidated Account in a number of ways. Power concessions cost more than \$5 million annually. The trust pays into the Consolidated Account more than \$40 million annually for items including the 5 per cent turnover levy and other State taxes.

More particularly, last financial year, through the restructuring of its financial arrangements, the trust also contributed \$23 million to SAFA's surplus which will come into the Consolidated Account. Notwithstanding these important financial factors, and also the presence of officers of other statutory authorities such as the Housing Trust, Samcor and the STA at the relevant Committees, the Minister of Mines

and Energy refused to have any Electricity Trust officers present to answer questions at his Committee. Indeed, the Minister's opening throw to his Committee was that he should not be asked any questions about ETSA: in other words 'Don't ask me about ETSA, I might have difficulty answering.'

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has the floor. He does not need any help from members of either side of the House.

Mr OLSEN: Having failed here, he then refused to provide information. Asked whether the trust would be involved in any further major financial rearrangements this financial year, he replied:

I am not prepared to give that sort of information.

This is despite the fact that such rearrangements could have a significant impact on the Consolidated Account. Not content with trying to rule out questions and refusing information, the Minister then took it upon himself to determine whether questions were in order. I quote some of his further responses to entirely legitimate questions:

It strikes me that questions of this type could very well have been put on notice.

He did not want to answer it there and then: he wanted some time to think about it. Then the Minister said:

I have to say that the question is out of order on two separate counts.

And, finally:

I think I may have to adopt a rule that if I am interrupted too many times I will refuse to answer the questions.

Mr Meier: Is this for real?

Mr OLSEN: This is for real. This is the new Minister of Mines and Energy. In a final attempt to deflect questions—

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OLSEN: In a final attempt to deflect questions about the trust's finances, the Minister claimed that the Opposition knew the answers, anyway, because I had been briefed about the matters being raised. I deny that absolutely, because we have had no such briefing on ETSA's financial arrangements. The Opposition has received no briefing whatsoever about financial arrangements entered into by the trust which were first disclosed in SAFA's annual report. These arrangements have important implications. For a start, as the Auditor-General states in the introduction to his report to Parliament the reduction in the State's net indebtedness last financial year occurred largely as a result of these arrangements. They form part of a series of financial rearrangements which have generated revenue of more than \$80 million over the past two years.

However, not all of this revenue has been retained by ETSA to help it keep power costs down. Some \$23 million will come into the Consolidated Account via SAFA to prop up Government spending. But there are other reasons to question these arrangements. They involve the use of ETSA's assets to raise money. As well as the trust and SAFA, there is a third party to these arrangements. That third party is a private investor able, until recently, to obtain large tax advantages through being involved in the financial arrangements established by the Electricity Trust through SAFA in this instance. However, the tax office has now ruled that such arrangements must be subject to tax at the full company rate.

It is little wonder that the Minister of Mines and Energy did not want to answer questions about this matter. I suppose I can, to a certain extent, sympathise with him. He is new in the job and the Electricity Trust's financial arrangements are a complex issue, so I sympathise to that extent,

but I certainly do not in relation to his arrogance, indifference and contempt for the Estimates Committee proceedings which we have witnessed in recent times.

An honourable member: Or for Parliament generally.

Mr OLSEN: Well, of course, Parliament generally. As I understand it, he was asked a number of questions about the sale of assets and when asked about financial arrangements next year he said, 'We will sell a few more assets and, the year after, we will sell a few more assets.' Eventually you run out of assets to sell, and then what do you do?

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections. The Leader of the Opposition still has the floor.

Mr OLSEN: This is all the more reason—

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On a point of order, Mr Acting Speaker, I ask why you are in the Chair when the Deputy Speaker is in the House.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The next speaker will be the Chairman of Committees. There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: There is no provision in Standing Orders to allow the Deputy Speaker to be in the House with a temporary Speaker in the Chair other than when the Deputy Speaker is called upon to make a contribution to a debate. That issue was debated in this House just before the close of the last session, and I draw your attention again to the fact that the Deputy Speaker is in the House whilst somebody other than the Speaker is in the Chair.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I will seek the advice of the Clerk. In the meantime, the Leader of the Opposition may continue his remarks.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: I think you'd better take a powder.

Mr OLSEN: Just to recap—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will not reflect on the Chair, otherwise he will be named.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I rise on a further point of order. Whilst the Speaker's elbow is in the House, I would want the Speaker in the Chair, not somebody acting on his behalf.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair has overheard most of the remarks of the past couple of minutes. I am surprised at the particular point of order being taken by the member for Light while his Leader was addressing the House. Technically, if one is to split hairs, the point of order he has raised is correct.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Not technically—factually.

The SPEAKER: Order! However, it would occur to the Chair that, as a practical matter, for the honourable member in his role as member for Henley Beach to be in here for a few minutes preparatory to his rising as the next speaker to participate in the debate is not a very serious infringement of the rules. The point of order raised by the member for light is technically correct. However, my presence now in the Chair remedies the situation to which he has referred, and that may be a matter for appropriate discussion by the Standing Orders Committee at a later stage. The honourable Leader.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, why do you persist in reflecting on members—as you just have on the member for Light—when in fact you are suggesting that the point of order he took is correct? Why do you have to belittle members when you make rulings on points of order?

The SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr OLSEN: Just to recap: the Electricity Trust's financial arrangements are a complex issue. We all acknowledge that, but this is all the more reason why the Minister should have allowed trust officers to be present and to answer questions at his Estimates Committee. Instead, he tried to substitute arrogance for his ignorance of the matters raised. Program performance budgeting and Estimates Committees cannot work when Ministers have attitudes like this or when they frustrate the Committees with irrelevant questions. I have analysed at some length the varying approaches taken by Ministers to these Committees to highlight the need for some consistency and conventions to be established and followed. One newspaper commentator wrote last week that the Estimates Committees were an opportunity to 'twist the political knife on sensitive issues'. They were never intended for this purpose, either.

The former Liberal Government initiated program performance budgeting and the Estimates Committees to provide Parliament and the public with more comprehensive and relevant financial information. They were intended to identify more closely financial planning with Government policy goals and to facilitate Parliament's role in monitoring and examining Government financial policies. As well, they were planned to assist Parliament to better understand the administrative side of Government and the changing functions and responsibilities of individual agencies. To do this, Parliament should have the opportunity to examine in detail, and in depth, agency programs.

As I have recognised, some Ministers have attempted to ensure that these results are achieved, but too many have not. I question, as well, the Premier's commitment to this process of financial examination and accountability. It was recognised from the outset that a key to effective implementation of program performance budgeting would be the development of indicators and measures to help assess efficiency and the success of programs. However, even now, nine years after the introduction of PPB performance indicators have not been included in a consistent form in the Program Estimates for all agencies.

In concluding my comments on the Opposition's attitude to the conduct of Estimates Committees, I suggest that there should be agreed guidelines which all Ministers will follow on the way in which information is sought from and provided by the Committees. In particular, these guidelines should ensure that questions are linked specifically to programs rather than general matters of policy or political difference, and that Ministers answers are confined strictly to the subject of the question.

Since the introduction of the 1988-89 South Australian budget, members have had the opportunity to compare the financial direction it reflects with the policies of the other States. During his Estimates Committee, the Premier said that South Australia had continued, in the budget, to maintain its position as a low tax State. As a point of historical fact, this position was established during 33 years of unbroken Liberal Government, but under two decades of Labor, and particularly under this Government, it has been steadily eroded.

This financial year, State tax collections in South Australia are budgeted to rise by 10.7 per cent. The equivalent figures for other States are as follows: Victoria, 10.5 per cent; New South Wales, 10.1 per cent; Tasmania, 10 per cent; and Western Australia, 9.5 per cent. In other words, South Australia is budgeting for the highest rise in tax revenue of these States.

To put this Government's financial policies into a wider perspective, the average annual growth rate of State expenditure over the last five years has been 9.9 per cent in South Australia (the highest of all the States), while the extent of net financing (the amount of borrowing necessary to meet the differences between income and spending) has grown by an average 17.2 per cent a year—again the highest of all the States. These figures, obtained from a comprehensive comparison of the budget papers of the States, show that under this Government South Australia is a high tax State, a big spending State and a big borrowing State.

Over the past six years this Government has spent, taxed and borrowed more than the other States because it could not contain wasteful and inefficient spending or eliminate work practices entrenched during 20 years of union-controlled Labor Administrations in South Australia. The Auditor-General's Report has highlighted the following range of areas where taxpayers could be saved money: improved productivity in departments such as Woods and Forests; cutting down on the abuse of sick leave; provision of services such as cleaning of Government offices and school buses by private contractors; rationalising Government office accommodation and housing for Government employees; and better management of the introduction of computer technology in the public sector. In these areas alone, there are potential savings of tens of millions of dollars a year.

However, the Minister of Transport graphically illustrated this Government's inertia, its resistance to change, during his Estimates Committee. He told the Committee the STA's business plan could not be implemented without union cooperation and agreement. The authority cannot even introduce ticket vending machines for the convenience of commuters because the unions will not cooperate, while the Minister also conceded that the Government would not entertain any proposition for the private sector to provide some public transport services—implicitly because the unions again would not cooperate.

This is an attitude which pervades the present Government. It is an attitude which says that essential public services such as transport, health and power generation are not owned by the people for the people. Rather, they are controlled by key union officials who decide the standard of service to be provided and at what cost. As a result, we have the second highest electricity tariffs in Australia. Public transport fares have risen more in Adelaide over the past six years than in any other State capital, and our health system is in a shambles, with hospital and bed closures and long waiting lists.

These are just some of the legacies of a Government which refused to confront wasteful work practices or to pursue options that will provide a better standard of basic service at less cost. It has taken the Auditor-General to bring into the open the potential abuse of sick leave. Information obtained by the Opposition during the Estimates Committees heightens the suspicion that there are abuses and that some Government agencies are not as strict as they should be in ensuring sick leave is used only for genuine reasons.

For example, sick leave taken by weekly paid employees of the Engineering and Water Supply Department averages 9.44 days per employee per year, while in administrative sections of the department it is 6.52 days per employee. In transport, figures supplied to the Opposition indicate that the loss of productivity caused by sick leave not covered by a medical certificate costs \$500 000 a year. In the Department of Personnel and Industrial Relations, the average sick leave taken per employee per year is 7.4 days, but in Local Government, a department with an essentially similar

working environment, the amount is much less—4.9 days per year.

Taxpayers are entitled to question disparities such as these. If the incidence of potential abuse of sick leave identified by the Auditor-General among public hospital porters and orderlies is representative of the whole health sector, the annual cost in lost productivity would be about \$25 million a year. If the average sick leave taken per employee in the whole public sector is five days a year without a medical certificate, as would appear to be the case from information supplied to the Opposition during the Estimates Committee, the cost to taxpayers would be \$56 million in lost productivity. However, what has been the Government's response? The Auditor-General raised the matter with the Premier in February this year. When, six months later, his report to Parliament revealed the extent of his concerns, statements by the Premier encouraged press reports that the Government had already taken decisive action. One front page headline even suggested a blitz was on, but what in fact has happened?

Opposition questions in the Estimates Committee exposed the perception set by the Premier's press statements as being far removed from reality. The Premier has led the media to believe that surveys were already under way in certain departments to determine the extent of potential abuse of sick leave.

However, a representative of the office of the Government Management Board admitted during the Premier's Estimates Committee that this was not the case. No surveys had begun. The departments in which the surveys were to be undertaken had not even been selected. Well over six months after the Auditor-General raised a problem which may be wasting millions of dollars of taxpayers' money a year, the Government has taken no decisive action to investigate it.

In the same context, I also raise abuse of Government concessions. Again, this matter was brought to the surface, not by Ministers meeting their responsibility to ensure taxpayers' money is being spent legitimately, but by the Auditor-General. As a result of concerns he raised last year, there will be a saving this financial year of more than \$2 million in electricity and water rate concessions and Housing Trust rental rebates. The public is entitled to question just how much control Ministers are exercising over the activities of their departments when this sort of abuse of taxpayers' money can occur.

There is no doubt that similar ministerial inattention to financial detail led this Government to invest in the New Zealand timber venture, which continues to trade at a massive loss. Information obtained during the Estimates Committees shows that the original reason the Government gave for this investment has been shown to have been seriously flawed. Members will recall that the Government justified the investment on the grounds that a supply of timber was needed for mills in the South-East to replace the losses incurred in 1983 bushfires. Figures given to the Minister of Forests' Estimates Committee revealed that the Government's original intention was to ship 6 000 cubic metres of plywood annually from Greymouth to Australia.

However, in 1986, the amount shipped was only 2 500 cubic metres; in 1987, less than 1 000 and this year it is expected to be about 2 600. In other words, it will take three years to import from New Zealand the amount of timber the Government said would be shipped annually when this investment was originally made. And this Estimates Committee was given further reason to question the activities of the Timber Corporation.

Well over a year ago, the corporation purchased in Sweden equipment for its Shepherdson and Mewett Mill at Williamstown. The former Minister, the member for Spence, told his Estimates Committee last year that installation of the equipment was expected to commence shortly. However, 12 months later, the member for Spence's successor has been forced to admit that the equipment still lies idle. The total amount spent on it so far is \$598 000. It is little wonder that the Timber Corporation incurred further losses of \$3.9 million last financial year and that its accumulated losses now are almost \$17 million.

But the Government's attitude to financial failures like this is not to look at ways to minimise the exposure to taxpayers. Instead, this Government wipes off, at taxpayers' expense, debts incurred by commercial organisations like the Timber Corporation. So far, SAFA has been involved in write-offs to the tune of \$28.6 million. I asked the Premier, during the Estimates Committee, to say whether there will be further write-offs this financial year.

Typically, he ducked the question and allowed the Chairman of SAFA instead to claim that such write-offs were now an accepted form of public financing. This may be the case for Labor Governments, but it is not a practice which the next Liberal Government will follow. It can only lead to further inefficiency in Government operations. It removes the incentive for these agencies to perform when they know that the debts they incur will be written off and converted to capital. It gives them an unfair advantage over their private sector competitors which must pay interest on their debts.

The SAFA Chairman's response to this issue raises important questions about the role of the authority. The former Liberal Government had the legislation drafted which led to the formation of the authority. We developed plans for the establishment of SAFA to organise the efficient borrowing of money required by Government departments and agencies for their operations. The centralisation of this function in SAFA has led to efficiency gains which the Opposition has acknowledged.

However, we did not contemplate a role for SAFA in subsidising loss-making Government operations. Large sums of money already have been invested by SAFA in the Timber Corporation, the Central Linen Service and the Clothing Corporation.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: And they do carry a risk in their deals.

Mr OLSEN: Of course they carry a risk, which means a further write-off of taxpayers' money. These investments have little, if any, prospect of a return. This facet of the authority's activities is completely at odds with its main legitimate function of efficient financing. The raising of capital and the subsidisation of Government commercial agencies are all treated as one in SAFA's reports. The water is becoming very murky, to say the least. It will become increasingly difficult to separate the legitimate functions of the authority and to measure its efficiency if this trend continues.

This sort of financing qualifies for the rebuke of the State Governments contained in an editorial in the *Australian* of 26 September. That editorial complained that every State budget presented this year had either ignored or paid no more than lip service to the level of official debt. It stated:

This unsatisfactory treatment by the States of their taxpayers, who are entitled to see a balance sheet showing what is being done with their money, only leads to more profligate Government spending and a cavalier attitude towards borrowings.

I have pointed out before that the presentation of the South Australian budget does not conform with the Federal budget presentation. As a result, the underlying deficit is seriously

understated in the production of falsely balanced budgets or fictional surpluses. Last financial year, the South Australian budget included borrowings of \$344.2 million as receipts to show a so-called surplus of \$34.4 million. This financial year, the Premier claims that he has a balanced budget when, in fact, it includes further borrowings of \$226.1 million.

New South Wales, with its 1988-89 budget, has become the first State to present its accounts on the same basis as the national accounts. There is nothing hidden in its bottom line result. Current debate about the presentation of the accounts of the States has been prompted by the disclosure of an assessment by the ratings agency, Moody's, of the indebtedness of the States. I assume that the Premier accepts the assessment of Moody's, one of the two major American rating agencies, given that he spoke in glowing terms in the House on 11 November last year about its rating of the State Bank.

Moody's has now compared the debts of four of the States using a combination of financial ratios to produce a credit rating. These ratings are used by financial institutions when negotiating interest rates on loans to organisations such as SAFA. The key ratios used by Moody's are: total State debt as a proportion of gross State product, liquid assets as a percentage of debt, and the debt service ratio (that is, the percentage of revenue needed to cover net interest costs). Moody's has now assessed the indebtedness of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland. It has found that South Australia's total debt, at 36.5 per cent of gross State product, is the highest proportion of the four States. That substantiates what we have been saying for some time about the level of borrowings and of debt in South Australia. This Government is a high debt Government.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: They've been telling more blueys.

Mr OLSEN: Once again, we see an example of the Government trying to set a perception by press release but, in reality, it is a far different story. South Australia has a 36.5 per cent debt as a percentage of gross State product; we are followed by Victoria and Queensland at 34.2 per cent, and New South Wales at 26.7 per cent. At the same time, Monday's assessment does not include all the State's liabilities. For example, according to the Auditor-General, there are unfunded liabilities of more than \$2.2 billion for public sector superannuation and long service leave. This would bring the State's total indebtedness to more than \$11 billion.

The Auditor-General's Report also raises the need for the introduction of at least a modified form of accrual accounting to acknowledge and ensure the financing of unfunded liabilities. This is something a Liberal Government will pursue. The Premier has attempted to dismiss the extent of the State's debt as being of no consequence. Yet he cannot tell Parliament or the public precisely what it is. This is typical of his approach to government. He believes in government by press release, promise and perception rather than government based on principle and performance.

The Estimates Committees uncovered further examples of this practice. Let me recall for the benefit of the House some of the promises the Premier made in his 1985 election policy speech. He promised the immediate establishment of South Australian International . . . to promote trade. That organisation has yet to materialise. Rather, the State development Estimates Committee revealed a downgrading of the trade promotion effort in the United States and Asia.

The Premier promised that the Attorney-General will immediately begin preparations for major test cases before the Court of Criminal Appeal to obtain tougher penalties

that can stand as a benchmark for these and other serious crimes. This was a reference particularly in rape cases. In the past three years, there have been more than 1 000 rapes and attempted rapes coming to the notice of the police, but not one test case has been mounted by this Government. At the 1985 election the Premier said:

I give the teaching profession a guarantee that teacher numbers will be maintained.

Over the past two years, they have reduced by 505 in State schools. The Premier promised the start of a third arterial road to provide a new corridor to the southern suburbs.

Mr Tyler interjecting:

Mr OLSEN: That is a very appropriate interjection from the member for Fisher, because he would remember that promise to his electorate. The Minister of Transport's Estimates Committee established that this project is on the back-burner until at least 1993. Note the deafening silence of the member for Fisher now. He is not interjecting any more: he has gone back into his burrow. The Premier promised three years ago that a living arts centre 'will proceed'. There has been no progress since. There is no money in this year's budget for this project, which was used by the Premier at the last election to cultivate the arts community, and he was unable to tell the Department for the Arts Estimates Committee when it will proceed.

I do not need to remind the House that the Premier also promised at the 1985 election the go-ahead for a world-class entertainment and sports centre at a site at Hindmarsh. I can give other examples where headline grabbing announcements made by the Premier have led to nothing. In 1984, a page one headline in the *Advertiser* proclaimed that the Premier planned a purge on Public Service fat cats. He said the salary bill for AO and EO officers would be cut by 15 per cent over the following three years. At June 1988, however, the number of AO and EO officers was 88 more than when the Premier made this promise. This represents a 9 per cent rise in the salary bill, rather than the promised 15 per cent cut.

Just before the 1985 election the Premier promised that by 1990 the Hackney bus depot would revert to parklands. There was a photograph of him on page 1 of the *Advertiser* standing on top of a building opposite the Hackney bus depot pointing to the area that would be converted to parklands. However, the STA admitted to the Department of Transport Estimates Committee that this move is at least another four years away. Once again, it was a cynical attempt by the Premier to corner the environmental vote.

An honourable member: Long-term vision.

Mr OLSEN: It is just that he keeps on promising to get over the next election day and forgets to deliver the promises to people. During the 1985 election, this Government talked about its contribution to the River Torrens Linear Park as though the scheme was its initiative. When my Party questioned, during the Adelaide by-election, whether this initiative of the former Liberal Government was being deferred, the Deputy Premier, according to the *News* of 4 February, 'condemned reports the scheme would be cut'. But the Minister of Water Resources admitted to her Estimates Committee that the budget allocation for the scheme this financial year was only \$240 000. There will be no new construction work or land acquisition. Effectively, this is a deferral of the project.

More recently, the Deputy Premier, wearing his Emergency Services hat, promised Parliament on 16 August that the Government's anti-corruption strategy would be in place as soon as possible. This assurance produced media reports about the Government's determination to take quick action following the NCA report into police corruption. However,

the Attorney-General revealed to his Estimates Committee that the ministerial committee established to formulate the strategy had met only once in the six weeks since the Deputy Premier promised the Government would press ahead as soon as possible.

Examples like these make it inevitable that the credibility and honesty of this Government will be a key issue at the next election. In just six years, this Premier has broken more promises than Mr Dunstan did in nine years. You have to be good to beat Don Dunstan with respect to broken promises. Mr Dunstan promised South Australians a petrochemical plant and a uranium enrichment plant and a growing economy. We achieved none of them. This Premier has promised an entertainment centre, a living arts centre, tougher court sentences for serious crime, a dynamic new organisation to boost trade, a third arterial road to the south and a growing economy, and we have none of these, either. He is only fortunate that the Liberal Party pushed ahead with its promise to establish Roxby Downs, or the Premier would have nothing to open to mark his sixth year in office.

I think it is rather ironical that the Premier is to open a project that he tried for years to keep closed. The mirage in the desert is turning out to be some mirage, given the royalties that will flow to this State's Treasury over the next decade or two, three or four. It has been six years of falling behind, of the South Australian economy being outperformed by the other States, of declining living standards under Labor and of broken promises. The dishonesty of this Government makes the Estimates Committees, which this debate follows, all the more important. This dishonesty also explains the evasions and diversions which dominated the approach of some Ministers to their Committees. This dishonesty is becoming increasingly typical of a Premier and a Government who do not want the truth—just something they can tell Parliament instead.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I would like to make a few remarks about the Estimates Committees. I had the pleasure of chairing the Estimates Committees over seven days and seven nights, except for a short time when I was excused to attend the funeral of a former Speaker of the House. Last year I made some criticisms of the House of Assembly as a venue for these Committee meetings. After sitting through this year's Estimates Committees, nothing has changed my mind about that criticism.

The necessary rearrangements that are made to hold the meetings in this Chamber in my view do nothing to add to the value of the work that is done by the Committees. The acoustics in this Chamber are very poor, even when it is being used for its traditional purpose, but the acoustics are even worse following the rearrangements that are made to accommodate the Committees. I hasten to add that in making that observation I am in no way being critical of the staff in the way that the Committees were set up or in relation to the arrangements that were made as far as amplification is concerned. I noticed that, depending on from where the questions came, Ministers at the table had difficulty hearing questions and that Committee members had trouble hearing the answers provided by the Ministers. I refer specifically to an entry in *Hansard*, where the Deputy Leader stated, 'Speak up and more slowly, I cannot hear you.' It is my view that the Estimates Committees could be better conducted and to the greatest satisfaction of all people concerned, in a venue specifically designed to conduct a conference.

My experience again this year confirmed my view that the amount of information that can be elicited from a Minister is dependent upon the amount of preparation that

members are prepared to put into a question. Such preparation depends largely on the degree of understanding of a question on the part of the questioner. It is quite obvious that some members are provided with a list of questions from a member from the other place, who in fact may be the Opposition shadow representative for a portfolio and that sometimes members asking questions do not really understand the purport of the questions and are therefore not able to follow up with supplementary questions to elicit the information that is required.

I completely understand the situation that is occurring. Any Opposition member would be faced with the same sort of predicament. It is impossible for a member to know everything about every subject that is raised in this place. It is quite natural that a member holding a shadow portfolio position would know more about certain subjects that are raised in Committee than would a member who is actually asking a question in Committee.

I believe that in due course consideration ought to be given to allowing members of the Legislative Council holding shadow portfolio positions to participate in the Estimates Committees. They would thus be able to ask questions directly, and we would not have to put up with the visage of members asking questions which they do not understand and which have been written out for them by a member from the other place—and to which they do not receive satisfactory answers because they are not able to follow through due to their lack of knowledge of the subject matter. The Ministers in the Legislative Council attend the Estimates Committees and it seems logical that the Opposition shadow spokespeople should also be given the same courtesy. I emphasise that these are my views only. I do not know whether I can convince other members of Parliament that these changes should be made, but I personally feel that they should be made.

This was the sixth time that I chaired the Estimates Committees, in some way or another: over the past three years in the capacity of Chairman of Committees, and in the three years prior to that in the capacity of Acting Chairman, when the former Chairman of Committees, Mr Max Brown, wished to take a break, answer the telephone or was otherwise called away on parliamentary work.

Previously, the matter of how far members could go in questioning a Minister on certain subjects has been a bone of contention, and over the years this has become an ever increasing bone of contention. The area of dispute revolves around how far Committees can delve into the highways and byways of statutory bodies. One school of thought is that the Estimates Committees are supposed to deal with expenditure from the Consolidated Account and that, if a statutory body does not draw its finances from the Consolidated Account, various questions about that organisation cannot be raised. On the other hand, it has been argued that, where a Minister has direct ministerial control over a statutory body, one can trace the connection to the statutory authority from the Estimates by way of the wages paid through the lines relating to the ministerial departments.

So far, I have followed the view that questions be allowed on statutory bodies where a Minister has a direct ministerial control. However, I acknowledge that this is a grey area so far as questioning in the Estimates Committees is concerned. The rules of debate for the Estimates Committees are in the hands of members of Parliament. I understand that the current Sessional Orders for the conduct of the Estimates Committees will soon be inserted in Standing Orders and presented to members of this Parliament in due course. I hope that members take every opportunity to examine them when that occurs.

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I am pleased to participate in this debate pertaining to the Estimates Committees. I believe that, if they are used properly and if Ministers respond in a proper and genuine fashion, the Estimates Committees provide an opportunity for members of Parliament to undertake their proper function, namely, to question the Government and to seek information about the operation of Government departments. Members of the Opposition, particularly, have very limited opportunities to obtain relevant information about the operation of Government, statutory authorities, and other organisations which come under the ever increasing Government administration umbrella.

Unfortunately, because of the number of staff at their disposal, Governments have the ability to bombard the media and other groups with information dressed up in a certain way so as to portray to the community the message that they want to convey. In many cases, of course, it is far from accurate. The budget Estimates Committees provide some limited opportunity for members of Parliament to carry out their proper function and to question the Government on its activities.

The member for Henley Beach has foreshadowed certain amendments to the Sessional Orders. I sincerely hope that this is not an attempt to again gag the Opposition, because Oppositions, unfortunately, have very few rights in Parliament. They are starved of adequate facilities necessary to undertake their duties. The Opposition operates in a building which is a disgrace in a modern parliamentary democracy. Some members of the Opposition are not even provided with a fax machine for obtaining information. They do not even have a decent computer system, although it is recognised throughout the community that such systems are essential. However, the Ministers are provided with an ever increasing number of private staff and facilities for carrying out their duties.

There are a considerable number of private appointments. They are aided and abetted by the Commonwealth Government's Dr Goebbels machine about which we have all recently read. I want to comment on how this budget, given the responses we received in the Estimates Committees, will affect people in the rural community—the farming and the agricultural sector—and the impact of that on this State and the nation.

It is unfortunate that too few people appreciate that the agricultural sector of the economy has the ability to respond more quickly than any other section of the economy, to generate and provide income and jobs, and to help create a favourable economic environment that will benefit the whole nation. There is no other sector—

The Hon. H. Allison: And generate substantial revenue to the State.

Mr GUNN: Yes, and generate substantial revenue to State, Commonwealth and local government coffers so that they can carry out their proper roles. However, those many agricultural industries have to be in a position to sow their crops and manage their enterprises. To do that they need access to finance at reasonable rates of interest and not be hogtied by unnecessary regulation control or be impeded by unnecessary environmental controls or Government red tape. People involved in these industries need reasonable access to Government services. These needs that I have put forward are not unreasonable requests: they are requests that will benefit every citizen of this State.

I wish now to quote figures. I have been advised that in 1980-81 the Australian people paid \$40 286 million in taxes and in 1987-88 that sum increased to \$92 170 million. Per head of population the total tax burden rose from \$3 274 in today's dollars in 1981 to \$5 719 in 1987-88. I cite those

figures because one of the great problems facing rural industries, which are subjected to income fluctuations, is that people are hit unfairly with income tax, which lessens their ability to reinvest. Agriculture requires a large capital input so that agricultural enterprises can be operated successfully.

In the past we have had sensible and responsible Commonwealth Governments which encouraged our farmers, who are not only the most efficient and effective in the world but who produce more per head of population than any other farmers. They have that ability because they have been encouraged to acquire updated and modern equipment and to keep abreast of modern technology. Certainly, their activities were supported by an efficient and effective grain handling system and marketing boards. However, if rural industries are over-taxed, they cannot provide that sort of opportunity.

I refer to the problems facing the agricultural sector because it has been estimated that rural indebtedness in Australia has increased from \$2 082 million in 1970 to \$8 010 million this year—a massive increase. The point that has to be made is that the rate of interest that people paid in 1970 is nothing compared to what is being paid today. Members must understand that, in those marginal areas, as well as

farmers paying high rates of interest, in many cases they are paying a penalty rate of interest because of the risk element. That is not only unfair but also unreasonable. This practice should be stopped immediately. It is absolutely essential that Governments at State and Commonwealth level enter into meaningful discussions with the banking system to resolve this matter and provide finance at a reasonable rate.

Farmers do not want gifts or hand-outs. All they want is a fair go and the opportunity to produce. They will do the rest and they will be happy to look after themselves, because they will provide for the nation. I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* figures in respect of the rural adjustments scheme as provided by the *Quarterly Review* of the Bureau of Agricultural Resources Economics (page 298). Also, I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* a table of statistics from the budget papers indicating the value of rural production in South Australia. Both these tables are of a statistical nature.

The SPEAKER: I seek the honourable member's assurance that the material is entirely statistical.

Mr GUNN: Yes, Sir.

Leave granted.

RURAL ADJUSTMENT SCHEME

Assistance	1986-87			1987-88		
	Applications received	Applications approved	Funds approved	Applications received	Applications approved	Funds approved
	No.	(b) No.	\$'000	No.	(b) No.	\$'000
Part A:						
Debt reconstruction	5 478	2 273	188 792	2 435	1 308	110 320
Farm build-up	439	259	21 670	506	302	28 582
Farm improvement	119	52	1 609	67	39	1 653
Part C:						
Household support	695	603	5 113	675	558	4 092
Rehabilitation	119	79	703	172	131	1 247

(a) The basis of the rural adjustments scheme changed with the new State and Northern Territory (Rural Adjustments) Grants Act 1985. The main changes were to Part A assistance. From July 1985, rehabilitation assistance is covered under Part C. Also, assistance changed from a Commonwealth funded subsidised loan to an interest subsidy on loans from State or commercial lenders.

(b) Data may include approvals of applicants received during previous year.

(p) Preliminary.

Source: Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

TABLE 10.1—Gross Value* of Agricultural Commodities Produced, South Australia

	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88(p)
	\$ m	\$ m	\$ m
Crops, Pastures and Grasses:			
Barley	207.3	183.8	155.7
Wheat	327.9	390.0	325.7
Fruit and nuts	106.2	120.1	119.3
Grapes	76.8	82.0	80.3
Vegetables	80.1	98.8	96.6
All other crops, pastures and grasses	118.1	155.9	176.5
Total crops	916.4	1 030.8	954.1
Livestock Slaughtering:			
Cattle and Calves	76.4	109.2	123.1
Sheep and Lambs	73.9	105.6	97.3
Pigs	53.2	63.1	63.7
Poultry	48.2	48.5	51.8
Total livestock slaughtering	251.6	326.4	335.8
Livestock Products:			
Wool	330.1	389.3	583.4
Milk	74.5	80.7	83.7
Eggs	21.3	22.8	24.3
Honey and Beeswax	3.9	3.8	3.3
Total livestock products	429.9	496.7	694.7
Total agriculture	1 598.0	1 853.9	1 984.6

(p) Preliminary, subject to revision.

* Gross value is the value placed on recorded production at the wholesale prices realised in the market place, in general 'market place' is the metropolitan market.

Mr GUNN: Agricultural production in South Australia this year is estimated at \$1 984 million. In 1985-86 it was \$1 598 million—an increase of almost \$400 million in the value of agricultural production in that short space of time. That must have resulted in a significant improvement in the South Australian economy, benefiting the citizens of the State. In the forthcoming year we must make sure that these producers, particularly those in areas prone to bad seasons, have the opportunity to utilise their land. Under the current situation many farmers will be refused assistance through the rural industries assistance scheme and they will be placed in a difficult situation by the banks. If South Australia is not careful there will be large tracts of land that will not be farmed effectively because farmers will not have access to funds.

Certainly, it is not in the interests of the people of this State, the Government or local districts that land is not producing to its maximum economic level. The people on those farms are the best people to manage them in most cases. They have had the experience, they understand the difficult situation, and many have been there for generations. These people do not make big demands on Government: they are used to living under conditions where they do not have every facility that is provided to the community

within 25 kilometres or 30 kilometres of the GPO. All these farmers want is the opportunity to sow another crop and look after their stock. There are a number of things the Government can do. What concerns me is that this year SAFA has an operating surplus of \$279 million and in its report it states:

SAFA is now an outstanding example of the possibilities of truly commercial and entrepreneurial achievement within a public sector framework.

That is excellent, although I could question how SAFA obtained that money. But we have learnt that SAFA has written off \$28.6 million; it has given that money to the State Clothing Corporation, the Central Linen Service and the Timber Corporation. I suppose that one could say that the Government has that right but, at the end of, say, five years, what benefits will those write-offs bring to the citizens of South Australia? Unfortunately, they will be of little value, because these organisations will keep running at a substantial loss and I could mention many other examples of Government waste.

However, if the Government is in a position to write off \$28 million, it is in a position to provide the E&WS Department with sufficient funds to extend the pipeline at least from Ceduna to Penong. There is no reason why that extension should not occur. If the Government can write off funds in those other areas, there is no excuse whatever not to extend the pipeline. People from this area are sick and tired of deputations, committees and other inquiries when blind Freddy knows that there is only one answer to their problem. Those people are facing a particular difficulty. Some of those people who are asking to have electricity provided are being called upon to pay thousands of dollars for a connection fee.

If the same charges were attempted to be levied in the southern suburbs there would be pandemonium and those people would not accept it. People cannot afford to make that contribution, and it is possible that that scheme will not go ahead because those people are not willing to borrow more money. Governments are saying that they will lend more money, but many people do not want to borrow one more cent as they believe that they have borrowed too much already.

All they want is a fair go. I appeal to this Government to give them a fair go. The amount of money that has been provided through the Rural Assistance Branch for the year ended 30 June 1988 is itemised in a table on page 27 of the Auditor-General's Report, which I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard*.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Duigan): Is the table of a purely statistical nature?

Mr GUNN: Yes.

Leave granted.

Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 1988

	Note	1988 \$'000	1987 \$'000
Funds held at 1 July		25 310	13 455
Receipts:			
Commonwealth advances, subsidies and grants		6 554	5 314
Repayments of advances	1	22 694	17 401
Loans from the South Australian Government Financing Authority	3	21 328	39 307
Payments from Consolidated Account for Natural Disaster Relief		—	1 300
Recoup of Administration expenses		494	231
Interest		2 983	3 025

	Note	1988 \$'000	1987 \$'000
Total Receipts		54 053	66 578
Total Funds Available		79 363	80 033
Payments:			
Repayable advances	1.1	30 621	33 682
Rehabilitation grants		73	60
Payments to the South Australian Government Financing Authority	3.1	13 567	9 410
Transfer to Consolidated Account	2	7 361	11 571
Other		17	—
Total Payments		51 639	54 723
Funds held at 30 June	4	27 724	25 310

Mr GUNN: I wish to bring to the attention of the House a number of other matters. An interesting editorial in the *Weekend Australian* of 24-25 September entitled 'Farmers to the rescue again—unfortunately' states:

Not for the last time, our farmers have bailed us out of another balance of payments mess with a record wheat crop at a time when wheat is also fetching the highest prices ever on the world market. This windfall has come in the nick of time, just as Japanese importers appear to be carrying out their threats to switch from Australian to United States coal. Australia boasts the most efficient rural sector in the world. Yet our farmers receive less help and fewer Government subsidies than almost any other in the Western World. For every one of our 200 years of development as a trading nation, food and wool have been the staple of our balance of payments. Although all Australians who live in the cities owe a debt of gratitude to our farmers, our dependence on the land demonstrates how little economic progress we have really made.

Today we are facing the consequences of our narrow development: a once high standard of living that is being inexorably eroded with a Third World dependence on commodity prices. It should not be forgotten that the record wheat crop has come about because of favourable weather in Australia and an extensive drought in the wheat-growing areas of North America and Argentina. The prices of wheat, wool and coal are all beyond our control. Nor has a weak dollar proved to be a panacea. It alone cannot create new industries, find new markets or make Australia more competitive. On the contrary, although Australia traditionally had a strong currency we were still able to become a world-class food producer and mineral extractor.

What little manufacturing Australia was able to build up, despite rather than because of excessive tariff protection, has been allowed to atrophy... The Government's dependence on ever-increasing tax revenues is the most destructive way to keep domestic demand in check.

Unless the Government accepts reality it will find that the goose that laid the golden egg will not be there. I am concerned that Government policies continue to discriminate against the agricultural and mining sectors which underpin our economy. The gross value of rural production is expected to be some \$21.6 billion this financial year, which is up 9 per cent; and rural exports will earn some \$15.2 billion, which is an increase of over \$1 billion on last year.

During the past five years farmers' net capital stocks have fallen by at least 11 per cent and they have been living on their capital. That situation cannot continue. People have asked that drought areas be proclaimed, and the Government has refused. It has also refused to provide short-term measures to deal with some of these difficulties. Yesterday I referred to what has happened in relation to agricultural machinery and quoted from the *Australian*, which contained an article indicating that thousands of jobs and some 1 100 machinery traders and dealers had disappeared in Australia. I estimate that in excess of 110 to 120 have disappeared in South Australia, and this State has about 13 per cent of the population.

If anyone goes to country towns on Eyre Peninsula and certain other parts of the State they will see what has happened: the loss of jobs and employment opportunities;

the effect on schools; the attempts by the Government to reduce school bus services; the effects on local football and cricket teams; and the effects on the ability of shops to survive. The other day when I was in Kimba I spoke to people who expressed concern that a shopkeeper could not continue to employ people and had to streamline his business because of increasing costs and lack of turnover.

It has been estimated that in the city probably 40 000 jobs have gone because of the downturn in the sale of machinery. This is a serious situation. I appeal to the Government to accept that there is a problem, which can be solved if there is goodwill, and by solving the problem the Government can do something for the nation as a whole. In the main these people are hard workers and are in difficulties through no fault of their own. It is in the interests of this State and nation that something be done about it.

It is not unreasonable to ask for a satisfactory water scheme or a little agistment. That has happened in the past. No-one can continue to pay interest rates bordering on 20 per cent. It is not unreasonable to have a system of income equalisation deposits; that should never have been removed. These people are paying tremendous costs for fuel and that money is not being put back into the roads system. If Governments are not careful they will cause long-term structural damage which will take many years to rectify.

I make this appeal because I believe that the majority of responsible citizens in the metropolitan area appreciate that there is a problem. They expect Governments to act because they know that a good outcome will provide employment and income for themselves and their families. The trouble is that we are spending too much money in non-productive areas. The money has to be spent on the productive side of the economy, and if that occurs there will be sufficient funds to go into these other non-productive areas. Commonsense should prevail. A lot of people have to be involved—

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

Mr TYLER (Fisher): I wish to contribute at this stage because I believe it is important to have a balance which has been sadly lacking in most of this debate so far. But, first, I congratulate the members for Henley Beach and Playford on the way in which they chaired the Estimates Committees. I believe that they showed considerable commonsense in the way they handled that important job. It is not an easy job; it is long and tiring. I, for one, pay tribute to the role that they played in the whole procedure.

I was involved in several Estimates Committees, one being Premier, Treasurer and Minister for the Arts, and I noted that the Leader of the Opposition in today's contribution claimed he did not get a fair go during the Estimates. He accused Government members of asking dorothy dixers and irrelevant questions.

Mr Gunn: Well, they did.

Mr TYLER: The member for Eyre says, 'They did.' Well, I have gone back and looked at *Hansard*—

Mr Gunn interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The member for Eyre has concluded his contribution and the member for Fisher has the floor.

Mr TYLER: Thank you for your protection, Mr Acting Speaker. The member for Eyre is noted for interjecting when I am on my feet. Following the Leader's remarks, I went back and looked at the *Hansard* report because I was involved in that Committee and my recollection was that the Leader of the Opposition had received a fair go. He is really saying that Government members are not entitled to

ask the Premier questions, but that is absurd. Who does he think he is? Has he more rights in this place than a private member on the Government side? I for one insist on my right to ask questions and I believe that other Government members do as well.

The *Hansard* report of the Estimates Committee debate on the Premier's lines shows that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Light asked the Premier a total of 206 questions, many of them as a result of a lack of understanding. The Premier and his departmental advisers continually had to explain to the Leader of the Opposition what is going on. Indeed, the Leader showed a lack of expertise in referring to financial matters, and often the Government members and the bureaucrats involved in that Committee could only shake their heads in despair.

Although Opposition members asked 206 questions during that Committee, Government members asked only 41, yet the Leader of the Opposition still says that he wants more time. That is absurd. Indeed, the Leader has been offensive to other members of that Estimates Committee who wanted to make a contribution. He wants to hog the whole show, but that is just not on. If he continues with that sort of attitude, some Government members next year may exercise more of their rights during the Estimates Committees.

After all, when the Minister of State Development and Technology appeared before his Estimates Committee, Opposition members had a whole series of questions to which they required answers and Government members on that Committee allowed the member for Mitcham 4½ hours of uninterrupted questioning of the Minister. Indeed, the honourable member got much more information as a result of that bipartisan approach than if he had tried to politically point score from the exercise.

The proceedings of the Committee before which the Minister of State Development and Technology appeared represented a useful exercise mainly because of the attitude of the member for Mitcham, but I cannot say the same for some other Opposition members who took part in the Committee before which the Minister of Health and the Minister of Correctional Services appeared. In that regard, we had the misfortune of having the member for Hanson leading the Opposition charge and he continually wanted to point score and grandstand. In fact, at one stage he put on a *prima donna* performance in this Chamber, the like of which would have horrified the onlooker.

I was involved in the Committee before which the Minister of Recreation and Sport appeared, and I considered that that Committee was a useful exercise. The member for Bragg and the Government members involved in that Committee received much information from the Minister, and we did not see the point scoring that went on in a couple of other Committees. The Minister of Transport's line was an interesting area in which I am personally concerned. The Minister, as usual, helped the proceedings run smoothly. However, the member for Bragg unfortunately becomes confused in this whole area. For instance, he asked a question concerning toll roads and wanted the Minister to introduce a toll on the Mount Barker Road. I had read about his question before he asked it in the Chamber, because he had released it to *The News* earlier in the day and Robbie Brechin's column came out with the headline, 'Libs seek highway toll'. It claimed:

A toll to fund much-needed highway development in South Australia might be a solution to the growing problem, according to the Opposition's transport spokesman, Mr Ingerson.

He is to ask the Transport Minister, Mr Kenneally, if the State Government has considered charging a toll for, say, the South Eastern Freeway. 'If not, why not?' Mr Ingerson will ask.

Quite frankly I am one member of Parliament who would be most firmly opposed to toll roads. I believe the suggestion is nothing less than highway robbery.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr TYLER: The member for Mitcham interjects but I know that it sits very nicely with the Liberal philosophy. I understand that the Greiner Liberal Government in New South Wales is moving in that direction. The fact remains that a toll is another tax and the public will find—

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order, so are responses to them. I call the member for Mitcham to order and ask him not to interject.

Mr TYLER: The member for Mitcham obviously ought to visit New South Wales and talk to his counterparts in the Greiner Government, because he will find that they are moving in that direction. I know that New South Wales has had toll roads for some time, but the Greiner Government is seriously looking at privatising even more roads in that State. It sits very nicely with their philosophy, but the fact remains that a toll is another tax which the public will find annoying, irritating, discriminatory and unacceptable. I know that the member for Bragg has been suggesting this as a bit of a policy kite flying exercise, probably to test public reaction to the Liberal toll plan before the next election. I do not need an opinion poll to tell me that South Australians will reject toll gates being placed on our roads. It shows just how much out of touch the member for Bragg is with South Australian motorists.

Mr Hamilton: He is being consistent.

Mr TYLER: As the member for Albert Park says, the member for Bragg is consistent. He is certainly consistent: he is consistently out of touch with commuters and motorists. The member for Bragg really does have a lot to learn when we start talking about our road system. He continually gets confused between the responsibilities of the various levels of Government, and there was no better example than in his question to the Minister of Transport. He said that the State Government should consider charging a toll on the South Eastern Freeway. Quite frankly, he should know better. That is a silly and stupid suggestion, because he ignores the fact that it is a national highway and that it is, therefore, the responsibility of the Federal Government.

During the Estimates Committee the Minister quite rightly put the honourable member in his place. The member for Bragg also overlooked the fact (and the Minister also pointed this out) that to justify the charging of tolls a much larger volume of traffic than could be generated in South Australia would be needed. The economics of his silly suggestion do not stack up. I am firmly opposed to it and I believe that the vast majority of South Australians are also firmly opposed to it.

I was also involved in the Estimates Committee of the Minister of Tourism, Local Government and Youth Affairs. I find this whole portfolio area particularly interesting and enlightening. I thought that the way that the Minister of Tourism handled her questioning and handles her portfolio in general does much to commend her, despite the attacks made on her by the member for Coles in this place yesterday. The Minister of Tourism pointed out to the Committee—and I noted it in one of the questions that I asked—that the marketing budget in South Australia had been spectacularly increased. There has been about a 46 per cent increase in the marketing budget for this year.

That is a glowing tribute to the Minister and I believe it shows that tourism is a vital part of the South Australian economy. During the Estimates Committee I asked her just what it means to the State in economic terms, and she

replied that it was in the order of \$1 billion per year. That is a very substantial figure. It is a growing industry and it is a large employer in South Australia.

I note that in actual fact this 46 per cent increase in the marketing budget is the biggest increase since the first Bannon marketing budget and, from memory, that was about 90 per cent. If it is analysed, when the member for Coles was the Minister of Tourism in this State we will see that we had a pathetic marketing budget and it took until the present Minister of Transport became the Minister of Tourism and, subsequently, the current Minister to spectacularly lift our whole effort in the marketing of tourism in this State. We see it in a number of areas, including the opening of hotels, the booming festivals that are held around the State and the spectacular success of the Grand Prix. As you pointed out so very well in your speech yesterday, Mr Acting Speaker, companies will not invest in hotels in this State unless there is a market and unless they can see that the State Government has a commitment to the whole area of tourism. We have had the opening of the Hyatt Hotel, and there is a proposal for a hotel complex on the East End Market site. The Minister of Tourism should take much of the credit for that because she has been very active in this whole area. I know that she is highly regarded in the tourism industry.

I believe that the Bannon budget has much to commend it, and I know that residents in the Fisher electorate will have much to be pleased about, particularly in the areas of health, education, water resources and roads. At some later stage I intend to place on the record some of the benefits that residents in the Fisher electorate will receive as a result of this budget. I will just refer briefly to a couple of them. For instance, the completion of Happy Valley Drive and the \$500 000 in the budget to improve Flagstaff Road are very welcome initiatives in my area.

The increased funding for water resources so that the first stage of the Happy Valley filtration plant will be completed and commissioned in November next year is another initiative which is greatly welcomed by the people, not only in the Fisher electorate but in the southern area generally. The commissioning of the Noarlunga hospital is another major initiative in this budget. I point out to members that that is yet to go before the Public Works Standing Committee, but that hospital is certainly welcomed in the southern areas. The Minister of Community Welfare, the Deputy Premier, my colleague the member for Bright and I have been agitating and campaigning for that hospital for some time. I might add that we have had the support of many residents in the area, particularly Mr Brian Wreford, who has been very outspoken on the need for a hospital. It is a fitting tribute to the former Minister of Health who set the whole ball rolling. The budget also removes the last traces of the \$63 million budget deficit legacy that the Bannon Government inherited from the previous Tonkin Government, which is something that has not been mentioned all that much.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr TYLER: The member for Eyre does not like it, but the fact remains that the current Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr TYLER: The member for Eyre tries to shout me down, but the fact remains that the Leader of the Opposition and much of the front bench—those tired members opposite—were part of the Government that was responsible for that huge deficit. It has taken us six years to finally wipe out the legacy of the Tonkin years, and I know that the people of this State do not want to return to the disastrous experiment of the Tonkin Government.

So far, all we have heard from the Opposition is a continual blurb of running down the Estimates Committees. It was not this Government that established the Estimates Committee system—it was members opposite who established it. In fact, Premier Tonkin decided that he could not expose his Ministers to the questioning of the then Labor Opposition and that they needed the protection of public servants behind them, so he decided to formulate an exercise to protect his Ministers. That is why we have the Estimates Committees in their current form.

Mr Gunn interjecting:

Mr TYLER: It is interesting that the member for Eyre says that it is part of their policy. All we have heard is the whingeing of members opposite about something that is part of their Party policy. In years gone by the member for Alexandra has continually run down the Estimates Committees. Yesterday, we heard the member for Davenport run them down, and the member for Hanson—

Mr Rann: He told the journalists not to bother turning up because they didn't have any decent questions.

Mr TYLER: Exactly right. The journalists have acknowledged the fact that the Opposition is certainly very weak in this State, and they decided to not even bother reporting half the questions asked during the Estimates Committees. Journalists around this State find it a complete waste of time because of the Opposition's approach. It is no good members opposite complaining about the Estimates Committees. The ball is firmly in their court. If they want to use the Estimates Committees properly and ask questions of the Minister and the Government, they should do so. The one thing I do resent is the fact that the Leader of the Opposition comes into this place and says that the member for Fisher, the member for Briggs and other members on the Premier's Estimates Committee wasted time.

Mr Rann: We gave him a free ride.

Mr TYLER: Yes. In fact, as I pointed out earlier, the Opposition asked 206 questions to the Government's 41. That does not indicate that the Government hogged the Estimates Committee procedure.

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

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I rise to join in this post-mortem of the events of the Committee structure. I use the term 'post-mortem' because there has been a great deal of critical analysis on both sides of the House with respect to what took place and the effect or non-effect of the Estimates Committee system. It has evolved over a period and, in the first instance, it revolved around the proper form of words to allow the Committee structure to get under way. I believe that the sessional orders which are currently in place have stood the test of time in relation to the procedures and the behaviour directly associated with the Committee structure. I take up the point made by the member for Henley Beach, that is, the Estimates Committees are now at a stage where they ought to be covered by Standing Orders. Of course, minor changes would be required to ensure that they fit into the new form which the Standing Orders Committee is now looking at.

The matter which is not resolved by sessional orders or the current Standing Orders—and I draw attention to this because I believe that the events of the previous two Estimates Committees have been very much less than satisfactory—relates to the fact that information which Ministers undertake to provide for inclusion in the supplementary edition of *Hansard* is required by *Hansard* this coming Friday, 7 October. In the past, material has been required by a given date and then, unfortunately, the supplementary

Hansard has taken several months to appear. In the interim, in most cases, the members who ask the questions and those who are awaiting the answers do not have access to this information. When this matter was raised on the first day of the Estimates Committees this year, I accepted the indication given by the Premier, who was advised by one of his officers, a member of our own House structure, Mr Kevin Simms (the Leader of *Hansard*), that the provision of *Hansard* itself may still take some time but that, as a matter of course, *Hansard* would circulate the information to all members awaiting replies to questions.

It is almost two and half weeks since the commencement of the Estimates Committees and I still have not seen any of the answers as promised. I make this point, not to suggest that they will not be forthcoming from the area from which they were promised but to draw attention to the fact that, if the Estimates Committee structure is to work properly, it will require some follow-up by Ministers and their advisers, and it requires that the necessary information is in the hands of members at the earliest possible moment so that the bases of questions can be tested against the answers and, if further research is required or further questions need to be asked, this can be done while the issue is current.

I received more advice during the Committees than appears to have been the situation in a number of cases my colleagues have mentioned. I sat in on four Estimates Committees and, except for questions about local government from Labor members, there was a good flow of information from the advisers as well as from the Ministers, including the Minister of Emergency Services. In the case of the Treasury lines, a great deal of information was provided, although it was apparent that the Premier was much happier on the Department for the Arts lines late at night than he was during the earlier part of the day in relation to financial matters, when he hesitated and took questions on notice and sometimes referred them to his officers. However, during that Committee session I saw a circumstance I have never previously experienced, when one of the Premier's advisers started questioning one of the other advisers. I believe that the Estimates Committee Chairman was as wide-eyed as most other people at a senior officer having the temerity to intrude into the debate in such a manner. Had he proceeded further than he did, I have no doubt that a great deal more would have been said before the Committee proceeded.

Parliament requires the advice which is given by ministerial advisers, and I question Ministers who religiously prevent their officers from giving information. In my experience, the Committee structure has improved over the years. In the long-term, Ministers are far better served by allowing the free flow of information without getting into vital policy areas or matters of commercial sensitivity. The processes of Parliament are the better for that free flow but, when a senior adviser starts to intrude into the debate and questions another adviser whose advice he did not want to accept, I believe that that officer ought to be taken aside by the Premier and given advice as to how he should conduct himself in the future.

I was interested to note that, during examination of the Auditor-General's lines, which were dealt with in the presence of the Chief Secretary (Hon. D.J. Hopgood), there was an acceptance by the officers that there would probably be an advantage in future in writing into the Auditor-General's Reports a summary of the known larger items of expense outstanding for payment at 30 June each year. Over a period of time, both the former Premier (David Tonkin) and the current Premier attempted to move the accounting system

of the Public Service closer to the commercial pattern than previously.

It is by no means a typical commercial pattern of presentation today, but there are some areas where that has taken place. Cash flow accounting, as has been the norm for the public sector, gives no indication to anyone of the true position of the State's finances in relation to a particular department or statutory authority. The accrual form of accounting which is now used extensively in a number of departments and statutory authorities goes somewhat further than the simple cash flow system in providing additional information, albeit without there being a true indication of stock on hand and outstandings both of debt and income.

The figures at the end of the year are a little like a lottery: one gets some of them right, but others give no indication of the information sought. I defy any Minister to come in and paint the correct picture, even with the advice that is on hand, because in most instances the information is not available to Ministers. I hope that this development of the presentation of accounting systems, something which the Premier has lauded in recent years as an advance on what we have done previously, proceeds at a useful pace and that the material which is provided to Parliament gives more detail which will allow a better understanding of the end result.

The other matter I refer to is the material which has been made available and the budget overall, and this became apparent during the questioning of various sectors. It is easy for a Government to obtain a headline by announcing its program for a given year and then, during that year, not fulfil the promises but show a very large spending deficit. We certainly saw this in relation to the Country Fire Services and the Metropolitan Fire Service and, to a degree, the Police Department. I mention only those areas as it is those that relate to the Committee on which I served. In analysing the whole of the documentation that is available, in a number of departments, one sees that there are quite major discrepancies in relation to what is promised will be spent in a given year, and with a Minister or the Premier standing up and announcing the same project a second time around. Of course, it has been common practice for a project to be announced up to five or six times, if the Ministry believes that the Government can wring out of a continuous announcement the same—

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I put the entertainment centre, the Redcliff petrochemical works, Monarto and one or two others in a slightly different category, because they are truly election bait. I am referring more to individual programs within departments, in relation to which a promise is made by the Premier or by a Minister but then funds are withheld, with the community being denied the fulfilment of the proposal, which in many cases people in the community or community organisations have assisted to develop. Sometimes it is not possible to undertake a project on time, but at least we should be extended the courtesy of being told in this House by way of some form of presentation why funds for programs, proposed in a previous budget, are not forthcoming. We should not have these double or triple announcements being made, just for political purposes.

As to specific matters, I have mentioned local government, and I have lauded the Minister of Local Government for providing information and for allowing her officers to participate. That does not deny the fact, however, that the Minister had a number of her political colleagues ask long and detailed questions.

Mr Tyler interjecting:

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The member for Fisher has shown his ignorance on a number of matters. He should refer to the *Hansard* and note the number of column centimetres that relate to questions asked by Government members and then answered by Ministers, and then compare that with the succinct questions that were asked by most members of the Opposition and the nature of the answers that were provided. One notes the occasion when in response to a question asked by a Government member the Minister said, 'This is the answer I am going to give you. I don't know what you thought you were asking, but this is what you are going to get.' The reply that the Minister gave could just as easily have been circulated in a document beforehand or afterwards.

I respect the right of members from both sides of the House to ask questions, but the system will work best if only questions requiring information that has not already been provided or discussed previously in Committee are asked. The point I make is that a lot of the benefit of the Committee structure was denied due to the structured questions and the responses given by a number of Ministers. If the Government, at both the Ministry level and the parliamentary level, is fair dinkum about the Committee system and about making it work properly they should take note of this criticism and reassess the position. Members opposite have only to measure the column lengths in relation to questions asked by Government members and the responses given to adjudge the comments that I have made.

Questions were asked by members from both sides of the House about the Country Fire Services and the Metropolitan Fire Service—two organisations that are vital to this State—but, unfortunately the Minister of Emergency Services has failed to give a lead as to how those two organisations will be structured to their mutual benefit and that of the State. He cannot walk away from the two organisations and simply say that, if they want to adjust their boundaries, they should go away and do it and that when they have sorted it out they should go back and tell him and he will do something about it. The two fire services operate in entirely different circumstances. One is based on voluntary effort. I know that in the past criticism has been made about the top level of management associated with the Country Fire Services, but I make no criticism of that.

I believe that the type of management now being brought to the Country Fire Services provides a distinct advantage to the fire service in this State. We have people who are planning and who are analysing data, and they are giving direction. However, one must recognise that the vast majority of the work is done by volunteers, whereas in relation to the Metropolitan Fire Service it is the union that dictates how the system will work. The union is holding to ransom not only the top management of the Metropolitan Fire Service but also the Minister. There is evidence of this in the answers given to questions that were asked and in the other current information that is available—which information I am prepared to provide to any member, either through a substantive motion or subsequently on another matter.

There is a need for leadership, no matter what role the Minister is involved in. That leadership provides direction in difficult circumstances and gives people a shake, and necessary legislation or direction can be provided, with the community thus benefiting from expenditure of Government money. I say again that I was disappointed at the Minister's failing to show the type of leadership that is required in assisting in the provision of a proper fire service. The situation has not been improved by the Premier's putting in the too hard basket the matter of a proper assess-

ment, and a very necessary assessment, of the funding arrangements necessary for the fire service.

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): I have been in this place for long enough to know when members are talking rubbish and when they are being sincere. I have served on both sides of Parliament. I remember the times when we were in Opposition and when we were questioning Government Ministers. I think that the remarks made by the member for Fisher were spot-on, in terms of the attitude of the previous Liberal Government. Ministers in that Government did not have the ability to sustain a response to an attack, if you like, with questioning and probing, by Opposition members at the time. I remember being subjected to a strong attack when on one occasion I had the temerity to put 350 questions on the Notice Paper, at which time I was giving the Government notice that I wanted responses to questions about where it was going. This matter is already on the public record and I will not go over it again.

I believe that the budget Estimates Committees provide a good forum for members of Parliament—and particularly for members like me—who have such a desire, to obtain information from the Government or from the Ministers of the day in respect of matters that affect their electorates. I found during the budget Estimates Committees that the information provided to me was most helpful in many cases, which I will come to in a moment. Before I do, I want to respond to one of the criticisms made by the Opposition about how Government members frustrated questioning by members of the Opposition. It is incredible that they raised this matter, because I can remember on several occasions members on this side agreeing not to ask questions in order to facilitate questioning by members opposite. Certainly, I am at a loss to understand what members are on about. As I said previously, it is just cheap politicking.

I now refer to a real issue which I believe every member should be interested in, that is, the quality of child-care in the community. Through the Estimates Committees I was able to ask many questions about what was happening in that area. I am pleased to advise that the manner in which this Government, ably assisted by our Federal colleagues, has provided child-care services in South Australia is the envy of many other Australian States. In the budget Estimates Committee I sought additional information on how the Government was going to provide assistance for children with a disability and what respite care program was to be provided for those people. The Minister (page 280 of the budget Estimates Committee report, 20 September 1988) stated:

The provision of respite care has been a concern in the community for many years, particularly for welfare authorities. When the opportunity arose for the CSO to establish a respite care program for the parents of severely disabled children through funding provided under the Home and Community Care scheme (HACC), this opportunity was welcomed by the CSO and by those in the community who were concerned about the group of children and their families. The program commenced in . . . 1987.

Clearly, that program has been of great assistance not only to the children themselves but also to the parents, particularly sole parents. Particularly where they have a disabled child, parents are restricted in some ways in the manner in which they can move about in the community, and the provision of respite care for these people so that they can go out and enjoy themselves in the knowledge that their child or children will be well looked after is important.

It is not just parents of severely disabled children who are affected; many parents are affected by stressful situations and I believe it is important that this provision be made in the community for all parents who need that

assistance. The Minister is now on the front bench and I refer to his lengthy contribution in respect of the question asked in Estimates Committee A (page 280 of *Hansard* of 20 September 1988). The Minister referred to some of the comments made by parents who had obtained respite care assistance. The Minister quoted a number of examples and stated:

My child is now happier—she gets a break, too!

Another comment was:

We know that our child is in capable, caring hands. Wonderful support from the field staff.

The Minister went on to say:

Parents also responded with repeated requests for more places and program expansion to meet the need for care.

I would like to come back to that later. The Minister went on to say:

In the 1987-88 budget, \$304 000 was provided, and in the 1988-89 budget under consideration \$320 000 is to be provided. That allocation provides for 150 places as 250 hours per place per annum. Parents are able to have regular planned care on a limited weekly basis (approximately five hours per week) of block care for longer periods.

The eligibility is spelt out and I will not go into that detail. The Minister went on to say:

Care is provided *via* the 14 family day care schemes throughout South Australia and currently there are 107 approved care providers, 114 families using care and 126 children receiving care. At present, 49 children on the waiting list are being processed for placement.

The importance of this program is without question. I now wish to express concern about articles that have appeared recently in the press. First, I refer to the article which appeared in the *Advertiser* of 29 September headed, 'Children "abandoned" by working mothers' and which stated:

Traditional motherhood is being devalued as women increasingly prefer fulfilment in the work force, according to a marriage guidance expert.

The article quotes the President of the Marriage Guidance Council of South Australia, saying that he believes that the pursuit of economic independence for women has made a dramatic impact on society's fibre. The article continues:

Mr Kirby said yesterday the effect on children could not be underestimated. 'Children are being abandoned to various forms of child-care, many of which are unable to provide adequate mothering and nurturing,' he said. 'Abandonment and lack of consistent nurturing impairs a child's ability to trust and form secure emotional attachments.'

Based on my experience with child-care centres in my district, I have yet to hear a criticism of that nature. Given what I have seen, I can only praise highly the role of the staff who look after children in child-care centres.

I noted with a great deal of interest a letter in yesterday's *Advertiser* from Jenny Rosevear of West Lakes who indicated how incensed she was at the tone of the article. The letter states:

According to the article, working mothers must not only bear the responsibility for 'abandoning' their children but also be held

responsible for rising crime rates in the future. Surely these are unfair and misleading accusations.

If anything, the article surely raises the issue of quality child-care as a fundamental right. Why should women be made to feel guilty for working? Given the tremendous importance of caring for our children, why is professional child-care in such short supply?

Why is so little value and recognition given to mothers who choose and are able to stay home? And what of the deserted wife? Society's attitude seems to damn her if she works and to damn her if she stays at home in poverty on a pension.

Not only will the article have angered many mothers but it is a slap in the face for the vast majority of committed and capable child-care workers.

I agree with the sentiments expressed by this woman. Many members of this House go doorknocking around their electorates, go to child-care centres and other places. There is no doubt that child-care centres have been ably assisted by the Federal and State Governments. It is worth placing on the record that in excess of 80 per cent of child-care places in South Australia have been achieved since 1983, and that is no mean feat. This clearly indicates to me the commitment of this Government in terms of providing these facilities.

Why should a woman who wishes to work be made to feel guilty if she wants to provide the best conditions and education for her child? When she works and raises that money some members of the community condemn her for doing so. Members of this House who are parents will know that all parents wish to provide the best for their children. I am at a loss to understand how Mr Paul Kirby, from the Marriage Guidance Council, can make such criticisms. If his comments as quoted are correct, I am at a loss to understand how he can demean the role of women in the work force who want to have independence and provide the best for their children.

Single and deserted women with children live in Housing Trust estates, and all members know of the uncaring and bigoted attitudes that are directed towards them because they stay at home with their children. We receive comments, in many cases from males, that a certain woman is getting cheap rent and should not be given that assistance; that she ought to go out to work. Other derogatory remarks are made against women because a male friend may drop around to see them from time to time.

I believe that articles such as this that appear in the media do nothing to assist women, particularly in relation to their trying to bring up their child in an educated and caring environment. One way or another society will pay if we do not provide the best possible environment for these children. I believe that if they are given equality of opportunity in education then they will go on to bigger and better things once they enter the work force.

Since I have been in this place I have heard so much from the Opposition about law and order. I vividly remember the disgusting advertisements that were run by the Liberal Party leading up to the 1979 election. During the time that I was in Opposition I rigorously questioned the Tonkin Government about what it had done in relation to law and order. Since this Government has been returned to office it has done far more in a similar period of time than did the Tonkin Government.

Members interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: I was hoping to get such interjections. The member for Mitcham should peruse page 171 of the Estimates Committee of 15 September. It contains an issue which I believe should have seen a bipartisan approach, but the Opposition embarked on a program of trying to make cheap political capital out of what occurred. The record of our Attorney-General and Deputy Premier—indeed, of this

Government—will stand up to close scrutiny. Let us look at the—

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: I will come to the crime statistics. On page 172 of the Estimates Committee of 15 September the Attorney-General stated:

One of the real problems we have in trying to have a rational debate in this area is that crime statistics are often not comparable. A recent example was where South Australia appeared to have a higher theft rate than other States, but when one looked into it one saw that in this State all lost property was included in the statistics whereas in other States it was excluded. If one just took the bald figures it showed that South Australia had a higher crime rate for theft than other States.

In this area alone the Liberal Party and members opposite want to mislead the community at large.

Mr Oswald interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: The member for Morphett says, 'That is nonsense.' When he was at his booth at the Adelaide Show handing out that junk which contained the misuse of crime statistics I recall saying to him that I intended to address that matter. The member for Morphett and the Opposition will hear more from me and Government members about this. We will let the electorate know exactly what this Government has done—more than what was done in a comparative time under the weak Tonkin Government.

This State has more police per head of population than any other State in Australia, with the exception of Western Australia. Clearly, this Government has given a commitment to law and order. The member for Mitcham knows my involvement in the Neighbourhood Watch program, and he nods his head in acknowledgment. I have made a commitment to that, and that commitment will continue.

Mr D.S. BAKER (Victoria): It has been interesting to listen to members from both sides of the House in their assessment of how the Estimates Committees have worked. Most members have some criticism of the way they work, and in most cases those criticisms have been constructive. I was particularly interested in the suggestions put forward by the member for Henley Beach, who had obviously put a great deal of thought into what he was saying. I agree entirely that there have to be some changes. They will have to be addressed in a bipartisan way. It is clear to me that the Estimates Committees of the past fortnight have been, once again, a charade. I noticed a comment from a journalist about this, and I will refer to what was said later. Perhaps the journalists may be able to sharpen their game, and perhaps those who have a say in how the Estimates are run may be able to sharpen their performance.

Time and time again we saw lengthy introductions by Ministers and quite nonsensical questions asked by Government members and prepared statements were read out *ad nauseam*. It appears to me that the opportunity for the Opposition to ask questions is becoming more and more limited each year. In fact, we reached the stage during one session where three questions were asked in 45 minutes.

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

Mr D.S. BAKER: Before the dinner adjournment I was somewhat reluctantly praising the member for Henley Beach for the constructive points he put forward in his assessment of the Estimates Committees. As I was saying, it is quite obvious that something has to be done because, compared with what was originally envisaged, there is now a farcical situation. We must remember that it should be in the interests of the Government to make those Committees work efficiently. There will always be an element of political point scoring, and I guess that is what this place and democracy

is all about, but somewhere there has to be a constructive attitude from both sides of the House. The time has now come, in the interests of the Government and the Opposition, for us to put bipartisan pressure on public servants and departments so that the departments are run more efficiently in the interests of the taxpayers of South Australia. As we hurl obscenities at one another across the Chamber, we often forget that at the end of the day it is the poor taxpayer who picks up the tab.

It is in the interests of the Government to ensure that there is gentle questioning and probing of the performance of the public servants. Unfortunately, the Ministers are using the situation to shield those public servants from questioning, no matter how valid it is. The more unfortunate point is they are using the system for policy statements *ad nauseam*.

The Hon. R.J. Gregory interjecting:

Mr D.S. BAKER: Time and time again there was an opportunity for a short, concise answer, but the Minister was handed a long sheet to read out, and one can see that if one looks through *Hansard*. I note that the Minister is interjecting, and I see that the media has given him a tick or some sort of praise for his first performance before the Estimates Committees, but one should always be wary of praise from the media. If he had any influence on the Treasury benches, he might be able to help in the reconstruction process that must take place. A head of a department said to me that officers spend many months getting their house in order, cleaning out the cobwebs and providing the written answers for any question to the Minister so that the Minister looks fantastic and so that the department cannot be stumped by any question that is asked. That takes considerable effort and the gentleman to whom I spoke said that in his department people were preparing for the Estimates Committees for virtually three months of the year. Because the system ended up as an absolute charade, it is time we looked at what goes on and how we could change the procedure.

I want to quote from *Hansard* some comments made regarding the Estimates Committees. One honourable member stated:

... this will be the first opportunity that I have had to comment on the Estimates Committee procedures that we have just gone through.

He went on to say:

... we were happy to try the procedure and, indeed, we welcomed the attempt by the Government to give effect to those policies that it enunciated when in Opposition—that it would introduce such a procedure specifically to provide the Parliament, and particularly the Opposition, with greater opportunities to question the Government.

They are pretty lofty words. He went on to say:

I indicate that we have serious reservations about the value of the new procedure in the longer term for effective opposition in this Parliament.

Those comments, and others that I will read out, were made to this House on 21 October 1980 by the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Bannon.

He went on to say—because it was not working, and he was in Opposition—that he wanted an all-Party committee of the House to establish a review. He got a little wishy-washy, as usual, and said that he might finally vote for establishing a select committee. However, a Standing Orders committee was set up, and it is interesting to see what the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Bannon, said after a report was handed down, when commenting on the Estimates Committees of 1981. He said:

Finally, there is the question of public servants, their advisers and their roles. We strongly supported the concept that Ministers should be responsible for answering the policy questions and that

public servants and advisers should be confined to matters of factual information; indeed, I go further and say that in many cases it should be their job to provide it, because they have the information at their fingertips, and that is the reason for their attendance before the committee. Last year, too often we had cases where a Minister would insist on answering all questions put to him by the committee.

I just hope that the Premier will re-read what he said, and put it into practice at Cabinet meetings, because nothing has changed, some seven years later. We have the Ministers answering questions *ad nauseam*, when they should be answered by officers of their departments and the public servants. In fact, in many cases public servants have privately confided in me that they wonder why they go along, because the Ministers just chop them off all the time. Surely, that is not what we are on about. The former Leader of the Opposition went on to say:

One would hope that Cabinet decides on some common and standardised approach from Ministers and that the role of Public Service officers and advisers can be made quite clear to them.

I am sure that we would all agree with that. That is why we have so many problems, and I believe that is why we have to do something about the matter.

Apart from the aims of the Estimates Committee and their downfalls, I now want to talk about several matters that were named in the Estimates Committees in which I participated. One of them was the Forestry Estimates Committee, and I made some quite derogatory comments about the performance of the Woods and Forests Department. The Minister of Forests, the Hon. J.H.C. Klunder, took me to task about this and said:

The member for Victoria seems incredibly keen for private enterprise to get its hands on these operations. I wonder why private enterprise is not noted for buying things that are not going concerns.

My comments were prompted by the Minister's admission that the Woods and Forests Department has total assets of approximately \$600 million—that is \$600 million of taxpayers' funds, while last year those operations lost \$1 million. The member for Mount Gambier and I both support very strongly the right of the Government of this State to plant areas of forest and to produce timber from those areas. I believe that this is a very right and proper thing to do and, in fact, the Woods and Forests Department does that part of it very well. However, the minute it starts engaging in commercial operations from the product of those forests, it continually shows itself to be totally incompetent in financial management and in competing with private enterprise in those operations. In trying to defend the losses, the Minister went on to say that it was all caused by the Ash Wednesday fire.

That excuse has been used by the Woods and Forests Department for some five years, that is, that the Ash Wednesday fire has cost it a tremendous amount of money in its commercial operations. Nothing is further from the truth. For the first year it had public sympathy because it was a national disaster but, since then, we have seen it used as an excuse for financial incompetence. The fact is that after Ash Wednesday a tremendous amount of timber was cut, taken from the forest and stored. The production levels of timber mills almost doubled. In fact, extra shifts were put on to cope with the extra production. In any financial operation that, in itself, would lower overhead costs, and at that time, with the best timber ever available to any sawmill operation in this State, it should have been competitive in the market. Of course, it was not. However, private enterprise operations in the South-East were competitive in that market in spite of Ash Wednesday. They continued to make profits in spite of Ash Wednesday and they continued to prosper.

The Minister keeps berating the member for Mount Gambier and me for having the audacity to question the fact that the commercial operation of the Woods and Forests Department is not as efficient as it could be. I am sure that the people in both the Mount Gambier and Victoria electorates support us in our drive for some accountability from the Woods and Forests Department—and I have not even started on Satco, although it would take well into the evening to add up the disasters which have beset that company.

I will deal with one part of the Satco topic which was covered by the Leader of the Opposition, and that is the Shepherdson and Mewett sawmill equipment. The Leader mentioned the fact that the equipment, which is now valued at some \$500 000, had been sitting on the docks at Port Adelaide for 18 months and is now sitting in a yard in one of the timber mills and still, after two examinations during Estimates Committees, has not been installed. The Minister went on at length saying what a wonderful job his department did, that the total cost of the equipment was \$352 000 and it is now worth about \$600 000, and what a very good deal it was. He also said how important it is and mentioned what it will do for the profitability of Satco. Unfortunately—

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

Mr D.S. BAKER: There is no question about that. If it was handed over to a private enterprise company, it would sell it for what it could get and put in some decent equipment. That is the very point: the Minister admits that the equipment is five years old, although it tends to last quite a time. However, he says later how important it is in Satco's operation to make sure that it upgrades all the time, and he justifies spending a lot of extra money on up-to-date precision equipment for the Satco mills. He goes on at length, telling us what he is going to do.

Then there is the bungle of buying second-hand equipment. During last year's Estimates Committees we questioned the Minister quite closely as to who received the commission for purchasing that equipment. It was canvassed quite widely in this House, because the Government had a former IPLH director travelling around the world as a machinery expert purchasing equipment but, what is worse, he received a commission for it. That equipment has been sitting there for two years. It is now obsolete, and it is about time that journalists who criticise the way in which the Estimates Committees are run have a close look at this matter because it has been pushed under the carpet for far too long. Estimates Committees can function well, provided that we can shorten the procedure in order to obtain factual information from the Ministers concerned and their advisers.

The other point I take up briefly concerns an article headed 'Little juice squeezed from Public Service mandarins', written by Rex Jory in the *Advertiser*. The article reads as follows:

But with the expansion of Government, the appointment of ministerial minders and press secretaries and the introduction of politics by television, the top public servants have been forced into the shadows.

They have been forced further into the shadows by the Ministers who head the Estimates Committees and who will not let them answer questions. That is very bad. The article continues:

It is an opportunity for the Opposition to put individual Ministers under pressure, extract information and twist the political knife on sensitive issues. The Opposition has the opportunity to unsheath the long knives.

That is not a constructive attitude to take. In fact, that attitude has been taken by the Government of the day, and

that is why the Estimates Committees have fallen into a heap. Jory goes on to say:

Not one issue raised in nearly two weeks of exhaustive questioning embarrassed the Government. The media, which felt obliged to cover the hearings, were bored, even irritated, by the endless stream of apparently poorly researched questions.

I say to members of the media that, as *Hansard* shows, there is ample information from the Estimates Committees to be picked up by them with which to question the Government of the day on its performance and on the performance of the Ministries that those Ministers head.

This State lacks good investigative journalists who are prepared to do a little bit of work, to research their subject properly, and not rely on the Opposition to do it or on the blurb that is handed out by members such as the member for Briggs, who hands out non-factual drivel. Members of the media take that up because it is the easy way out. It is about time they got off their bottoms and did a little bit of research and probing for themselves and spent less time wandering around the corridors and in the press gallery talking to one another. Members on both sides of this House should force employees of the media to do some more work.

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): First, I will deal with the recreation and sport estimates and speak briefly about last year's capital expenditure and the amount proposed for 1988-89. Thanks to this Government, South Australia now has an excellent hockey stadium at the Samcor paddocks. That development involved a very significant purchase of land at a cost of approximately \$1.6 million. I am surprised that the transfer cost into the Department of Recreation and Sport was so high. In essence, it means that Government land has been transferred from one department to another and one of the smaller departments, which has one of the most significant effects in the community, has lost a substantial amount of cash that could have been put into the development of more facilities.

This year the development of a velodrome at a cost of \$1.9 million may be possible. I say that because there is no Federal backup money at all. In the past, unless significant Federal money has been put into these projects, they do not occur. Whilst it is said that that sort of money will be spent on plans and pre-development of the velodrome, it remains to be seen whether it is not just another election run-off, which seem to be coming out rapidly at the moment.

The other development put forward is a small bore rifle range at a cost of \$350 000. We support that but note that it has been in the last three budgets. We note also that it does not have any premises and therefore has nowhere to spend the \$350 000. The disappointment is that we have no money at all for local facility development. So, the whole area of supporting sporting clubs at the grass roots has disappeared—we have no money at all. We are told by the Minister—

Mr Hamilton interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: We are getting less now, so behave yourself. The reality today is that this line has totally disappeared. It is interesting that the member for Albert Park talks about that, because in the last five to seven budgets there has always been a line for local facility development. It has only been cut out in this budget and it is interesting that the honourable member should raise it.

The other interesting area is the sudden development of need for sporting facilities in the southern areas. One has to suspect that perhaps an election is on. Perhaps we suddenly realise after five years that we have a massive problem in the southern areas and that at last we are starting to get some action. If we put it into perspective, how good is the member for Fisher and how strong is he in getting money

for his electorate? We have heard him over the past three or four years saying that this is required, but nothing has happened. One must therefore question what is going on. Is it really an election gimmick or is it pressure from the member for Fisher? I believe it is an election gimmick, and I am sure that we will see what will happen over the next few months.

I refer to Foundation South Australia. We have heard today that \$1 million will be given to the South Australian National Football League. In making inquiries this afternoon, I was interested to find that no guidelines have been set. We have merely had an announcement by the Government that it will spend \$1 million on football. The football league really does not know what the guidelines will be—it knows only that it is suddenly the benefactor of \$1 million. I am cynical enough to believe that on Grand Final day a deal was done in which the South Australian National Football League was to be the first cab off the rank as far as this new Foundation South Australia was concerned. I have no objections, because I am a strong supporter of the football league and happen to be on one of its major committees—the retention committee. I have no objection to the foundation putting the money through to the league. However, I am concerned that some 100 other sports are also looking for significant funds but that they do not count at this time. Their guidelines have not been set out, but suddenly there is a massive front page issue relating to the South Australian Football League.

It is about time the Government came clean on what will be the guidelines, how much money is to be replaced with the cigarette advertising funds and how it will be done. It is unrealistic and unreasonable that the larger organisations, which have the most political clout, are able to be first cab off the rank. Without being cynical I suggest that the racing industry will be the next one announced, and then I suspect that some of the minor sports might come out. The foundation was set up with no objection from the Opposition. Now that it is in place it ought to be fair dinkum and ought to be stating how it will put this money out, rather than simply making willy-nilly front page headline grabs, as happened today.

As to the racing section of recreation and sport, I am concerned that the Government again has gone down the track of seeking continual reports. We all know that, if one does not want to do anything, one calls for a report. What is the position in the racing industry? In regard to fixed odds betting, the Government has called on the former Deputy Premier (Mr Wright) to head up a committee. In terms of on-course telephone betting, it has called on him again to examine that matter. This all suggests to me that the Government does not want to make a decision. Instead, it just wants a well-known and well respected man in the sporting industry to give a report and thus delay the decision of the Government. It is incredible that the Government will not bother to make decisions but governs by reports.

It is also interesting to note that the most healthy extension of the TAB is into hotels and that this move has now been approved by the unions. The TAB is now able to extend into hotels because the PSA has agreed. If that is not a lot of garbage, I do not know what is. It is about time that the Government simply said, 'We are going to have TAB units in hotels because that is where our expansion lies,' instead of having every time to ask the unions. It is a disgraceful situation.

Mr Hamilton: That's nonsense.

Mr INGERSON: It is not nonsense. The honourable member should read what the Minister said. He said, 'We have at last been able to work things out with the PSA.' If

that is not waiting for the unions, what is? Both the honourable member and I know that that did not involve negotiations. As to 5AA, it is important to note that \$1 million of equity has again been put into the station this year, making a total investment of \$7.4 million. Again this year, a significant loss of \$820 000 was incurred, bringing the loss over four years to \$4 million. As to the \$820 000 loss, it is important to note that the TAB contributed \$750 000 for broadcasting rights, so that, if the TAB had not paid that, there would have been a loss of \$1.5 million.

It is also interesting to note that we have a special gambling room in the large auditorium on North Terrace aimed at large gamblers. That concerns me. It is basically a high rollers room at the auditorium, and some of the smaller clubs, particularly the greyhound and trotting clubs, are concerned that some of their large regular punters are possibly being pulled away from their associations into the auditorium. I am concerned about that. The Minister says that he is going to investigate the matter, and I hope that he will do so.

Let me now turn to transport. We had the Minister saying to the Estimates Committee how great he was in organising the transport portfolio, how well he had re-organised the STA, and how he was on top of his portfolio. The member for Fisher had a great deal of enthusiastic comments to make about the Minister. Let me look at some of the great things that the Minister has done.

In 1982-83 the STA had a net deficit of \$70 million. Five years later the deficit is \$116 million. The on-line computer system in the Department of Motor Vehicles had an estimated cost of \$4.5 million, but today that is \$11 million—more than a 100 per cent blow-out. The Crouzet ticketing system had a cost of \$4.5 million, but today the cost is \$11 million and, as the Auditor-General has said, he cannot even tell what the internal working costs of the Crouzet system are. Yet, when inspections are done at the STA, it tells people that it has the best computer accounting system in South Australia. The STA says it can tell all the on-line costs for trains, trams and buses, yet it cannot even tell us what are the set-up costs of that system. We had a blow-out from \$4.5 million to over \$11 million. The original cost of the *Island Seaway* was \$11 million, but today it is \$21.3 million-plus.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott interjecting:

Mr INGERSON: It is interesting that the former Minister of Marine referred to \$21.3 million. The Auditor-General said very clearly that since June the cost had not been added in. The Minister of Transport will later be asked questions about the true cost. However, everybody knows that it is about \$25 million.

In relation to the *Island Seaway*, an interesting question was whether we should have an award for that vessel and whether we should introduce sickies for it, because it has had more sickies than have the Department of Transport employees, on average. It has had more than 10 days off in one year and that sort of record will continue. The ship has been poorly designed and that fact is gradually being proved. Yesterday the Minister of Transport began to soften us all up, because it has ballast and floatation problems. Further, it is under-powered and it has cost almost double the original estimate.

In relation to sick leave, in 1986-87 the Department of Recreation and Sport employees had an average of 7.4 days off, but one year later that figure has increased to 8.8 days. Within 12 months there has been an increase of 1.4 days for every person in the department. It is quite staggering that there should be this sort of lack of control, yet during the Estimates Committee we heard that the Minister of

Transport should come out from under the bushel and show us the light. He does not need to come out from under the bushel, because the light is all there—he cannot manage anything. Every single thing to which he turns his hand more than doubles in cost within a very short time.

I refer to the on-line system in the Motor Registration Division. We were told that the increased costs for that system were due to the protracted implementation period; in other words, it took a little longer—five years instead of one year! The increased costs were also said to be due to an underestimation of the complexity of the task; in other words, no-one sat down and looked at what sort of input and output they wanted in the department, but they were prepared to spend \$4.5 million (which is now \$11 million) and they did not even bother to establish the complexity of the task. They said that the increase was caused by the introduction of sophisticated technique and technology; in other words, they did not understand how the computer worked. Further, they alleged that there was lack of adequate project management expertise, but this department handles millions of dollars a year. When things go wrong, it is always difficult to attract and retain suitably experienced people. Perhaps one of the reasons why we could not retain them was because they knew that it was in such a mess and it would never be fixed up properly.

Finally, the difficulty with the software package is mentioned. If \$4.5 million is to be spent on a system, surely someone should sit down and find out whether or not the software packages work. What has been done to remedy the situation? The Minister has said that weekly meetings will monitor and report on the progress of this whole system. On top of that, and having spent all this money, the department, instead of coming on-line with the computer, will introduce an interim system designed as a stepping stone to the final on-line system. Having said that all that money will be spent on a new system, the Government now says that there will be an interim system, because the original one does not work. The first stage will relate to registration and the second stage will relate to the licensing system.

Why did we not say five years ago, 'Let us have the registration system, put it on-line, get it up and running and then we will worry about the licensing system and integrate it with all the other areas that are required'? That seems to be simple and commonsense, but this Government does not seem to know how to manage those sorts of things. It seems to continue to spend more and more money, but this Minister comes from underneath the bushel with disaster after disaster. Let us look at another major area of concern, that is, the Crouzet ticketing system. During the Estimates Committees we were told that the major cause of problems in the system was the 10 million faulty tickets.

Mr Tyler: Who told you that?

Mr INGERSON: The Minister said it. We were told that people had more than two months of travel before the STA realised the tickets were faulty. I know that I am gullible, but that is a joke. Someone forgot to tell us that the batteries in the machines and the validators on the buses did not work, that they still do not work on the trains, and that they did not work this morning on the trams. We were told that the software was 'out'. Yet, there are still up to 40 calls a day for service problems related to the Crouzet ticketing system.

The Auditor-General has indicated that it will cost \$4 million a year to run this system—the system that was to save us \$1 million in fraud. We have this magnificent Crouzet ticketing system which the Minister says is okay, yet 40 calls were received today in relation to simple service matters.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right should control their excitement.

Mr INGERSON: It was suggested to the Minister that he should be introducing, or at least considering, taxis at night, particularly on services where there was obviously no support. Metropolitan members, on driving around their electorates after 7 p.m., would be surprised if more than 80 per cent of the buses were not empty. Yet, when the Minister is given the option of introducing taxis or smaller buses into those areas he says, philosophically, 'There will be no privatisation of the STA.' What he is saying is that he is not prepared to look at reducing costs, because that is what would occur if taxis were used during slack periods at night.

The taxi industry is privately owned and run, and is exceptionally efficient. It should be expanded into this non-profit and high cost area of the STA. I find it quite amazing that the philosophy of the Government should be, 'We will keep on going down that very narrow road of no privatisation at all costs, even if it will save the taxpayers of South Australia some money.'

Let us look at the general financing structure of the STA. This year there was a reassessment of the provision of some \$10 million, with \$6 million applying to previous years. We now have an accumulated shortfall.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable member for Murray-Mallee.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): This evening I will summarise the remarks that I made about rural poverty in the lead up to the Estimates Committees and address some of the matters that other members have drawn to the attention of the Chamber and to future historians about the effectiveness of the Committees in determining the appropriateness (or otherwise) of the way in which we spend the money we collect from people in the form of taxes, in the name of equity and justice. I sometimes wonder whether or not I look in the same dictionary as Ministers and members opposite when it comes to defining 'equity' and 'justice'—but more about that in a moment.

Mr D.S. Baker: They couldn't even spell it.

Mr LEWIS: Some of them cannot. Statutory authorities are a problem for Estimates Committees. The Government and Ministers need to get their act together. Statutory authorities are clearly accountable to Ministers and therefore must be accountable to the Committee. Officers of a number of statutory authorities have been coming before the Estimates Committees in company with their Ministers for years, ever since the Estimates Committee approach to analysing the budget appropriations was first introduced by the Tonkin Government.

Members, such as the member for Todd, who is the most recent appointment to the Ministry, need to recognise that it is not good enough to sit in the Committee and deny any responsibility for the way in which funds are appropriated and expended by statutory authorities such as ETSA for which he is personally responsible. It is not good enough to deny the Parliament a valid explanation of the fashion in which the Government did that double deal sleight of hand trick when it sold off the power generation equipment to the Japanese for a higher price than the actual construction value or even for that matter the replacement cost. It then leased it back so that at the end of the 30 year period it will again become the property of the trust and, therefore, the people of South Australia. In the process, it ignored two very important points and refused to disclose them to the people of South Australia. That is my perception and under-

standing of the situation from the limited information available to date.

There was a clear cut profit from that deal that went straight through SAFA into general revenue. That money in general revenue was not used for capital works and yet it came from capital assets. This is the compounding of the felony—the 30 year life ascribed to the assets that were sold and leased back is a nonsense. That equipment will not even last half that time, and members opposite who have a smattering of engineering knowledge would know, by examining the construction and specifications of the equipment and the sites and footings on which it was mounted, the truth of what I am saying. It will need bandaids from year 12 and is unlikely to be able to be kept in service beyond year 20. Yet this State, through the organ of the Electricity Trust, will still be committed to Japanese financiers for 30 years in that lease arrangement. Where the devil we will get the money from to build the replacement generation equipment I do not know. But one thing is for sure: this devious action and other circumstances in the Federal budget in these most recent years clearly illustrates the deception that the Labor Party is prepared to use in this country of borrowing against the future efforts of children yet unborn to finance its glorious socialist schemes of the moment, in the process mortgaging those lives—there is no question about that.

Through currency manipulations and the abuse of people living in rural communities by the effect of policies on their disposable incomes—I will come to that in a minute—the Labor Party, both State and Federal, has managed to create the illusion of responsible economic management. However, even arithmetical analysis of what it has undertaken illustrates the deception and crookedness of that approach to the management of State and national finances. The member for Todd should know that it is not appropriate for him—and I will tell him if no-one else is prepared to do so—to deny that he has a responsibility for those statutory authorities that are accountable to him. It is disgusting that he was allowed to simply say that it was not appropriate for him to make a further explanation about it.

Let me address the questions that have been put before the Committee by the member for Elizabeth. As suggested by the honourable member, a distinction between the functions of the Estimates Committees in examining appropriations for proposed expenditure and reviewing past expenditure is desirable. However, I do not think that it is appropriate to pursue an analysis of those two different kinds of functions to ensure accountability through the mechanism that he proposed. Time will not allow me to address that matter in great detail.

I would also like to address some of the ridiculous propositions put by the Premier, not only during the course of the Estimates Committees but throughout his whole term as Premier. He is long on noise and short on action. He is big on good news but you cannot find him whenever there is a necessity to explain anything awkward or difficult. Then he is going in the opposite direction at a million miles an hour in his jogging shorts with or without his shoes or whatever else is necessary to make life comfortable.

It is all talk and no action, the way I see it. As a classic illustration of that, and without wishing to impute that I agree or disagree with the proposition, as was pointed out by my Leader the Premier said that he would reduce the salaries of administrative officers and executive officers in the Public Service by 15 per cent over three years, and he would reduce the number of fat cats in the Public Service. Yet, members know, as was pointed out by my Leader earlier today, the number of those people in such positions

has increased by 88 and there has been a 9 per cent increase in the salaries paid to them: no reduction whatever. The three-year period is fast coming to an end. The Premier needs to be brought to account, not only by the Opposition in this place but also by the journalists who are given accreditation to come to Parliament House and report its proceedings for the benefit of the public. That brings me to my next point. Members of the Government who participated in those Committees in commenting on the reports of the Estimates have said that the Opposition lacked fire, determination and political thrust. That is as may be—

Mr Tyler interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: And the member for Fisher may say, as he will—but I have difficulty hearing high mid-tones of the kind that his voice projects in the Chamber. I can never hear his interjections, and whether or not that is fortunate for me, I do not know. When I hear what he says, he misses the point. Again, when he made his contribution to the Estimates Committee, he missed the point. The point is that they are there to provide information to the members of the Committees acting, as they do, on behalf of the whole Parliament. It is not about political point scoring. They are not there for the purpose of entertaining journalists who are so inane, inept and incompetent as to require the Parliament to be a place of entertainment for them. This is not the Colosseum: it is the Parliament. We are supposed to debate matters of substance, and seek information that will provide us with a better understanding of the way in which the Government operates on behalf of the majority of the people who elected it, for the rest of us who have the fortune or otherwise to live in this State, according to how we view it. The Committees are not there for the purpose of providing members with an opportunity to exercise their egos. They are there for the purpose of obtaining information.

Moreover, unlike other members who have made the point that they could be Committees of both Houses of Parliament and included in them might be members of the Legislative Council who have been informally and not constitutionally recognised in their appointments as spokesmen in the policy areas for which Ministers are responsible (as was mentioned by the member for Henley Beach), I believe that it is not appropriate to regard them as joint Committees of both Houses of Parliament. We need to remember that the budget is a piece of legislation which is introduced in this Chamber, examined in this Chamber and passed in this Chamber. If it is not passed in this Chamber, then the Government falls, because it is a vote of confidence. As a consequence of that, it is neither appropriate nor sensible to suggest that we should incorporate members of the other place in this Chamber on those Committees. They are Committees of this Chamber, the Chamber equivalent to the Commons in the Westminster system.

Let us get the wool away from our ideas when we examine the ways in which we might improve the function of the committees. Standing Orders and sessional proceedings of Committees based on those Standing Orders are dynamic: I accept that. They are in a constant state of change, as is the whole of nature, but the fact remains that it is not appropriate for us to ignore the lessons of history. We can see other forms of Government in the world today where they have got into these hybrid arrangements in their democratic institutions and, as a consequence, have got into trouble. We should avoid that and learn from the illustrations we have elsewhere and from history. So much for the Committees at large.

I now wish to summarise the kinds of things that I have drawn to the attention of the House during the past three weeks. I have referred to rural poverty and the disadvantage

experienced by people who live in rural communities. I have told the Chamber of the comparisons between rural and urban income levels. The average income in Murray-Mallee which I used as an illustration was \$8 954.11 and, for the lowest 85 per cent—which cuts off people in the public service living in those communities at the top end—\$6 056, whereas in the suburban situation the average income is \$12 855—\$4 000 a year more. The average income for the lowest 85 per cent of the population in those urban cities—\$8 654—is still some \$2 500 greater, and it is worse still in situations where the household is dependent to any degree on the income of a woman.

In Murray-Mallee, the average income for women is \$6 761.16 and, in the suburbs, \$9 256. If we take off again the top 15 per cent, we find that the average income for women is \$4 332.70, whereas in the suburban areas it is \$6 521; again, over \$2 000 difference in the incomes of the two groups.

So I was amazed—indeed, aghast and annoyed—when I saw budget documents specifically prepared saying that we are addressing justice and equity and we are addressing issues which affect women, with no mention being made of this enormous disparity. Even if it is true that people lie a little to suit themselves when filling in census documents, although I do not accept that, the fact remains that there is this disparity, and that disparity is very substantial, amounting to over 33½ per cent. Indeed, as a proportion of \$4 300, \$2 200 is more than 50 per cent. Yet that is the difference between what a woman can expect to earn on average in the lowest 85 per cent of those paid for whatever they do in Murray-Mallee compared to the lowest 85 per cent of women living in comparable urban circumstances. That is a substantial difference.

The tragedy of it is that, whereas they may be asset rich and they may have substantial incomes when seasons are good, the fact remains that they are very poor in cash resources; they are cash poor. The assets are only the value which one individual may ascribe to the land upon which several hundred others are farming already. So a valuer looks at that one sale and, for whatever reasons the individual buying the land made the decision to buy it, the valuer applies that same opinion of value unit area across the entire district in which that price was paid. It bears no relationship whatever to the capacity of the land to produce an income.

Families that are well heeled, who have been established there for several generations and were in the process of earning income in better times long since past, have established off-farm investments which generate income and enable them to further extend their holdings by paying ridiculous prices to buy the next-door property; prices far greater than the demonstrated capacity of that property to yield an income that would give them not only a return sufficient to cover the costs of fertilizer and materials used in production, but also wages, and then meet a notional amount for the interest on the money which is invested in the land.

A person in the metropolitan area may have a full-time job, getting a salary of, say, \$20 000 a year, at the same time having the family savings invested in SAFA bonds or something similar at 13 per cent. Over several generations an accumulation of \$50 000 to \$100 000 in such investments is not uncommon: 15 per cent is not an uncommon gilt edge security income from such investment, yet one will not receive 15 per cent on money invested in farm land today, and there is no prospect of obtaining it. However, the belief, well advised or otherwise, is that if the land is

available now we must buy it at whatever price we must pay, because it will not be cheaper tomorrow.

This has led to the mistaken belief that people in rural communities are more wealthy than they really are. What has happened over the past couple of decades is that they have gone to banks, borrowed money, not only to change their equipment and expand the size of their holdings but also, and more importantly, to provide their households with sufficient money for ordinary daily living purposes. They have extended their overdrafts now to the maximum, and they find themselves with little disposable income, after meeting the interest bill and the costs of production (incorporating such other things as Government charges, and so on), as the figures I have put to the Chamber clearly illustrate.

Regrettably, we ignore the fact that they provide us with the means by which we are meeting our balance of payments. We export most of what we produce on our farms, and that provides all Australians with the means to meet the balance of payments. It enables the chardonnay socialists, who drive around in their BMWs and Porsches, to buy imported goods. In turn, the people who have generated the wealth, upon which the rest the population in urban areas rely, do not enjoy the benefits.

It is important that we do not take away their policemen; that we do not further abuse and insult them, after having closed their hospitals, by then saying that because we will save \$300 000 we can find \$150 000 to meet the costs of an irresponsible Minister of Health who shoots his mouth off unnecessarily whenever he is making public comments as Minister. That is an insult to people in the communities of Tailem Bend, Laura, Blythe, and the like.

THE ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. H. Allison): The honourable member's time having expired, I call the member for Morphett.

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): During the Budget Estimates Committees several areas of concern were raised, one of which involved the new staffing formula for schools. Before I refer to that, however, I wish to summarise some of the major points which emerged from the examination of the Minister of Education's lines. The first point is that the new staffing formula for schools will not save anywhere near the \$6 million originally claimed. The second point worth looking at is that, after a period of enrolment decline, primary school enrolments will start to rise from 1989 and the total school enrolment will start to rise again in 1991. The third point is that the Minister failed to answer criticism by the Auditor-General of the management and financial control systems in the department. Quite a serious problem emerged, and in the next few months we will examine that in more detail.

Another point was that over 100 schools were reported for overstating their enrolments in 1987 and 1988, resulting in substantial overpayments to some schools. It was also revealed that over \$2 million has been wasted by the department during the term of the Bannon Government on rental costs for vacant teacher houses. In addition, the Minister is still considering possible amendments to the Education Act relating to the ability of principals to speak out against the effects of some Government policies. The final point was that the cost of the 4 per cent pay rise for staff was about \$20.5 million.

Those points form the seven major criticisms that came out of the education lines. I mentioned the Government's interference in the right of principals to speak out on behalf of a school and its school council. I doubt whether any member of this Chamber is not on one or more school

councils. We all know the importance of allowing the principal to sit on the council and advise it. Indeed, on many occasions, it is through his or her guidance that decisions are taken. There is nothing wrong with a school principal's being allowed to speak on behalf of the school council and the school community. I abhor any suggestion of legislation being introduced to take away that right from school principals.

In the campaign prior to the November 1985 election, the Premier made some very interesting statements. In particular, on 21 November 1985, he said:

I can announce today that a State Labor Government will continue to retain teacher numbers in spite of decreasing student enrolments. Labor will give parents a guarantee that there will be no cuts to schools during our second term.

Although on examination of the Minister it has been very difficult to determine the exact reductions, since that time, and certainly over the past three budgets, the best figures available to us indicate that there has been a decline of about 500 full-time equivalents. According to page 61 of the Auditor-General's Report, in the last year alone the number of teachers expressed as full-time equivalents declined by 368 to 14 319. That statistic must be looked at in the context of the Premier's 1985 guarantee that the Labor Government would ensure that there would not be any cuts to schools during its second term and that it would continue to retain teacher numbers in spite of decreasing student enrolments. That is the sort of Premier that this State has. How can any member of the public or any parent of students in our schools believe the Premier when, at election time, he makes promises but then just forgets about them the day after the election has been won?

The Premier's promises on teacher numbers and funding were central to the Bannon Government's re-election campaign. They were enormously important and popular promises and had the Bannon guarantee. The exact extent of cuts in teacher numbers is difficult to estimate. However, our best estimate is that about 350 teacher positions went in the past two budgets, rising to around 500 for the past three budgets. At the time of the 1986-87 budget, the Director-General of Education said:

The Government's budget strategy for education is to reduce the number of teacher positions by 230, from February 1987.

Once again, I refer members to the Premier's promises. The South Australian Institute of Teachers was told by Government representatives in budget discussions for 1987-88 that the cut for that year would be 120 teachers. Again, I ask members to cast back their minds to the Premier's promise that there would not be any cuts.

That alone gives a total of 350 teachers. This figure is confirmed by a look at the estimated number of average full-time equivalent teachers in the Education Department included in the Financial Statement of the Premier and the Program Estimates. There is no doubt that the Premier has blatantly broken a promise. The flow-on from that type of breaking of promises and the concern expressed in school communities is highlighted in a letter that I have received from the Glengowrie High School. The letter was obviously drafted centrally and various parents at the school have been asked to send it along to their local member of Parliament. I am receiving a large number of these letters, and I am sure that honourable members who have students from their electorate at Glengowrie High School are also receiving copies of the letter. The letter, which highlights the parents' concern about the formula, states:

Dear, Mr Oswald,

My children attend Glengowrie High School. Once again the quality of their education is being threatened by the policies of your Government and the Education Department.

I point out that it is a blanket letter. Whilst it refers to 'your Government', clearly as a Liberal Opposition member I have no responsibility for Government policies. Nevertheless, the letter would have gone out to members of all political persuasions. The letter continues:

The new application of the staffing formula ensures that staff numbers will continue to be reduced; and Glengowrie High School will lose 1.8 teaching positions, despite the fact that there will only be 14 fewer students in the school according to the February 1989 estimates. The quality of education will be adversely affected.

It lists five points as follows:

1. No formal remedial program possible—too few staff.
2. Some class sizes are larger than recommended.
3. Classes are being taught by teachers who are increasingly working outside their specialist field.
4. Reduced ancillary hours mean more teachers time is spent on clerical and maintenance duties rather than teaching duties.
5. Reduction of the numbers of extra-curricular activities because of extra teaching loads.

The letter continues:

Teachers have absorbed staff reductions in the past because of their commitment to the education of our children and they cannot continue to do so. In addition, our school has received no grants, financial assistance, or even positive encouragement to implement our well publicised 'high technology' computers across the curriculum proposals, despite staff using their own time for training, and parent donations and levies.

We have supported our school in fundraising activities and by contributing to the school high tech. fund so that our children will be prepared for work in the 1990s. How long will it take before the resources and manpower needed to provide my children with quality education are maintained, let alone increased to an appropriate level?

This staffing situation is not fair or honest. Promises to maintain staffing are not being kept. I demand that my children's education will not suffer. This includes a guarantee of staffing at least the same as the 1988 level. My children's future is at stake. I want action, not talk.

Yours sincerely . . .

It is signed by a constituent who lives at Somerton Park. That clearly highlights the concerns in school communities. The Government should address these concerns as a matter of urgency. I totally support that parent, as I do the many other parents who have written to me on this subject.

In the middle of September the Leader of the Opposition called on the Government for a 12-month moratorium on this controversial issue. He called for that for a simple reason, namely, that he believed that unless the Bannon Government backed off from the changes it was planning, no doubt the quality of education in our schools would be reduced further. It is Mr Olsen's belief that the Bannon Government has tried to justify this policy on cost saving grounds. That came out clearly during examination in the Estimates Committees. However, information that has been provided to the Opposition indicates that the Government will not save anywhere near as much money as it intended because the policy has not been properly thought through.

This is where the Leader of the Opposition's idea has so much validity, and it should be adopted by the Government immediately. A 12 month moratorium would allow time for the Government to consult with the experts in schools and not just the departmental number crunchers. This would allow them to arrive at a better considered formula. Clearly, a better considered formula is needed. Certainly, we cannot continue to be led down this track by the Bannon Government. Schools should be advised immediately that the 1988 staffing formula will be used for 1989 whilst further consultations are conducted. If the Government does not adopt that course of action, it is not doing the right thing by the school community and it is not doing the right thing by the schools in the electorate of Morphett.

I would like to bring to the attention of members a couple of other matters that came out during the Estimates Committees. These matters will also be of great interest to par-

ents. I refer to the cost to parents in sending students to Government schools. It is difficult to compile estimates of costs to parents in sending children to Government schools, as members would know, because of the varying fees levied by school councils and the plethora of additional items that parents are asked to pay for. However, there is certain anecdotal evidence available that parents are having to pay more and more, in the form of extra fees, for what used to be 'free education' provided by the State Government. For example, a sample of Government primary schools shows that some parents are now paying up to 185 per cent more in 1988 than for the comparative fee in 1982. I remind members that it was 1982 when the Bannon Administration came to power. As I have said, the sample showed that in Government primary schools some parents are now paying up to 185 per cent more than was the case in 1982. That is an absolute outrage, whichever way one looks at it.

This increase is much higher than the 56.6 per cent increase in the CPI over the same period. The Government talks about confining its increases to CPI levels, and it must do something in the future about its education budget so that the increases borne by parents are maintained within CPI levels. If the Government is not doing that, it is not being a responsible Government. These fees are not the only parent contribution toward their child's education, because numerous extra costs for trips and functions cannot be accurately calculated. We all know that these costs are increasing all the time.

There is also the considerable level of funds raised by parents that we should consider. Surveys conducted in Education Department schools in the Adelaide area show that parents contribute more than 50 per cent of extra funds spent in schools after staff salaries have been paid. Time does not permit me to expand on that subject, but I hope that I have left clearly in the minds of members that there is enormous concern and anger in the community about how the Bannon Labor Government has blatantly broken its promises—promises that the Premier made in the 1985 election campaign not to tamper with the numbers in schools. Immediately the campaign was over, he just put the promises behind him and we are now looking at teacher reductions of about 350 over two budgets, and possibly 500. One educational economist said that it could even get up to around 600.

In the few minutes left I would like to place on the public record my concern about cuts in the health budget, which is of particular interest to me. Adelaide's major public hospitals are being further squeezed again in this budget to the tune of \$13 million. The preliminary figures of the Health Commission's 1988-89 budget allocation indicate that the Bannon Government wanted the six major Adelaide hospitals to make do with \$13 million less than they had in the previous year.

Members interjecting:

Mr OSWALD: It is interesting to note that, as soon as we move to discuss health, members opposite interject. It must be a sensitive issue. This decrease of \$13 million is in addition to real term funding cuts to these hospitals in the previous year of nearly \$31 million. I can recall some years ago that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital overran its budget and, as a penalty, its next budget was decreased by, I think, \$2 million. I would have to check that figure, and I could be proved to be incorrect, but it was around \$2 million. The Royal Adelaide Hospital, which effected cost savings of \$300 000 in the previous financial year, is now being asked to accept a recurrent funding decrease of \$5.3 million or, in real terms, to accept about \$13 million less than it received in the previous year. This is the reward for

a hospital which runs a tight ship. I really do not understand what the State Government is trying to do to the hospitals in this State.

Against the wishes of the local residents, who do not want it to happen, the Government wants to close country hospitals. The bureaucrats and the Minister decided that such a course would be in the best interests of those communities. I have been to Blyth and talked to people in the Blyth Hospital administration. They do not want the hospital to be closed and, if the local residents do not want it to happen and they have sound reasons for opposing the closure, it should not happen. I do not believe that the Government is acting in the best interests of the health area of this State when the following year the Health Commission penalises a hospital for overrunning its budget by reducing its funding.

The State is on the decline. It is quite clear that the State is hiding behind this laid-back attitude which pervades certain groups in the community. They believe that everything is all right and the Bannon Government hides behind this facade of the Grand Prix, the ASER development and the submarine project while, in the meantime, all the economic indicators demonstrate that the State is getting further behind the other States. No economic indicator would prove my statement to be wrong.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. H. Allison): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY (Minister of Labour): I move: That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I have previously referred to the very serious subject of drug and alcohol abuse and the need to determine long-term solutions to this problem. At the outset, I commend a person whom I have come to know over a long period of time. She has a very genuine interest in, and has prepared a considerable amount of information and evidence on, this subject. She is concerned, as I am, that sections of the community have failed to respond to various campaigns in South Australia and other States.

I also commend the national campaign against drug abuse and the magnificent work that the Drug and Alcohol Services Council is doing in South Australia. The behaviour of people who are caught up in the illegal misuse of substances and the effect on them, their families and the community is devastating to say the least. Society today is oppressed and tyrannised by a minority of chemical abusers: 90 per cent of the population is victimised by the remaining 10 per cent. One in three hospital beds is presently occupied by a person with alcohol related problems. We are told that 50 per cent or more of road accidents involve people with alcohol in their bloodstream.

The present laws dealing with chemical abuse tend to victimise the innocent members of society. It would seem that all of society has to bow down to the ineffective methods of dealing with chemical abuse. We can refer to many examples—the riots in Long Bay prison, robberies, violence, road carnage, and the abuse of innocent people and their families. It would seem obvious, therefore, that power needs to be taken from the abusers and returned to the non-abusers.

The decriminalisation of drunkenness in 1984 left no positive alternative to take its place. I suggest that the only positive alternative is education. This involves re-educating thinking and behavioural patterns. In most instances we are told that AIDS is a self-inflicted disease; likewise, chemical abuse is a self-inflicted disease. We have an obligation to treat both. We are told that there is no current solution to AIDS. However, I suggest that chemical abuse is very much a treatable disease.

However, both the abuser and the abused must be educated simultaneously. This is imperative and essential. Because the chemically confused mind of the abuser is unable to make responsible decisions, the chemically free mind of the majority of society's victims must make the decisions for them. So, we look to a solution. I believe that the solution is to introduce legislation to give the abuser a choice—either an appropriate penalty by way of a fine, the loss of licence, imprisonment, and so on, or compulsory attendance at a specially designed centre which I will refer to tonight as perhaps chemical freedom education centres.

It could be imagined that the majority of abusers would choose the latter alternative. Since chemical abuse is a growth industry of international proportion, this defuses the power of the drug pusher. People will know with certainty the consequences of chemical dependency; thus, those who do not live up to the commitment that they must make to society will be penalised. If we need an analogy, the most effective commercial on television at present, I suggest, is that, if you get caught drinking and driving, you pay the penalty. The other analogy is that, if you get caught abusing, pushing or using chemicals, you will pay the penalty, which is either punishment or education.

So we provide a choice. This is in no way punitive, since the abuser is also the victim of chemicals. The manic-depressive loses control when they go off their drugs. Under the Mental Health Act the police have power to remove the manic-depressive from the home and place that person under treatment until stability is restored with drugs, recognising that the period of time involved depends on that person's response to treatment.

The chemical abuser loses control when he or she goes on to chemicals. Therefore, the law must have the power to remove the abuser from the home and place that person in treatment and for education until stability is restored without chemicals. The period of time will also depend on his or her response to treatment.

Dr Eric Gandry, in an article headed 'The Recovery from Alcoholism', states:

When alcoholics begin their drinking careers, they do not know that they are in danger of becoming alcoholics. By the time heavy abusive drinking begins it is too late. The THIQ in the brain is formed; it is active and highly addictive; and it forms the physical compulsion to drink. It is just as difficult for an alcoholic to stop drinking, as it is for a heroin addict to kick that habit. Incidentally, THIQ is formed also when an addict shoots heroin into his or her body.

The chemical abuser must be educated to stop using chemicals completely. This is also a medical solution. At the Dalhousie Chemical Dependency Unit 90 per cent of the patients have lost their families before entering treatment. In the Salvation Army bridge program 3 per cent achieved sobriety. If society could change this to 6 per cent this would be 100 per cent improvement in the success rate. When the abuser bucks the system, the answer is to continually return him to education until the treatment is completed. An analogy is that the child who constantly truant from school is consistently returned to school. The powers that be have the authority by law to ensure that he does. This authority also relieves burnout and discouragement on the part of professionals. Thus, abusers are not released

from education until the appropriate authorities are satisfied that their education has been effective.

To ensure that legislation is passed and that Government accepts, in the first place, the responsibility for such legislation to be introduced, there is a necessity for the peer system of victims of chemical abuse—which is, after all, the majority of society—to join forces to force the passage of that legislation. Education centres could be established. Perhaps surplus teachers with wisdom, experience, expertise and life experience maturity (and other professionals, such as social workers, etc.) could staff these centres. At the moment, we are dissipating finance, experience and expertise at the delinquent end of society. What we should be doing is recycling this resource into the professional end of society. Initially this will be expensive, but eventually the dividends will be returned.

Let us look at another analogy in regard to that fact. The present Government sees fit to carry the current loss of the Adelaide Grand Prix for the long-term dividends. Currently, copious committees are dissipating expertise and funds in sitting for hours devising methods of approaching this problem. It is a subject on which I could go on for a very long time but which I believe needs to be put before this Parliament and considered. I would appreciate any comment from any person who has the opportunity to read in *Hansard* what I have had to say, because I believe that it is a matter about which society and the community generally feel very strongly and on which they would like to see some action taken.

Mr ROBERTSON (Bright): I want to turn to a subject which I addressed about a year ago in this place. It is an issue which, in a sense, refuses to go away—that of the level of pay under many of the standard blue collar and other awards. I want to make a few comments on the poverty and difficulties facing some families on what has come to be a kind of *de facto* basic wage.

Some months ago I received a communication from a constituent. The one working partner in the family works in a funeral parlour and earns \$225 a week for what cannot be the most attractive job in the world. The family has the benefit of the Family Assistance Scheme and is fortunate enough to have a trust home for which they paid, at that time, \$105 a week.

The question that arises is: how do people live in an ostensibly middle-class suburb with middle-class aspirations and middle-class dreams, and turn their kids out of the front door every day to go to school looking like all the other kids on the block if they have to subsist on \$225 a week plus the various allowances I have mentioned, particularly when over \$100 per week is paid on rent? The great difficulty faced by families in this situation is unseen and extremely painful. There is great pressure on parents to try to keep their kids and house looking like the children and houses of neighbours, but it becomes very difficult. The solution adopted by this family is that the children do not go on school excursions, the family eats fairly limited amounts of basic food, and the kids have new clothes rarely and look after the ones they have extremely well. That is the only way that families in that situation can survive and keep their heads up.

I have another letter from a single parent, and I will quote it in some detail. It states:

I am writing to you, as my local member, of a problem which must be affecting thousands of people in a situation similar to mine—the lack of affordable dental care. I am a divorced mother of two, working full time and earning slightly more than the limit which would entitle me to a health care card, but not what Governments insist on calling the 'average wage'.

I lost a filling several months ago, but because of the prohibitive cost of going to a private dentist, postponed until I could afford it. (I don't have private health cover). I was then advised to go to the Dental Hospital and be treated there, but was told when I did go that I wasn't entitled to be treated there, as I wasn't a pensioner or the holder of a health care card and would have to go to a private dentist. I see this as a Catch-22 situation.

At the moment, I feel I would be just as well off if I went on the pension and 'bludged' off the system, like so many people are doing at the expense of the taxpayers. Not only would I be entitled to the use of facilities at the Dental Hospital and other benefits but would also get a rebate on essential services—my electricity bill was [higher last month]. I seem to be caught on a downward spiral trying to pay all these bills. There is no real incentive for someone, like myself, to work these days.

The letter stands on its own feet. It indicates the great difficulty that working parents have, particularly single working parents or parents who have only one income, making ends meet, especially when the wage is a very basic wage.

I have another inquiry from a constituent of the member for Eyre, and the gentleman is in the same situation, trying to support his spouse and two or three children on a fairly basic wage under the pastoral award. It is interesting to have a look at the relative values of a few of these awards. As of 12 May this year, the pastoral award paid an adult with less than 12 months experience, without keep, a total of \$255.70 per week, a fairly minimal amount by any standards, but somewhat better than the gentleman working in the funeral parlor was paid. By comparison, the wage paid to an adult as an assistant in a supermarket is \$286.90 per week as at 5 February this year. The weekly wage paid to an adult fish cook or grill cook is \$274.10. Under the clerks metal industry award, a class 1 clerk in the first year of adult service receives \$296.60 per week, and under the metal industry award, again as at 31 March 1988, the wage is \$292.90 per week. I cannot for the life of me see how families can be expected to subsist on wages like that, and I ignore completely the difficulty faced by juniors under that same metal industry award who earn as little as \$90.10 per week if they happen to be unapprenticed juniors under 16 years of age.

How families can cope, compete and turn their children out looking like their neighbours' children, I really cannot imagine. It seems to me that the poverty traps in the present system must be recognised. Many of these very basic blue collar awards, including the pastoral award, must be raised to a point where people who come under those awards are afforded some form of dignity and are not forced to cheat on the system and take on social security. Under the present system people on social security with a number of benefits can in fact receive more take-home pay than someone working a 35-hour or 38-hour week. That situation seems to me to be quite ludicrous.

It would seem that the onus lies on Governments, industry and, I guess, the Industrial Commission to ensure that some of the discrepancies are addressed as soon as possible. I am aware of the arguments normally mounted against this, but it seems to me that, unless that can be done, unless the Industrial Commission is prepared to take on this matter with the support of Governments and employers, those base levels will not move, the anomalies will continue and the cracks through which people fall will remain. Until that situation is remedied, we cannot expect people to play the system straight and to stay off social security benefits when they may or may not be entitled to them.

I say in closing that the pastoral industry deserves considerable attention. I wrote in my response to the person concerned that I could not see for the life of me why the commission thought that the pastoral award was adequate. I had to confess that the outdoor life might have had its

compensations but I could not see why those compensations were worth the \$20 which separated the pastoral award from the fish cooks award for example. My advice to the person in question was that the more attractive pay rate was attached to workers under the pastoral award who accepted the \$52.74 per week deduction for keep and threw themselves on the mercy of the landowner to provide a reasonable standard of accommodation. I have to say, though, having recommended that and having seen some of the accommodation provided on rural properties, that the accommodation is none too idyllic and indeed it may not be worth much more than \$52 a week. But for what it is worth, my recommendation was that the family should take the wage with keep and accept the \$52 pay cut.

I return to the basic point: we must address the bottom line in many of the awards, including the pastoral award, and until that occurs people will continue to fall through the cracks and suffer the indignity of having to get by with inadequate nutrition, inadequate clothing and inadequate heating in order to turn their children out of doors in such a way that they look and behave like their peers and fit into so-called middle-class society.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I realise that many people this evening, this afternoon and yesterday referred to aspects of the Estimates Committees and I believe it has been educational to hear the variety of views expressed. Certainly, we heard from the Leader of the Opposition earlier this afternoon that a huge number of questions had been asked of most Ministers, and that some Ministers were able to answer many questions but others managed to stymie proceedings and did not come to the party with proper answers.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold: They were the incompetent Ministers.

Mr MEIER: As the honourable member for Chaffey says, they were the incompetent Ministers and certainly there are quite a few of those. That is recognised by most if not all people. I believe the Estimates Committees saw some of the most responsible, penetrating, in-depth questions from the Opposition that have come forward during the past few years.

There was probably a lack of emotion at times. There was no grandstanding: we did not go out of our way to create any unnecessary disturbance, nor was there yelling or shouting. In fact, it was conducted in such a way that any member of the public, seeing the proceedings of the Estimates Committees, would have said that the South Australian Parliament was a responsible body of elected members. That is very different from the comments we hear from time to time about our Federal Parliament, especially about people such as the Treasurer and the Prime Minister and their remarks.

But what did we find? First, speaking to members of the press in the corridors of this establishment, I found that the press were not terribly turned on. I found that some of them were bored. I spoke to other people associated with the Parliament—and I cannot refer to any of them specifically, for obvious reasons—and realised that they, too, were somewhat bored. It struck me that people are interested in parliamentary proceedings only when there is yelling and shouting and uproar, people grandstanding and emotional issues coming forward, with people trying to make a point for themselves and attract attention. It is very disturbing that this should be the case.

Earlier, the member for Victoria referred to a particular journalist who indicated that he did not think that the questioning was of any great depth. I served on the Committees which dealt with Labour, Education and Agricul-

ture, and I would challenge any journalist, any member of this House or member of the public to scrutinise the questions asked, particularly of Labour and Education, and say that they were not in depth questions. They delved into a wide variety of subjects and put the Minister under pressure, but that did not mean that we needed to become emotional about a particular topic. We still received replies from the Minister which were the replies we were looking for. If we did not, the matters were probed further.

So, when we act in an irresponsible manner the press take us to task and say, 'What have we here in Parliament?' The public, too, say, 'The way those people behave is a disgrace', but we have just seen that, when we act responsibly, the press say, 'How boring!' They were trying to give the public the impression that not much was being done during the Estimates Committees. A totally false impression was being conveyed to the public, and I hope that all sections of the media will note that ours was responsible questioning. I acknowledge that many sections of the media did their work; they investigated where necessary and reported accordingly. However, some small sections of the press perhaps should not expect things to be handed to them on a plate, but must do a little work themselves.

I would like to turn to a topic brought up by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs during the Estimates Committees. He referred to the Aboriginal Cultural Institute being set up in this city. The Minister pointed out that Cabinet has approved the proposal to go before the Public Works Standing Committee for consideration, and has also indicated that the proposed site is the old TAFE School of Plumbing in Grenfell Street. He further indicated that funding would come from a variety of sources, including the Aboriginal Development Commission, the Bicentennial Authority and the State Bicentennial Committee, and that there would be substantial involvement from the Premier's office, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

The Minister detailed some of the activities that will occur in the Aboriginal Cultural Institute. He said:

It will lend itself to a range of activities that will promote the culture, history and art of Aborigines. It is envisaged that it will accommodate static displays of Aboriginal art and artefacts and be a venue for art exhibitions and live activity such as dance, drama and music.

I am very disturbed that an Aboriginal Cultural Institute is to be set up in a large urban area such as Adelaide, not because we should not give full credence to Aboriginal culture and art but because Aborigines have come from the land; they have an affinity with the land; their spirit rests in the land. This is a clear case of Europeans being condescending to Aborigines in saying, 'Look, we will make this old building available for you. We will help you set up and then you will have a real cultural centre.'

Not so long ago, I had the privilege of seeing the Yakima National Cultural Centre in America. The Yakima Indians are probably in a similar position to the Australian Aborigines since they occupied the land for countless centuries, were taken over by Europeans and have had to re-establish themselves. The Yakima Cultural Centre is not located in the city but inland in the State of Washington. It is a considerable distance from any major centre; yet it has created an area which is a great attraction for visitors. The centre has a Yakima Nation Museum, which exhibits the story of the Yakima Indian people in a variety of ways.

Also at the centre is the Yakima nation gift shop where people can purchase a large selection of quality made Indian beadwork and other Indian handcrafts made by the local people. The heritage theatre seats 400 people and has been the centre for first-run movies. There is also a performing arts centre and the Yakima nation library, which is a full-service library specialising in the American Indian. It is the only one of its kind in the United States. The Heritage Inn Restaurant provides visitors with a unique and beautiful Indian atmosphere and a menu of great variety. The centre also has the Winter Lodge, which is the towering architectural wonder of the centre.

This type of centre would be excellent for South Australia but it should not be in Adelaide, because Aborigines have no affiliation with urban centres. Their affiliation is with the land and it is a great shame that the Government should encourage such a venture when its heart is probably not in it. We will find that Aborigines will not be in favour of it, either.

Motion carried.

At 9.18 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 6 October at 11 a.m.