

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

Thursday 2 August 1990

The House met at 12 noon pursuant to proclamation, the Speaker (Hon. N.T. Peterson) presiding.

The Clerk (Mr G.D. Mitchell) read the proclamation summoning Parliament.

After prayers read by the Speaker, honourable members, in compliance with summons, proceeded at 12.11 p.m. to the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the speech of His Excellency the Governor. They returned to the Assembly Chamber at 12.36 p.m. and the Speaker resumed the Chair.

*[Sitting suspended from 12.37 to 2.15 p.m.]*

**NEW MEMBER FOR CUSTANCE**

Mr Ivan Howard Venning, to whom the Oath of Allegiance was administered by the Clerk, took his seat in the House as member for the District of Custance, in place of Mr John Wayne Olsen (resigned).

**GOVERNOR'S SPEECH**

**The SPEAKER:** I have to report that the House has this day, in compliance with a summons from His Excellency the Governor, attended in the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency has been pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament, of which speech I, as Speaker, have obtained a copy, which I now lay upon the table.

Ordered to be printed.

**PETITION: DISABLED PERSONS EQUIPMENT SCHEME**

A petition signed by 400 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to extend the disabled persons equipment scheme to all classes of disabled persons was presented by the Hon. D.J. Hopgood.

Petition received.

**PETITION: BICYCLE HELMETS**

A petition signed by 116 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government not to make the wearing of bicycle helmets compulsory was presented by Mr Becker.

Petition received.

**PETITION: CITY OF HENLEY AND GRANGE**

A petition signed by 1 589 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to support the retention of the Corporation of the City of Henley and Grange was presented by Mr Ferguson.

Petition received.

**PETITION: QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL CARDIAC SURGERY UNIT**

A petition signed by 96 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to provide a

cardiac surgery unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was presented by Mr Hamilton.

Petition received.

**PETITION: ALBERT PARK BOOM GATES**

A petition signed by 54 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to install boom gates at the May Street and Clark Terrace railway crossings at Albert Park was presented by Mr Hamilton.

Petition received.

**PETITION: BREAST X-RAY SERVICE**

A petition signed by 4 871 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to continue and expand the South Australian Breast X-ray Service was presented by Mrs Kotz.

Petition received.

**PETITION: PLASTIC MATERIALS RECYCLING PLANT**

A petition signed by 232 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to establish a plastic materials recycling plant was presented by Mr Trainer.

Petition received.

**PETITION: McLAREN FLAT COMMON EFFLUENT DRAINAGE SCHEME**

A petition signed by 387 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to subsidise the installation of a common effluent drainage scheme at McLaren Flat was presented by the Hon. D.C. Wotton.

Petition received.

**PAPERS TABLED**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—

Remuneration Tribunal—Report relating to the Judiciary.

By the Treasurer (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—

Lottery and Gaming Act 1936—Regulations—Instant Lotteries. Licences.

By the Minister of Health (Hon. D.J. Hopgood)—

Commissioners of Charitable Funds—Report, 1988-89. Drugs Act 1908—Regulations—Labelling of Poisons. Health Act 1935—Regulations—Nursing Home Licensing Fees.

Medical Practitioners Act 1983—Regulations—Fees.

Specialist Register.

Optometrists Act 1920—Regulations—Board Membership.

Physiotherapists Act 1945—Regulations—Fees.

Psychological Practices Act 1973—Regulations—Registration Fees.

South Australian Health Commission Act 1976—Regulations—Medicare Patient Fees.

By the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Hon. Lynn Arnold)—

Riverland Development Corporation—Report, 1988-89.

By the Minister of Fisheries (Hon. Lynn Arnold)—

- Fisheries (Gulf St Vincent Prawn Fishery Rationalization) Act 1987—Regulations—Licence Transferability.  
 Fisheries Act 1982—Regulations—  
   Central Zone Abalone Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   General—Licence and Net Fees.  
   Gulf St Vincent Prawn Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   Lakes and Coorong Fishery—  
     Licence and Net Fees.  
     Licence Transferability.  
   Marine Scale Fishery—  
     Licence and Net Fees.  
     Licence Transferability.  
   Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   Restricted Marine Scale Fishery—Licence and Net Fees.  
   Southern Zone Abalone Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   Southern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   Spencer Gulf Prawn Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   West Coast Prawn Fishery—Licence Transferability.  
   Western Zone Abalone Fishery—Licence Transferability.
- By the Minister of Education (Hon. G.J. Crafter)—  
 Rules of Court—  
   Local Government—Local and District Criminal Courts Act 1926—Pre-trial Conferences and Medical Reports.  
   Supreme Court—Supreme Court Act 1935—  
     Appeals, Admiralty Rules and Facsimile Transmissions.  
     Bail Authority.  
     Commercial Proceedings.  
     Concurrent Writs and Commercial Matters.  
     Criminal Jurisdiction Forms.  
 Associations Incorporation Act 1985—Regulations—Fees.  
 Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1966—Regulations—Fees.  
 Builders Licensing Act 1986—Regulations—Fees.  
 Business Names Act 1963—Regulations—Fees.  
 Classification of Publications Act 1974—Regulations—  
   Classification Guidelines.  
   Exemption.  
 Commercial and Private Agents Act 1986—Regulations—  
   Fees.  
   Licensing Deferral.  
   Licensing Deferral (Amendment).  
 Commercial Tribunal Act 1982—Regulations—Fees.  
 Consumer Credit Act 1972—Regulations—Fees.  
 Consumer Transactions Act 1972—Regulations—Fees.  
 Co-operatives Act 1983—Regulations—Fees.  
 Fees Regulation Act 1927—Regulations—  
   Places of Public Entertainment Fees.  
   Overseas Student Fees.  
 Goods Securities Act 1986—Regulations—Fees.  
 Land Agents, Brokers and Valuers Act 1973—Regulations—  
   Disclosure Exemption.  
   Fees.  
 Liquor Licensing Act 1985—Regulations—Fees.  
 Places of Public Entertainment Act 1913—Regulations—Fees.  
 Second-hand Motor Vehicles Act 1983—Regulations—Fees.  
 Summary Offences Act 1953—Regulations—Public Entry.  
 Trade Standards Act 1979—Regulations—  
   Elastic Luggage Straps.  
   Pedal Cyclist Helmets.  
 Travel Agents Act 1986—Regulations—Fees.
- By the Minister of Transport (Hon. Frank Blevins)—  
 State Transport Authority Superannuation Scheme and Pension Scheme—Report, 1988-89.  
 Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Act 1956—Regulations—  
   Ballotted Licences.  
   Fares.  
 Motor Vehicles Act 1959—Regulations—  
   Probationary Licence Exemptions.  
   Registration and Licensing.  
   Registration and Permit Fees.  
   Tow Truck Fees.  
 Road Traffic Act 1961—Regulations—  
   Photographic Detection Devices.  
   Rear Vision Mirrors.  
 State Transport Authority Act 1974—Regulations—  
   Student Travel.
- By the Minister of Finance (Hon. Frank Blevins)—  
 Police Superannuation Act 1990—Regulations—  
   Pension Commutation.  
 Stamp Duties Act 1923—Regulations—  
   Corresponding Laws.  
   Private Company.
- By the Minister of Housing and Construction (Hon. M.K. Mayes)—  
 Architects Act 1939—By-laws—Fees and Advertising.
- By the Minister of Recreation and Sport (Hon. M.K. Mayes)—  
 Racing Act 1976—Rules—  
   Greyhound Racing Board—Definitions, Inspections and Disqualification.  
   Harness Racing Board—Fees.
- By the Minister for Environment and Planning (Hon. S.M. Lenehan)—  
 Botanic Gardens Board—Report, 1988-89.  
 Environmental Protection Council—Report, 1988-89.  
 Planning Act 1982—  
   Crown Development Reports by the South Australian Planning Commission—  
     Mareeba Hospital—Pregnancy Advisory Centre and Domiciliary Care Centre.  
     Establishment of Primary School at Hallett Cove.  
     Division of Land at Coonalpyn Station Yard.  
     Construction of Lift Shaft at 81 Greenhill Road, Wayville.  
 Beverage Container Act 1973—Regulations—  
   Refunds.  
 Planning Act 1982—Regulation—  
   Goolwa Development Control.  
 Waste Management Act 1987—Regulations—  
   Liquid Waste Disposal.  
   Waste Contribution Fees.
- By the Minister of Water Resources (Hon. S.M. Lenehan)—  
 Sewerage Act 1929—Regulations—  
   Certificate Qualifications and Fees.  
   Fees.  
 Water Resources Act 1976—Regulations—  
   Fees.  
   General.  
 Waterworks Act 1932—Regulations—  
   Certificate Fees.  
   Fees.
- By the Minister of Lands (Hon. S.M. Lenehan)—  
 Bills of Sale Act 1886—Regulations—Fees.  
 Crown Lands Act 1929—Regulations—  
   Definition Fees.  
   Fees.  
   Proclamation Fees.  
 Real Property Act 1886—Regulations—  
   Fee Exclusions.  
   Land Division Fees.  
   Registration and Entry Fees.  
   Staged Land Division.  
 Registration of Deeds Act 1935—Regulations—Fees.  
 Roads (Opening and Closing) Act 1932—Registration Fees.  
 Strata Titles Act 1988—Regulations—  
   Fees.  
   Strata Plan Deposits.  
 Surveyors Act 1975—Regulations—  
   Fees.  
   Seaford Survey Area.
- By the Minister of Emergency Services (Hon. J.H.C. Klunder)—  
 Police Pensions Fund—  
   Report, 1988-89.  
   Actuarial Report, 1988-89.  
 Explosives Act 1936—Regulations—Fees.  
 Police Act 1952—Regulation—  
   Consular Agreement.

By the Minister of Mines and Energy (Hon. J.H.C. Klunder)—

- Electrical Products Act 1988—Regulations—Safety and Energy Labelling.
- Mines and Works Inspection Act 1920—Regulations—Fees.
- Mining Act 1971—Regulations—Fees.

By the Minister of Labour (Hon. R.J. Gregory)—

- Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act 1968—Regulations—Fees.
- Dangerous Substances Act 1979—Regulations—Fees.
- Lifts and Cranes Act 1985—Regulations—Fees.
- Long Service Leave (Building Industry) Act 1987—Regulations—Various.
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986—Regulations—
  - Asbestos Licensing and Application Fees.
  - Construction Safety—Asbestos Removal.
  - Registration of Employers.
- Shop Trading Hours Act 1977—Regulations—Hardware and Building Materials.
- Worker's Liens Act 1893—Regulations—Fees.
- Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986—Regulations—
  - Claims and Registration.
  - Disclosure of Information Repeal.

By the Minister of Marine (Hon. R.J. Gregory)—

- Boating Act 1974—Regulations—Mannum Swimming Zones.
- Marine Act 1936—Regulations—
  - Certificate of Competency.
  - Examination Fees.

By the Minister of Employment and Further Education (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

- South Australian College of Advanced Education—
  - Report, 1989.
  - Local Government Superannuation Board Rules—
    - Approved Authority and Contribution.
- Building Act 1971—Regulations—
  - Documents.
  - Site Assessments and Swimming Pools.
- Dog Control Act 1979—Regulations—Registration.
- Fees Regulation Act 1927—Regulations—Hairdressing Examination.
- Local Government Finance Authority Act 1983—Regulation—Southern and Hills Local Government Association.
- Corporation of Tea Tree Gully By-laws—
  - No. 1—Permits and Penalties.
  - No. 2—Streets and Public Places.
  - No. 3—Parklands.
  - No. 9—Caravans.
  - No. 10—Flammable Undergrowth.
- District Council By-laws—
  - Cleve—
    - No. 1—Permits and Penalties.
    - No. 2—Animals and Birds.
  - Loxton—
    - No. 36—Council Land.
    - No. 37—Permits and Penalties.
  - Willunga—
    - No. 15—Beach Control.
    - No. 18—Parklands.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

City Watchhouse Relocation—Interim Report and Final Report,

The Establishment of a Living Arts Centre,  
Eyre Peninsula College of TAFE—Ceduna Campus—Final Report,

Flinders University—Information Science and Technology and Engineering Buildings,

Port Adelaide Outer Harbor No. 6 Berth—Wharf Extension—Final Report,

Redevelopment of Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science Frome Road Complex,

RN 6203 South Road Upgrading and Widening—River Torrens to Hale Street,

Royal Adelaide Hospital, Kitchen Redevelopment and Central Plating System—Final Report,

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE—Stage II—Final Report,

West Beach Marine Research Laboratory—Stage II.

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

Hallett Cove East (Karrara) Primary School,

Northern Adelaide Plains Water Supply EL 076 Zone Establishment—Stage I Angle Vale—Virginia-Two Wells Area.

Ordered that reports be printed.

#### MATTER OF URGENCY: UNWARRANTED TAX INCREASES

The SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the honourable Leader of the Opposition:

I give notice that it is my intention to propose the following matter of urgency when the House resumes this afternoon:

That this House at its rising adjourn until 1 p.m. tomorrow, for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely, that this House condemns the Government for its false and grossly misleading claim, made for the cynical purpose of justifying unwarranted tax increases, that at the Premiers Conference the Commonwealth cut funds to South Australia by \$180 million, and particularly condemns the Government's decision to continue this blatant deception in the Governor's speech on the opening of Parliament.

Before calling on those members who might support the proposed motion, I indicate that I cannot accept the latter part of the proposed motion. The Standing Orders provide that no member may reflect on His Excellency and that, regardless of the subtleties of preparation, that part of the motion is out of order. As Speaker, I accept the proposed motion as follows:

That this House at its rising adjourn until 1 p.m. tomorrow, for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely, that this House condemns the Government for its false and grossly misleading claim, made for the cynical purpose of justifying unwarranted tax increases, that at the Premiers Conference the Commonwealth cut funds to South Australia by \$180 million.

Will those members who support the proposed motion indicate by rising in their places?

*Members having risen:*

Mr D.S. BAKER (Leader of the Opposition): We are not happy, because at no stage is there any reflection on the Crown. We are very concerned at the Government's deception, which is an attempt to hoodwink the taxpayers of South Australia into believing that it received \$180 million less from the Federal Government than it did the previous year. Of course, that is not correct.

I believe it is very cynical of this Government to include that in the Governor's speech when it knows full well that that figure has been challenged by us and by every political and economic commentator in South Australia as not being a correct figure. However, the Premier of this State blatantly used that figure in the Governor's speech, and I believe it should never have gone in there. This is the first chance we have had—

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition continues to refer to

the Governor's speech when you have expressly indicated that it is not appropriate to make any reference to it at all.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I ask that the point made by me in accepting this motion be taken notice of. Obviously, the Governor's speech can be referred to in debates as such, but I will be listening for any specific linking of the two points because, as I pointed out, that will be ruled out of order. I ask the Leader to be careful about how he applies the two terms.

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is the first occasion we have had to bring the Premier to account on this matter. In doing so, I put the Government on notice that the Opposition is not prepared to vote on tax measures until we have seen the budget. I also challenge the Premier to tell us this afternoon what tax measures the Cabinet finalised last Monday. The taxpayers of South Australia have a right to know. Tell us how many extra taxes he believes they will have to pay to restore the budget to the position it was in before the over-expenditure of last year. Tell us today, Mr Premier, how much overspending occurred last year—tell us exactly. You know exactly how much overspending—

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** A point of order, Mr Speaker.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** My point of order—and I will not make any other comment—is that members should direct their remarks to you, Sir, and not across the Chamber to other members.

**The SPEAKER:** All remarks will be addressed through the Chair.

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** Access Economics, one of the leading consultants in Australia, has said that last year South Australia overspent by \$130 million. I want the Premier to tell us, when he rises, the reasons for the over-expenditure and the amount. When the directors of Access Economics—as the senior advisers to Treasury—make statements, they can be well backed up. I think it is very important that we have a good look at this \$180 million. It is interesting to note that following the Premiers Conference the Premier trotted out to the media a list of claims of how he had been affected by Federal Treasury's cut of \$180 million. Those matters were: a cut in the real level of financial assistance grants of some \$40 million; cuts in the real level of capital grants of some \$3 million; a reduction in the water quality grant of \$53 million; a change in the Grants Commission period of \$50 million; and the cost of the national teachers award of some \$34 million. We know that that is not correct and we are challenging the Premier to tell us that it is not correct, because Access Economics says that it is not correct.

Turning to the cut in financial assistance and capital grants, when I challenged the Premier on 5 July he claimed that the State's general revenue grants fell in real terms, although this was offset by increases in specific purpose grants. The Premier stated:

... this is of little or no benefit to the State budget... these funds cannot be used to help provide essential State services which are the bulk of recurrent State expenditure...

I do not know who advised the Premier on that, but I would have a close look at his credentials. In fact, specific purpose payments do go to help fund essential State services, and I will go through some of them: hospital and health, \$325 million; higher education operating costs, \$200 million; primary and secondary education, \$135 million; and local government, \$58 million. The Economic Planning Advisory Committee (EPAC), of which the Premier is a member, has stated clearly that distortion by these specific purpose grants represents only a small fraction of the total amount of

conditional funding. Mr Premier, you are therefore misleading us in claiming that South Australia lost \$43 million in these grants, because that is not correct and cannot be substantiated by the figures.

Turning next to the reduction in water quality grants, in his press release of 5 July, the Premier stated:

So-called water quality grants to South Australia were reduced by \$53 million in real terms this year [despite it being] reasonably expected that this funding would be continued in 1990-91.

A nominal water quality grant—and I say 'nominal' because we do not know what it was used for—of \$30.5 million was paid to South Australia in 1988-89. In 1989-90, just before the State election, through a deal with his mates in Canberra, the Premier was given \$56 million as a nominal water grant. The Premier now claims that, because he has been given only \$3 million, he has been severely cut back. The average of the three years is close to \$30 million.

The Premier should tell the people of this State that he received a one-off grant to fight an election and buy some votes in South Australia and, as a result that figure cannot be used by any stretch of the imagination. The Premier has double-used that figure and, if members look at it closely, they will see that he has triple-used it and, therefore, it cannot be included in the column of financial cuts to South Australia for this financial year.

I turn now to the change in the Grants Commission period. In his press release the Premier also claimed that he received a cut of \$50 million as a result of the change in the Grants Commission review period. The truth is that the commission did not recommend a three year review period. The Premier knows well that it is stated in the report—and, if he has the report, he should read it—that this matter was on the agenda for the Premiers Conference as a five-year period. Certainly, this is relevant because, when asked for comment on the choice between the relative factors of three years and five years, the South Australian Treasury wrote to the commission on 26 January 1990 advising a nil comment.

How can the Premier tell the people of South Australia that, because he did not get what he wished for, that is, three years, he received less money; in fact, \$50 million less than he really wanted? The Premier cannot stack that up because, taking a five-year period, South Australia will receive an extra \$9.5 million than it would have received under the other scheme. It is about time that the Premier learnt a little about these financial matters, and it is about time that he stopped deceiving the people of South Australia.

I now refer to the claim that the national teachers award will cost South Australia \$34 million. The Premier stated quite clearly in his press release that the States were not consulted about the proposal for the national salary benchmark for teachers and he could not foresee what was going to happen. However, on 1 June 1990 the Minister of Education (Hon. Mr Crafter) and his Federal colleague (Mr Dawkins) hailed that it paved the way for further major improvements to the quality of education in South Australia. The Government knew all about it. It was consulted and no-one with any financial brains at all could say that that \$34 million was part of the \$180 million that the Commonwealth cut, and it is totally fallacious to do so.

What is really happening in South Australia? That is interesting to note; we have been putting to the people of South Australia that there have not been any cuts. It is interesting to read that the Centre for South Australian Economic Studies did not state at its July briefing that there have been cuts of \$180 million; however, it says that, on balance, the results of the South Australian budget this year represent a 6.3 per cent nominal increase in total net payments—not \$180 million, as the Premier has been trying to

foist onto the taxpayers of South Australia. Of course, he is trying to deceive the taxpayers of South Australia in relation to increases in taxes; he is trying to soften them up to make sure that that happens.

**Mr Oswald:** What's new?

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** That is exactly right. Let us look at what has been happening lately regarding increases being made in this deceitful way. The Premier made a promise before the last election that taxes and charges would not be increased above the inflation rate. What has happened already? There have already been 500 increases in taxes and charges in South Australia, and more than half those have been above the inflation rate. Hospital charges increased by about 70 per cent, but the Minister of Health must have had amnesia that week, because he forgot to tell anyone in South Australia that they had been increased. On 14 May we read in the press:

The Premier . . . committed the Government last night to holding rises in taxes and charges to increases in the consumer price index, despite a blow-out in the State's budget deficit.

What he failed to tell us was that the CPI was the Argentinian CPI and not the Australian CPI. That is the great problem. The taxpayers of South Australia have been hoodwinked into believing that the Government wants more money from the taxpayers of South Australia because it got less money from Canberra; that is not a fact and it cannot be substantiated. Since this gentleman has been the Treasurer, taxes and charges in South Australia have increased by 163 per cent, well over twice the inflation rate. However, that is not the great problem. The overspending is the problem. The waste of taxpayers' money is what is causing the problem. Access Economics has said so, and every other major economic reviewer and commentator in Australia has said that the problem is the blow-out in expenditure and not a reduction in receipts. However, the Premier will claim in a minute that it is due to a reduction in receipts, but that is not correct.

We could look at the Marineland and South Australian Timber Corporation fiascos. We could look at the spending on additional public servants during the election years: 549 additional public servants were employed costing another \$20 million. A total of 170 public servants attend their workplace each day, do not have a job, but still get paid. Let us look at some of the expenditure and some of the bad management, because all we see is taxes and spending by this Government, but nothing about economic management, and we see nothing about economic management because, quite frankly, the Government does not know what it is on about.

For seven years we have put up with that in this State but, on behalf of the taxpayers of South Australia, the majority of whom voted for us at the last State election, we will not let the Government get away with it from hereon in. And from hereon in, the Premier will have to stand up before the people of South Australia and be counted, because no longer can the people of South Australia afford increases in taxes and charges while the Government goes on wilfully spending money. The Premier will respond by trying to tag on to Premier Greiner in New South Wales, who has had to put up with a legacy of 12 years of Labor. He has got on with micro-economic reform; he has done it. His State Transport Authority has broken even this year while ours loses in excess of \$130 million. Unlike our Premier, Premier Greiner welcomed the five-year Grants Commission revenue factors that Premier Bannon claimed cost \$50 million. Voters at the last State election stated very clearly that they did not want the Premier—

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

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier):** The Leader of the Opposition, prior to the opening of this session, suggested that he would be constructive and that he would debate matters of substance and ensure that the Government was called to account in those areas in Parliament. That is fine and I welcome that, because that is the role of the Opposition in this State and it is about time that the Opposition understood that. To hear the Leader, after his somewhat pathetic opening earlier this year in the last session of Parliament, say that he would mend his ways, start dealing with these issues of substance and debate them, was good news, I would have thought, for the people and the Parliament.

So we have the first example of that today and I must admit my early optimism has crumbled very sharply indeed. What have we got? First, we have a motion that was obviously cobbled together in some kind of inordinate haste, without any preparation or consideration. As has already been pointed out, right from the beginning the actual notice of motion of urgency given to the Speaker was totally out of order. One would have thought that the Opposition could do a little bit of basic homework on procedure first. Unfortunately, even some of the minor aspects were wrong. For instance, the Speaker said that perhaps he ought to correct the Opposition on the spelling of his name; he may have Nordic antecedents, but his name is actually spelt with an 'o' not an 'e'. That is the sort of shoddy document on which this motion is based.

Then we come to the substance of the matter discussed by the Leader of the Opposition. I listened very carefully to the arguments and the figures that he put forward. As he proceeded, particularly in talking about the outcome of the Premiers Conference, I thought, 'Wait a minute, I have heard some of those figures before.' He was purporting that they came from Access Economics, but they did not come from Access Economics: they had come from somewhere else and that is what interested me. I thought that I had better make a check. It could not possibly be the case. Was the Leader of the Opposition using the source of figures that I thought he was using? I looked at the document that I had in mind and, to my amazement, I was right.

The pitiful thing about this motion is that on this particular issue, that is, Commonwealth funding to the States and what has been done to the Government of South Australia and our public sector financing by Commonwealth reductions, I would have thought we were on the same side; I would have thought the Opposition would have no compunction, no problems and no quarrels in supporting us on this issue. But whose figures are being relied on by the Leader of the Opposition? Whose propaganda is he quoting when he puts these matters before the House? It is the Commonwealth Government's.

The amazing thing about this motion is that, in a matter in which there ought to be some unity in South Australia against the Commonwealth, the Leader is picking up exactly the Commonwealth. Where do the figures come from? They come from a document called 'The Commonwealth Offer to the States and Territories', which was slipped under my door at the hotel at 7.30 on the morning of the Premiers Conference. This document contained a table of figures labelled a con by Mr Greiner, the New South Wales Premier—who has just been praised by the Leader of the Opposition—and shonky by other people, including me, figures that, in fact, resulted in the conference being paralysed for the whole of the first morning because the Federal Treasurer was unable to explain to us how a purported increase in other net payments shown in the table that he presented was actually of benefit to State budgets.

He was asked for the breakdown of those figures but he did not know that he had it; it would be very difficult to get and would take some time, but he asked whether we could just adopt the table and go on to the next item. The Labor and Liberal Premiers and the Northern Territory Chief Minister were not prepared to accept this table, which purported to show a good outcome from the States when indeed the opposite was true.

We sat there, deadlocked, until finally, sheepishly, some figures were produced which proved just what we had said all along, that included in these payments were a number of matters in which the State is simply acting as a kind of banker, taking from the Commonwealth and passing it onto, for instance, the higher education sector—nothing to do with our spending priorities or, indeed, our budget. However, Mr Treasurer Keating and the Commonwealth offer document lumped all those in together and purported to show that we had a real increase.

I would have thought that, if nothing else came out of the Premiers Conference, if nothing else was proved by the joint press conference of Premiers at the end of it, with Wayne Goss sitting on the right of me, Nick Greiner on the left (they probably should have done a swap politically) and all the other Premiers involved, at least it was proved that these figures cannot be relied on. Who are virtually the last people in Australia outside the Commonwealth Treasury to be using them—the Opposition of South Australia. That is disgraceful and it is about time Opposition members lifted their game.

In a minute I will analyse each of the components of the \$180 million in their correct form and prove how the Opposition Leader got them wrong. However, I must admit that, in the light of this cobbled up motion and this pathetic use of Commonwealth material by a State Opposition against its State interest and State Government—an extraordinary turnaround I would have thought: Mr Keating will be delighted to know of his new ally sitting on the Opposition benches in South Australia—I wonder what was behind the motion and why it had come up in this way. Of course, a number of things had happened in the intervening break.

The scribes in the media have been writing and speaking quite unkindly about the Opposition, its performance and the Leader. We cop it occasionally, too. I was particularly interested to note, just this week, the comments of a regular newspaper columnist who has an enormous amount of experience as far as the Opposition is concerned and about how its members operate and what they stand for. This columnist, who is also a very experienced journalist, had this to say—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON:** The journalist had this to say: Liberal Leader Dale Baker and his team—

and there they are, thumping the table and trying to keep up their morale—

will have to display far more knowledge of local nasties this session if they want to be taken seriously.

**Mr S.J. Baker:** Tell us about the \$180 million.

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON:** I'll get there. Don't waste the time of the House. I'll get there. The columnist continued:

The football analogies—

and these are not my words, but they are about the team that the Leader of the Opposition leads—

about not using up all the energy in the first quarter of a game, plus the running analogies about its being a marathon not a sprint which the Opposition keeps trotting out, won't save the team captain from getting his head kicked in in the changerooms if he doesn't alter the game plan this session. With last session's game a washout, a lot of disgruntled Liberal players, old and new, have

spent the winter break tuning up their kicking—for aiming at their own side.

That is a very interesting comment, but it is typical of a range of comments. That is factor one. Factor two: the disaster in the Custance by-election. I take this occasion to welcome the new member to our midst and look forward to a positive contribution. I wish him no ill, but the fact that the National Party very nearly stole the seat and certainly stole all the votes must have been galling indeed. Instead of a massive swing against the Government, it was a mere 2 per cent, and some 15 per cent off the Liberal vote. So that was Custance, the electoral test.

There is also front bench tension. The Opposition has lost someone from there and another has moved down. There he is, sitting up the back. Why he is there we do not know. Changes are taking place. Finally, I turn to the real key. Mr John Elliott and the Liberal Party executive are in town today, and they need to be impressed by the Leader of the Opposition. So, with all these pressures on him, he has to get something up and this is what he does.

I will deal with the points one by one. It really takes only two or three but, for the Leader's purpose, I had better be a bit more explicit, so I will deal with the particular items he mentioned. Item 1: a cut in the real level of financial assistance grants and a cut in the real level of capital grants. I would have thought that, in the light of the cuts we have had at the hands of the Commonwealth in the past few years, years in which general revenue from the States has disguised the extreme severity of the cuts, in this year, if no other, at the very minimum we could have expected a maintenance in the real level of our grants.

We were told last year by the Federal Treasurer that he would not put too much imposition on the States. He made a number of comments to that effect. Did we, in fact, get the real level of financial assistance grants? No, we did not; both they and the capital grants were cut and cut severely. That represents \$43 million of what we got last year based around the real or inflation value. This is an inescapable fact. I notice that the Leader did not waste too much time on that point because he knows very well that it is true.

Secondly, there is the reduction in the water quality grant. \$53 million is a big sum of money. The fact is that it was a special payment, and I agree that the maintenance of those payments cannot be absolutely guaranteed. For the past four years we have received those payments. They have grown and been at different levels over that period. They have become an important part of our budget factoring, and no notice or indication was given that we could not expect something in that area. This is why we include that figure of money we do not have. I pose a simple question: last year we got the equivalent of \$53 million—this year we have not. I would call that a cut in anybody's language, because our costs have not gone down, our services have not been reduced—on the contrary, they have gone up.

I find the third figure to be the most staggering of all. This is where, having supported the Commonwealth figures in his main case, the Leader of the Opposition turns to support New South Wales in its gang-up robbery of South Australia at the Premiers Conference when it and Victoria joined together to alter an agreement which was made in 1987-88 by the Premiers to last for three years, the third year of which is to come. They saw it torn up because it did not advantage them, and the Leader of the Opposition is saying that that is a good thing.

Let me explain the Grants Commission situation. The agreement was reached unanimously by the Commonwealth and all the States that the Grants Commission would make recommendations based on a three-year average. That was

to apply over a period of time, and then it would be reviewed; the basis could be changed after that. That time was next year. During the course of this year's examination—that is the year leading up to the publication of the report—it was suggested by some of the other States that as well as a three-year calculation a five-year calculation should be made as a kind of indicator of what changes could take place when that agreement expired. In fact, that was agreed and undertaken by the Grants Commission. We did not comment on it, as the Leader has suggested; we actually said, 'If they are going to do five years, they ought to do four years as well as an indicator.' We did not do that because our position was that they should stick to the agreement. They brought down the recommendations and showed South Australia, under the three-year agreed formula, getting \$60 million extra. Tasmania benefited under that three-year formula, as well it might do, and the other beneficiary was Queensland.

Those who were severely disadvantaged by it in their terms—and quite rightly, because the Grants Commission took into account the vast revenue and tax surge that had taken place, particularly in New South Wales—were New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia. Therefore, the Commonwealth stood in the middle of the argument between the States. There was an agreement on the table. Unilaterally in its offer document, the Commonwealth said, 'We will go for the five-year option.' Why would it do that? Very simply because the five-year option, while it gives us \$10 million, and while we deduct the \$10 million from the \$60 million—which is why the figure \$50 million shows in our table—it transferred all the benefits of the other \$50 million to New South Wales and Victoria in particular. The Leader of the Opposition of this State is standing up supporting Mr Greiner's endorsement of a Grants Commission approach that completely disadvantages South Australia. That is disgraceful.

The final point is the cost of the national teachers award. In the negotiations, first, under the Mark 6 Accord, the States, which are the major employers of teachers, were not involved, and an agreement was struck between the Commonwealth and the ACTU without any reference to the national benchmark.

Therefore, legitimately we said, 'If we have to pay the cost, surely we should have been involved in the negotiations.' The Federal Minister said, 'That is a fair point; we will look at compensation. There can be some compensation in this area; there is a just case.' It was argued at the Premiers Conference and we got nothing, other than the already-in-place agreement of the Commonwealth Government. We received not a cent; we are up for almost the full tote odds—\$34 million this financial year and a lot more thereafter. Of course it is in our table, because we only got that money; that is why it is there.

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Mr Speaker, that speech of the Premier to this Parliament was a disgrace. I will tell members what this debate is all about. I refer to a letter which I received this week and which, in part, is as follows:

All these years I have worked so hard, paid all my bills, do not cheat, now at nearly 74 and my reward is to be turned out of my home by an unfeeling madam—

and my constituent is there talking about the Minister of Water Resources—

who lives off my taxes very well indeed. I have also struggled to pay hospital benefits—another \$400 per year, house insurance, must have the telephone for security—what can I cut out?

This debate is about taxes on the people and the dishonesty of the Premier of this State who, for nine minutes in an

important debate, told us about the strain he went through at the Premiers Conference. I am sure that everybody was upset about the strain that he described for nine minutes in this debate.

This debate is the vehicle for the Premier to say to the people of South Australia, 'We have to put up taxes and charges; there is nothing else we can do.' That is the way he treats the people of South Australia, and of course it is dishonest. He has been dishonest from the day he was elected. I will not go back through the long, sad history of the Premier's saying to the people of this State, that he will not put up taxes and charges. However, as recently as 14 May he stated, 'No increases in taxes and charges beyond the rate of inflation,' but we have already heard from the Leader of the Opposition that the Premier has exceeded that on half the 500 charges that were increased by way of the *Gazette*—and, of course, we have not yet heard about the taxes, although we have been given a fair indication.

Let me remind the people of this State, before we actually pull apart the Premier's figures once again so that we can obtain a response from the next speaker, how dishonest the Premier is. Before the last election—in fact, at the end of the 1988-89 budget year—the Premier had a \$60 million surplus in SAFA. What did he do? He closed the hospital wards. He put people with problems with their hips and their eyes—your constituents, Mr Speaker, and the constituents of every member of this House—out on the street. He had a \$60 million surplus, yet he said to the hospitals, 'No more. Close the wards because I need some money for the election.' That is the honesty of this Premier!

On 19 November 1989, just a few days before the election, the Premier said, 'People of South Australia, I have a \$35 million surplus and I can pay for Homesafe, and I can manage the additional \$16 million in election promises with savings I will make.' How dishonest. We have evidence that came to light after the election that the Premier knew the budget was falling apart. Treasury officials knew that stamp duty, payroll tax and other revenue was to be less because of the state of the economy. Yet, the Premier was willing to tell untruths to the people of South Australia and lump them with additional promises when he could not even manage that budget. How dishonest can this Premier be? Now he is being dishonest again.

The Premier spent nine minutes of this House's time waffling on about the Premiers Conference and the Goyder by-election. The people of South Australia deserve a lot better than that. The Premier has told this House that he lost money because \$43 million in grants was refused by the Commonwealth Government. We know that his own South Australian Centre for Economic Studies, in the July briefing, said that his overall budget situation was far better—a .8 per cent real increase—despite all the problems the Premier talks about. We already know that the Premier received \$258 million in additional moneys, so why is he telling untruths?

Let us address the question. As the Premier would be well aware, direct purpose grants and income tax revenue have always fluctuated. Indeed, if we go back three years to the conference the Premier talked about, he would know that this State would now be about \$100 million worse off if the recommendation of the Grants Commission had been implemented. Indeed, this State is far better off than was perceived at the time.

Let us talk about water quality. The Premier knows it is a one-off grant—they always are. It is like the grant for the bicentenary. We would all like to think that the Federal Government will continue with funds to improve water quality in this State—and that will be the subject of another

motion in this House—but the Premier cannot talk about that money as a loss. Indeed, the \$34 million in teachers' salaries is an expenditure, not a revenue.

When will the Premier wake up? Can he not tell the difference between a revenue item and an expenditure item? This is the quality of the Treasurer that we have in this State. He said that we have a \$180 million revenue shortfall and that one of those shortfall items was an expenditure of \$34 million. If the Premier wants to know about debits and credits, I could spend time with him and explain a bit about accounting—

**Mr D.S. Baker:** Access Economics tried, but he wouldn't listen.

**Mr S.J. Baker:** Access Economics said that the Premier did very well and that he should have come back proudly from Canberra and said, 'I have done a very good job.' Yet, he comes back bleating saying that he has lost \$180 million. The South Australian Centre for Economic Studies—South Australia's own institution—said that the Premier did very well. Access Economics said that the Premier did very well.

Will the Premier or the Minister of Finance (who is the next speaker) tell the House exactly why the Treasury, if it was so upset about losing \$60 million because of the change from a three to five-year assessment, did not contest that change? The Federal Treasurer asked for comment, yet the change was never contested. So, if the State was going to lose money—and, let us face it, the Premier is always talking about financial stability; and the State's finances have to be far better off under a five-year rolling program than a three-year program—the change should have been contested at the Premiers Conference. For some time now we have had this problem of our Premier telling pork-pies.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has been very close to the line with many references in his speech. As this is the first day, we are fairly lax in what we are doing. The Deputy Leader has a point to make. It is a very important debate and I ask the Deputy Leader to comply with Standing Orders and be careful with the language he is using.

**Mr S.J. Baker:** It is interesting to note that the Minister of Finance has no confidence in his Premier and in the Premier's ability to run the State. The *Advertiser* of 2 July refers to the Minister of Finance and states:

'These private sector unions and those workers are paying taxes for the public sector,' he said. 'I can tell you now that those workers, those iron workers, those metalworkers, those shop assistants in the private sector, will run out of patience with the public sector; there is no question about that.'

Later, the Minister of Finance is quoted as follows:

I give the public sector at the outside two years; two years to sort itself out or it will not survive as a sector of the economy as we would all know it.

What the Minister of Finance has said is quite clear—Premier Bannon has had 7½ years, he has done nothing in that time, and even the blue collar workers are getting a little bit tired of his lack of performance.

That is the quote in the paper. Clearly, there is a lack of confidence in the Minister of Finance. We do not have a great deal of confidence in the Minister of Finance, given that he has presided over a record STA debt and the Health Commission bureaucracy. I do not have a great deal of confidence in either of the financial managers of this State. I want to go back to the budgetary situation that we are facing and question why the Premier continues to tell us untruths.

We have heard that two major financial institutions in this State have looked at the performance of the Bannon Government, and they are unhappy with its performance. We know that Access Economics made comments, and we

know that Moodys has said that the State has the highest net financing requirement per capita of any State.

*The Hon. J.C. Bannon interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. Baker:** The Premier obviously did not answer that question, although he had the opportunity to address it. Instead, he spent nine minutes of the debate talking about the strain he felt at the Premiers Conference. Obviously, he is a rotten financial manager. The Access Economics paper said that the net financing requirement is over \$700 million. There are other papers from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which is a source quoted in last year's budget papers, where the Premier said that we must take account of good reporting by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Even there we are talking about a \$672 million net financing requirement, which is the highest of all the States. The State cannot continue to put up taxes and charges without addressing its fundamental requirements.

It is no good for the Premier to say, 'I am not happy with the Commonwealth grants' when, in fact, we did very well. The Premier has repeatedly referred to a figure of \$180 million. We heard this from the moment the Premiers Conference finished. He used it in the Governor's speech. He has used it and abused it, because that is not the reason for the increases in taxes and charges. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition has challenged the Premier to tell us what are the true figures. I reiterate the challenge of the Leader of the Opposition: what is the budget outcome?

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. Baker:** No, it needs to be. These are the important things. What is the budget outcome? By how much did this Government overspend its budget? The Premier talks about increasing taxes and charges, yet he is not willing to tell the people what are the debits and credits of his budget. What taxes will the Premier increase? Outside this place there is a great deal of interest in those items. People who use motor cars would like to know how much they will be affected by increased petrol taxes; people who use banks or financial institutions want to know how much they will lose through FID charges; people who smoke want to know how much extra they will have to pay for cigarettes; and people who imbibe want to know how much extra they will have to pay. All these people are entitled to know, because the debate centres around the need to increase taxes and charges.

The central point of this debate is the untruthfulness of the Premier, a Premier who is willing to sustain a figure of \$180 million when we know that that sum is quite fallacious. I do not need to reiterate that the Premier cannot use the \$180 million figure as a reason or justification for increasing the burden on taxpayers in this State. The Premier has to be responsible. In closing, I call upon the Premier to reveal the budget as it stands because, without this information, the Premier has no right whatsoever to increase any taxes in this State.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Finance):** Over the years, one of the things I have learned here is that it is not any good to follow the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in any debate because he drives away the media—the man cannot get a line. The Deputy Leader has cleared the gallery—the media have gone. Only the Party faithful remain. Can the House wonder at that?

I will be as kind as possible. This is the first day of a new session of Parliament and it is, I think, the first urgency motion that the relatively new Leader has moved, and it is seconded by the relatively new Deputy Leader. Making all those allowances, what a miserable and pitiful effort. John Olsen did it better. I take back all that I said about him over the years—he did better, much better. It would be



difficult for members on this side not to observe the member for Kavel, whose face has been like thunder throughout the debate. The only sign of cheerfulness on the Opposition benches came from the member for Bragg—he loved it.

The Deputy Leader wandered all over South Australia having by-elections. He had by-elections in Norwood and Goyder, and I wish to welcome the new member for Rocky River—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I am talking to his father! I want to welcome him. I know that he defeated a good candidate in Michael Shanahan, and that is something to his credit. I noticed that the Leader supported Michael Shanahan but, there we are, one cannot win them all. The Deputy Leader's practice is to shout: he just shouts in lieu of any sensible debate, offering no substance at all—merely volume.

Quite properly, the Leader removed him from the Health portfolio—he could not cope. Even the media did not know who was the shadow Minister of Health. Neither did we. I can tell the Opposition that we had debates on this side about who was the Opposition spokesman for this, that and the other. We did not know. Certainly, the new Leader has achieved the strongest backbench of any Opposition in Australia. I bid farewell to my colleague, the member for Mount Gambier, who was a good Liberal Party spokesman in that area.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** It really does not matter whether the Opposition believes the figure of \$180 million. That is not important. However, I note that Dr Hewson and Mr Reith believed it. They said that the cuts were substantial, but they also claimed that they should have been harder. The day after the Premiers Conference they were quoted in the paper as saying that the cuts should have been deeper. They said the cuts were real but that there should have been more of them. I suggest that occasionally members opposite should talk with their Federal colleagues. There is no doubt that over the next financial year, and I suggest over the next two or three years to come, there will have to be some rigorous financial management in this State.

**An honourable member:** Something new for you!

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I will come to that in a moment. There has to be some rigorous financial and work-force management in this State. There is no con or trick: we have a substantial hole in the budget because of the Federal Government's cuts. I am not going to argue whether those cuts are necessary, because that is a separate debate. It is a debate worth having, but it is not the purpose of this debate, because the motion specifically says that the Federal Government's cuts were not real. Over the past couple of months I have gone through an exercise with all my ministerial colleagues—and whatever friends I had I have now lost—of looking at their recurrent budgets.

I did not do it for fun; I did not do it because we had lots of money; I did not do it because I am a masochist; I did it because there are some real financial problems facing every State in Australia. South Australia is no exception, but South Australia is one of the States that is in the best position to deal with the problem. Why? Because it has had almost eight years of this Government. We have a reputation in this country, whether it be from Moodys or anyone else, that is second to none. It states quite clearly that South Australia is in a very good position to manage the financial difficulties that lie ahead. I take some small credit for that, as do all my colleagues on the front bench. The Premier is particularly entitled to that credit. It does not mean that it

will be easy: it will not be easy, but it will be much easier in this State than in many other States.

Tasmania is bankrupt. The Labor Government, with its green allies, has been there for only 12 months. Tasmania had all those years of Premier Gray, who left it bankrupt. Tasmania has had to implement the IMF option; it has had to go to the Federal Government and say that it can no longer cope financially. In effect, the Federal Government has taken over the finances of Tasmania to try to put it in some kind of order, and that involves dismissal of thousands of public servants in Tasmania. This State is not in that position because of the good management of this Government.

However, there are a couple of problems, but they are not new. The State's income is declining: there is no question about that. In real terms, it is declining. In 1984, 61 per cent of our income came from the Federal Government; it is now about 50 per cent. That is a very severe reduction indeed. It has been a phased reduction and we have coped with it until now, but when a large slice like that is cut from a budget, it will take tight financial management to deal with it. So, our recurrent spending in real terms has come down. It has to continue to come down over a period. It would be very easy to take the Tasmanian option and say to our public servants, 'Here is one month's notice: away you go.' We will not do that; we will treat our work force much more responsibly. But there is a financial cost: we will have to reduce our work force by attrition, as the Leader was quoted in the newspaper the other day, but that is a slow process. If anyone believes that the financial problems confronting this State will be solved in one year, they are quite wrong. There is a huge difference with respect to the flexibility of the work force in the public sector and the private sector. The Leader of the Opposition stated quite clearly that he supports this Government's option of doing it by attrition and not by sackings.

There will also be some real problems with the capital works sector of the budget, because infrastructure needs refurbishing. It needs extending in areas where the population is expanding. A growing population requires servicing, but the pace with which we can do that has to slow down, because the income, not only from the Commonwealth Government but from our own revenue raising, is just not there.

*The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I have tried to ignore interjections, but I would have thought that the member for Heysen would have the decency to keep quiet. The member for Heysen was the Minister for Environment and Planning when the Stirling bushfire occurred, and it occurred in his electorate, but he did not even have the sense, the gumption or the ability to take care of his own constituents. It has fallen on this Government to give a \$10 million subsidy to the constituents of the member for Heysen. I would have thought he would have the decency to keep quiet for a while.

Whilst there will be a great deal of difficulty in relation to both our capital works program and our current account, there are some things that this Government believes have to be maintained at a very high standard, and we make no apologies for that. That is one significant difference between the Government and the Opposition: we believe there are some areas in which we will not compromise. I will not detail them all but I will give an indication: these areas include health, community and social welfare, and law and order. This Government will continue to fund those areas at a rate which we believe South Australia wants, which South Australia will pay for and which South Australia will

appreciate. However, there are other areas where we will not be able to maintain the level of services that we have today. There is nothing a politician likes more than to say 'Yes'. For this Government to have to say 'No' to people over the next few years is not something we are embarking on just to give the press something to write about. We have not dreamt up a \$180 million hole in our budget for fun or laughs: it is there, it is real and it has to be coped with.

I hope everyone read the Treasurer's speech at the opening of the Premiers Conference. If they have not, I suggest they do so—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** It is in the library; you can do a little research. The last paragraph of that speech made it very clear. The Federal Treasurer 'invited' the States to cut services. He said quite clearly, 'You have to cut services in the public sector. I invite you to do it and I will support you in doing it.' Just to focus our minds in South Australia, he gave us \$180 million less to see that we did precisely that. That is exactly what happened, and it happened also to the other States. It is quite remarkable that either the Leader or the Deputy Leader said there was no opposition to these cuts. It was my first Premiers Conference; I was very pleased to attend. We had a 24-hour jack-up or stop-work meeting to emphasise our protest.

I would like the Opposition to help the Government and the State of South Australia; it can do that by not writing to me and asking me for money. I have written down all the money asked for, and some requests have totalled obscene amounts. Every letter I receive from all members opposite asks me for more money for their electorates. If members opposite have the interests of South Australia at heart, they should show some restraint.

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

At 4 p.m., the bells having been rung, the matter was withdrawn.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: ARTS

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN (Minister of Water Resources):** I lay on the table the ministerial statement made earlier today in another place by my colleague (the Minister for the Arts).

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: STIRLING COUNCIL

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Minister of Employment and Further Education):** I lay on the table the ministerial statement relating to the Stirling council made earlier today in another place by my colleague (the Minister of Local Government).

#### SESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Sessional committees were appointed as follows:  
Standing Orders: The Speaker, Messrs Blacker, M.J. Evans, Ferguson, Gunn, Oswald and Trainer.

Printing: Mr Atkinson, Mrs Hutchison, Mrs Kotz and Messrs McKee and Matthew.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier):** I nominate the member for Stuart to move an Address in Reply to His Excellency's opening speech, and move:

That consideration of the Address in Reply be made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

Motion carried.

#### CONSTITUTION (ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION) AMENDMENT BILL

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier):** I move: That the Constitution (Electoral Redistribution) Amendment Bill 1990 be restored to the Notice Paper as a lapsed Bill pursuant to the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

#### REFERENDUM (ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION) BILL

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier):** I move: That the Referendum (Electoral Redistribution) Bill 1990 be restored to the Notice Paper as a lapsed Bill pursuant to the Constitution Act 1934.

Motion carried.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION (ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION) AMENDMENT BILL

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier):** By leave, I move:

That the Select Committee on the Constitution (Electoral Redistribution) Amendment Bill 1990 appointed by this House on 10 April 1990 have power to continue its sittings during the present session and that the time for bringing up its report be extended until Tuesday 4 September 1990.

Motion carried.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE OPERATION OF THE WORKER'S LIENS ACT 1893

**Mr GROOM (Hartley):** By leave, I move:

That the Select Committee on the Operation of the Worker's Liens Act 1893 appointed by this House on 11 April 1990 have power to continue its sittings during the present session and that the time for bringing up its report be extended until Tuesday 4 September 1990.

Motion carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier):** I move: That the House do now adjourn.

**Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport):** First, I wish to refer to something that happened in the House in recent times—and it is unusual for an honourable member to refer to something that has happened in recent times. I believe it is a very bad practice, in fact a disgraceful practice, for a Minister of the Crown to use an argument, a form of political blackmail, and say that he will make a tally of requests from members for work to be carried out in their area or of requests for some other expenditure on behalf of

the constituents of that member. The purpose for which each and every one of us is elected to Parliament initially is to represent the electors of our electorate. Another purpose is to pass legislation. The management of the finances of the State is a matter for the Government: it is not a duty of the Opposition. A duty of the Opposition is to be responsible in its arguments. But it would be irresponsible of any member of Parliament, whether in Government or Opposition, if they did not take up a request of constituents, whether individuals or groups, for money to be spent within that electorate.

The suggestion by a Minister that he will keep a tally of those requests from members of the Opposition but not from Government members is a disgrace; it is a form of political blackmail that should not be condoned by the Government. Such a suggestion might sound cynically smart but it has no credibility. It is not the duty of individual members of Parliament to make judgments as to where money should be spent in the final analysis; that is for the Government to decide. The Government will be judged on its ability to do that in an equitable manner. That system should never be challenged and we should not attempt to change it, because, if it is changed, what we call a democracy—and the purpose for which we are elected—will be destroyed.

I have some respect for the capacity of the Minister of Finance and for his forthrightness, but that cynical type of smartness has no place in a Parliament that we want the people to respect. No member of Parliament should be fearful of any threat—and that is what it is—made by any Minister in any Government in relation to raising matters of importance in that member's electorate whether or not they involve spending money. Most decisions involve spending money and some decisions involve saving it.

The main topic to which I want to refer this afternoon is the sittings of Parliament. I believe that for too long the elected members of Parliament have allowed themselves to be forced into a situation where the Executive, quite often the Government as a whole, believes that the only purpose of Parliament is to pass Bills that make laws, change laws or rescind laws. That is not the main purpose of Parliament at all: the main purpose of Parliament is to be a venue where the members who are elected to represent the community have an opportunity to put forward a point of view which they hold as elected members or which their electors have asked them to put forward on their behalf.

There are times when members of Parliament have to put to Parliament matters of concern, on behalf of individuals or a group in the community, with which the member may not agree, but that member has a responsibility to put that view, to debate it and, during the debate, if they wish, to say that they are doing that on behalf of a group or an individual in the community.

Parliament has sat for only 21 days since last November, that is, 2½ days a month for eight months. Is that giving the people a fair go for the money that they pay us as individuals and those around us to run the State? Is an average of about 50 sitting days a year for the past 20 years (including those years in which the Liberal Party was in government) a fair go? Does any honourable member really believe that that is a responsible approach? Never in one year of sittings of this Parliament since I have been here, that is, for the past 22 years, has private members business been completed or looked like being completed. I have used the system to make sure that I moved motions during the two hours that are set aside on a Thursday in an attempt to get across a point of view or to attempt to change laws in which I or others have an interest—and by 'others' I

mean those who have elected me—because there is no other way of doing it. Two hours a week on a Thursday, except for those Thursdays during the Address in Reply debate, and in the latter part of the year when Government business takes precedence, is a disgrace.

Parliament should sit even if there is no Government business so that individual members, whether they be Government backbenchers, Ministers or Opposition members, have a chance to debate an issue that may not need a change in the law but on which the opinion of Parliament is vital to the community. Surely that is not an unreasonable proposition. On one occasion it was argued that such a proposal would mean that the *Hansard* staff would be here more and that more volumes of *Hansard* would be printed, meaning that more money would be expended. We do not worry when we spend money in other areas but, when it comes to directly representing the people who put us here, either to put their point of view or to ascertain Parliament's point of view on an issue, Parliament does not sit.

However, although Parliament may not operate, the Government can bring in regulations that have a direct effect upon the community; yet those regulations cannot be challenged while Parliament does not sit. A previous Government introduced regulations when Parliament was not sitting. When Parliament resumed the regulations were rejected by one or both Houses, so they were not effective. However, immediately Parliament rose, the Government of the day—not this Government but one of the same colour—had the infernal cheek to bring back virtually the same regulations, against the will of Parliament. The Government was able to do that because Parliament was not sitting.

Parliament sits for only 60 days a year, and sometimes for only the afternoon. Today is a sitting day but we will have left here by 4.30, although I do not mind that on the first day. We should be fair and change Standing Orders to provide that Parliament sits a minimum number of days. Such a Standing Order could not be changed unless 75 per cent of the Parliament were in favour of it. In that way, no political Party could mess around with the sitting days to its own political advantage, and we would be here for the benefit of the people. If we sat only for Question Time on a day when there is no other business, so be it. At least in that way the Government is answerable to the people, whether the questions come from Government backbenchers or the Opposition. In all sincerity, I ask members to think about my suggestion.

**Mr QUIRKE (Playford):** I rise today to make a few remarks about a police officer named David Thomas Barr. Officer Barr was not a constituent of mine although he was attached to the Para Hills Police Station, my local police station, and he was part of a team of police officers who are responsible for many and varied duties in my area. Along with other members of this House, yesterday I attended the funeral service held for Officer Barr. It was a solemn and moving experience which brought together civic dignitaries, the Premier and other Ministers, prominent members of the Opposition, including the Leader, senior police, family, friends, work mates and many ordinary citizens of the State. Those assembled were there to acknowledge the service of Constable Barr to the community, to say goodbye to a work mate senselessly slain in the course of his duties, and to say goodbye to a son, father, husband, friend and relative.

To my knowledge, I did not meet Officer Barr but I felt outraged at the unnecessary and barbaric act, which must be condemned in any civilised society. I have no doubt that all members of this House join with me in expressing

outrage at that act and in extending deepest sympathy to Officer Barr's family in their hour of grief. As an officer of police, David Barr knew that his job contained many risks. He paid the ultimate price, losing his life in the execution of his duty. It is this point that I feel needs to be acknowledged in this place and on the public record.

As a servant of the community of South Australia, David Barr rose to the occasion when called, and laid down his life in protecting the community. I acknowledge the work of other officers in the Para Hills district and that of police all over South Australia. I convey to them my sympathy in their hour of grief, as well. Inspector Al Thompson and all those who work beneath him at Para Hills serve my community well. They are on 24-hour call and are called to scenes of robberies, domestic violence, traffic accidents and much more. I attended the funeral yesterday in recognition of the fact that Officer Barr died while serving the community I represent.

Earlier this year I contacted Al Thompson over serious vandalism and breaches of public order in the Para Hills shopping centre. The extent of the damage, the open violation of drug and traffic laws, and the intimidation of my constituents were items of real concern expressed to me by them. I report to the House that one telephone call fixed the problem. Al Thompson and the officers of that police station brought the full force of the law to bear and, with aggressive and effective regular patrolling, the problem was cleared up. There were no great headlines, no news stories, no great fanfares; just effective and intelligent policing.

As to the events that led to the death of David Barr, I wonder whether a similar set of circumstances to that I have described set in train this tragedy that cost the life of a 31 year old man. It is with this in mind that I reject the thoughtless story in the local Messenger newspaper for the northern area, the *News Review*. A person simply called 'Geoff' is quoted as saying that the problem comes from a lack of patrolling. I totally reject that. I admire the quiet and thorough way in which the police in my area go about their work. I must also say that I thought that the story was in particularly bad taste because it hit the streets on the day of Officer Barr's funeral.

I turn now to the murder of Officer Barr. The community felt absolute outrage at such a barbaric act. Whilst I do not want to canvass what will eventually be put before the courts, I feel that some remarks need to be made in a broad sense, and I hope that members take them in that context. The community cannot prevent all acts of such barbarity. Police are regularly called to scenes of potential conflict and to scenes of crime. Probably more than most of us, police officers feel the brunt of many community problems. As does the community, they need the protection of the laws they are sworn to uphold.

When the scales of justice are set to weigh up the evidence in this case, I hope that the outrage of our community is a signal factor in the sentencing. I hope that I will not have to speak on this matter again. I also hope that, when justice has taken its course and the court has handed down a sentence, that sentence reflects the outrage of the community and puts the guilty party in gaol until that person never again threatens the police or the community that they protect.

**Mr BRINDAL (Hayward):** What the member for Playford said is fortuitous. I place on record the Opposition's genuine sentiments of sympathy, and extend our condolences to the family and friends of Officer Barr and to other serving members of the Police Force. One of my best friends travelled with Officer Barr because, not long ago, he was

stationed in Whyalla and came down from there. Tragic circumstances such as this have a deep impact on the psychology of many serving police officers who have known and worked with an officer killed in the course of his duty. I totally endorse the remarks of the member for Playford.

Today I would like to address my remarks to the social justice strategy of this Government. After being privileged to hear two speeches by his Excellency, I believe that social justice has formed an important plank of the thinking and the way in which this Government seeks to operate. I commend it for that. We all know—both on this side of the House and on the Government's side of the House—that we are in difficult economic times, and that all of us who have a responsibility to the people whose taxes we take must drive the dollar as far as we can. I am sure that any effort the Government makes in that regard will get the support of the Opposition, and that it is committed to its social justice strategies.

Nevertheless, I am concerned—as I think I have placed on record before in this House—that while the Government touts social justice, it has certain measures that disadvantage people within our society. Two to which I would particularly refer are the new water pricing policy and the rates and taxes system in relation to land. I do not think that anyone on this side of the House would not accept a user-pays principle. A user-pays principle, especially in relation to our water system, is probably an important step forward for South Australia, and represents a genuine attempt to conserve a precious natural resource.

However, in my own electorate at Warradale there are a lot of elderly people and a lot of pensioners. They shifted into the area post-war, and bought modest accommodation. In many cases they bought, under advantageous schemes introduced by a succession of Governments, accommodation from the Housing Trust, so it was not high-priced accommodation. Those people were never high income earners; they were always the battlers and the people who struggled to do their best. All they want now is to live in their own house and to live out the rest of their lives with their partners on a pension. Unfortunately, because of the new water rating system, if their house is valued at over \$100 000 they are subject to an additional charge.

Similarly, if their house is valued at over \$100 000 they are subject to certain penalties from their council because of the value of their home. They did not buy lavish homes. The fact that their homes are now worth a considerable amount of money is due only to market forces. In fact, even the valuation that the Valuer-General puts on those homes is sometimes spurious. A number of people have taken their homes off the market. They have tried to sell them, but could not do so because no-one was interested in buying them. However, I have not heard of one instance in which the Valuer-General reduced the value of their home. If something is worth \$100 000, and one tries to sell it for \$100 000, and no-one will buy it, it is really worth nothing until someone buys it.

Downward valuations never occur even when the market turns down: there are always upward valuations. These people are really being affected by a system of valuation which taxes an unrealised asset. If people wish to realise an asset and the Government—either this Government or the Federal Government—believes it is legitimate to tax a realised asset, then let that be so; let it tax the realised asset. Let it not tax an asset which is only notional year after year, because in doing so it is disadvantaging a group of people.

I put it that it is disadvantaging its own, because the people I represent are not what anyone would describe as

traditional Liberal voters. They are the people who for years have voted Labor and for years have been loyal to the Labor Party. If there is now a Liberal member sitting on this side of the House representing those people, perhaps it should be a message to members on the Government benches. I can say honestly that I would rather be a member in this place only once, if the Government were to lift its game and truly represent the people I represent, rather than go on sitting here because the Government cannot do its job.

There has been a lot of talk today about money, how the Government needs more money and how we are all being ripped off. Again, part of that comes into the social justice area. I do not think that anyone on this side of the House would deny those who need money, services or help—those whom the safety net of society tends to let slip through its fingers. I do not think anyone on this side of the House would deny the Government either the obligation to help them, or the credit for helping them when it does so. Again, in my electorate I have been disturbed in the winter break to see instance after instance where the money the Government is targeting for social justice is not necessarily going to those in need, but rather to a group of people who feed off the needs of others. A good example of that was a conference I went to of Southern Domiciliary Care. Basically the conference was called because people could not get the services which they believe they have the right to expect and which the Government says is available to them. I am talking about the sorts of after hospital care, the shopping, the housekeeping and various associated functions, such as nursing.

So, this conference was called to discuss how best it could use what it has. Almost overwhelmingly the answer was this: you did the job for about 20 years, you did it well and you managed to fulfil a demand. When the Government became involved and gave more money, it then created a

level of bureaucracy, the sole purpose of which was to check that what the group had been doing for 20 years it was in fact capable of doing. In creating that bureaucracy, God alone knows how many thousands of dollars were siphoned off from a very laudable initiative of Government and into paying public servants just to check up on the matter.

Perhaps there is no better illustration than when I was working for the Education Department, and a lady from Imparja came down. At that time, they were after a television licence. She looked me in the eye and said, 'Do you know the second biggest industry in the Northern Territory is Aborigines?' Her assertion was that they do not really want Aborigines to raise themselves up, to be self-determining, and do what they wished to do with their own life. This Aboriginal lady asserted that there are too many public servants who have a comfortable life predicated on the disadvantaged in our society. I know that I am speaking to members of the Parliament and not to members of the bureaucracy. All members of this House were elected by the people to represent the people. I think that that is our job.

I urge all members on the Government benches—those who constitute the Ministry and those who constitute the backbench—to look seriously at this problem. Members opposite have a unique opportunity during this budget session to see that this State's dollars go not to our bureaucrats (unless they are truly in need) but to where the money is needed. If someone is in need, let us give them the money; let us not further line the pockets of a self-seeking bureaucracy. The budget session presents a unique opportunity to the Government. I commend my comments to the House.

Motion carried.

At 4.12 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 7 August at 2 p.m.