

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 27 February 1992

The **SPEAKER (Hon. N.T. Peterson)** took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

SCHOOL PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): I move:

That this House calls on the Government to require that either flashing light school pedestrian crossings, push button pedestrian crossings, a pedestrian bridge or other safety measures be mandatory for a road near all primary schools in the Adelaide metropolitan area and that the Government contribute towards the funding of such crossings.

I do not intend to speak for a great length of time on this motion because most members of this Parliament, particularly those representing newer developing areas, during the course of their duties have been approached by people expressing concern about the safety provisions made for their children to safely cross roads to their school. Since my election to the Parliament, I have noted that this is an issue of some considerable emotion, and often distresses many parents, students and teachers alike.

I have witnessed a barrage of complaints from numerous community groups over recent time, particularly from developing areas where inadequate safety measures are provided for students attending newer schools. I am sure that no member of this Parliament would disagree that it is absolutely imperative that our children have a safe means by which they can cross roads to get to their school. All too often we see school crossings installed after a student has been knocked down by a vehicle. I am sure that all members would agree that this is unacceptable.

I can cite three schools in my electorate which do not have safe crossings. I refer to the Hallett Cove South school which, for many years, has been fighting for a crossing on Gretel Crescent that carries vehicles leaving the 100 km/h Lonsdale Road; the new Hallett Cove East school, opened in the middle of last year, with no safe crossing on the busy Barramundi Drive which also carries STA buses; and the O'Sullivan Beach Primary School, which has no safe crossing on the busy Galloway Road.

I am aware, from looking at a variety of local papers across metropolitan Adelaide, that almost every week at least one of those papers carries yet another story of yet another lobby group demanding that a pedestrian crossing be installed near their school. Such measures are fundamental to the safety of our young children. The cost is relatively insignificant when compared with the cost of an insurance payout for a child who has been disabled. I am aware that the cost of a pedestrian crossing near one of the schools I mentioned, the new Hallett Cove East school, has been estimated at about \$30 000. It is important to look at what actually occurs in order for it to be determined whether or not a crossing should be installed at a school.

By way of example, guideline (for installation) 6.4.2 of Australian Standard 1742.10—1990 provides:

- (b) For each of 8 hours of an average day—
 - (i) the traffic volume on the road exceeds 600 veh/h (total directions), or 1 000 veh/h (total both directions) where there is a central pedestrian refuge; and
 - (ii) during the same 8 hours the pedestrian volume is 175 or more persons per hour; and
 - (iii) there is no other pedestrian crossing, footbridge or subway within a reasonable distance.
- (c) At a school where in two separate 1 hour periods of a typical school day, there are no fewer than 50 persons

crossing the roadway and at least 600 vehicles pass the site subject to the product of the number of pedestrians per hour and vehicles in the same hour exceeding 40 000.

That is a standard which has been followed by this Government to determine whether a pedestrian crossing will be installed. I am sure that almost every member of this Parliament is aware that, in order to get around this set requirement before a crossing can be installed, schools and lobby groups will sit down and work out how they can make sure that that criterion is met.

I do not mind saying that I am aware of and indeed have encouraged situations where, on a day that a survey is being done, parents have driven up and down the road on which the crossing needs to be installed and we have encouraged students to go back and forth across the road, to make sure that the criterion is met. But that can only happen where we have an obliging survey taker who will let us know the date and time at which the survey will be taken. All of that adds to the ridiculous nature of the situation we face: where it comes down to whether a school can muster the numbers to drive enough cars up and down a road during a one hour period and whether it can get students to cross back and forth to meet the requirements for installation of a crossing.

Those who are not that organised or who fall just short of the criteria miss out—until a student is run down. The honourable member for Fisher, who is presently in the Chamber is fully aware of what can happen prior to and after a survey is done. I am sure that, at a later stage, he will probably speak in this debate and tell us of the crossing that was refused in his area, but which was installed after a student was knocked down by a car.

In conclusion, this motion is not asking for the Government to totally fund these crossings; it is not asking the Government for a big cash handout; it is simply asking that the Government recognise it is an essential safety feature, that it require that these safety features be mandatory for all schools, and that it contribute, not totally, but in some part, towards the installation of such crossings. I know that members on both sides of this House have some sentiment towards this motion, and I hope you, Mr Speaker, and all other members will consider it when exercising their vote on the motion. Accordingly, I commend this motion to the House.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

'OUTLOOK 1992' CONFERENCE

Mr VENNING (Custance): I move:

That his House acknowledges the work of ABARE in staging the recent 'Outlook 1992' conference in Canberra and notes the outcomes and information which emanated from the conference.

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Research Economics (ABARE) hosted its annual three-day conference in Canberra on 4, 5 and 6 February. It was well attended, but we no longer see the practitioners, that is, the farmers, attending the conference in any numbers. We now see a very academic group made up of consultants, advisers, industry leaders, agri-politicians and academics generally. It was the fifth ABARE conference that I have attended, and I would rate it better than last year's conference. Whether that is because the forecasts are a little better—I wonder.

The fact that I was the only member of either House of this Parliament to attend the conference was not very encouraging. However, I appreciated meeting many South Australians, particularly the department staff such as Dr John Radcliffe, Hugh McClelland and Don Swincer, as well

as departmental economists. I pay a special tribute to the department's Mr Rob Rees, an expert on grain marketing. I have always found him to be very well advised on market trends, etc. and he is recognised across Australia.

I hope that our department is able to keep his services, but I know there is some doubt about that. I also note with some dismay that no-one from the United Farmers and Stockowners was present. I know that the organisation is having liquidity problems, but I was quite disappointed that it was not represented at all. We have just come through the worst downturn we have had in 40 years, but things are looking up, albeit very gradually. We expect an improvement in 1993-94, although not by much, but by 1994-95, hopefully, things will be moving again.

There are 15 000 farm units in South Australia, 1 500 of which would be deemed to be in trouble. The bottom line is that about 100 units will be leaving the industry. Interest rates across the world average 5 per cent to 6 per cent; in the United States it is 4 per cent, yet ours is 10 per cent, having come down a long way from what it was. The question asked by everyone is: how come the interest rates were so high for so long? Farm incomes have reduced by half in 1991, and farm debt has risen dramatically.

The farm capital base is eroding very rapidly. Once it has run down, it will be very hard to respond quickly to increased demand. I have spoken about this in the House before, as it is a problem that concerns me greatly. It threatens the livelihood of people and threatens our export competitiveness. If our tools of trade run down and wear out, our cost of production goes up and our effective production itself goes down, particularly in the cropping areas, with plant and equipment on those farms.

To return to the 1991 level of capital stock, crop prices need to be 33 per cent higher than the current ABARE predictions. Direct assistance to the farm sector would deliver big bangs for very few bucks—slang words, but they say it all. A recapitalised industry will earn us more export dollars and create more regional jobs and infrastructure, and that infrastructure would stay.

We have heard much about value adding, and it was a very prominent subject at the conference. Foreign countries add \$8 value to every \$1 of unprocessed Australian agricultural product exported. That comes from Hugh McClelland, whom I mentioned previously. We would wipe out three-quarters of our foreign debt and import bill if we did the same. Risk management will play a key role in agriculture in the next decade in Australia, because people have been taking risks but have been losing. Underwriting of the wheat price by Government must be a key part of risk management. We cannot expect farmers to put in crops with the huge costs involved. In my own books I spend \$3 to make \$4. That is \$300 to make \$400 or \$30 000 to make \$40 000. If you have a lean year, you can see clearly where you go.

Those are my own figures, and I live on some of the better land in Australia in regard to reliability. I spend \$3 to make \$4. Members can see the problems with risk management in this country. The Government must underwrite the wheat market. I make that comment not for political reasons but for reasons of commonsense. Most other exporting countries have Government assistance, particularly our export opponents. The Australian farmer is out there on his own, and members can see the problems.

In risk management we are seeing a very rapid trend towards futures marketing so that farmers can sell their crop on the futures market, thus being able to forecast to some degree and to hold their income so that they can have, at least, some reliable income in the next year and know

what their financial situation will be. The Sydney futures market did more trading in the last week in January than it did in all of 1991. That tells us that farmers are out there thinking and doing things.

The Federal Government must look at the IED scheme. It must be updated so that farmers can put money away in good times in readiness for the bad times. Farmers have to be reminded about these things. When we realise that only 38 per cent of Australian farmers ever prepare a budget, that is an indictment in itself. We have to pull our farmers into the twentieth century. The problem is that the average age of farmers is 57, and it gets a year higher every year. Therefore, we can understand why only 38 per cent of farmers prepare a budget. We must do two things: get our farmers younger and educate them to plan.

The minerals sector is probably the quickest way for us to get out of our present malaise. The minerals sector at the moment is vastly under produced; it is almost asleep. Our competitors, particularly South Africa, will take us to the cleaners unless we get our act together. The South Africans are coming on to the market with iron ore. These products were previously under strict sanctions. Now they are going out and they will target our markets directly unless we do something about it. For example, we shall be in serious trouble with steaming coal. We are very lack-lustre, so we must get our minerals out of the ground and make ourselves world competitive.

The next decade will see many changes, particularly in relation to energy generation. We shall find that the Japanese, in particular, will tax carbon emissions. Anything that spews carbon into the air—and that is coal—is predicted to attract a 10 per cent tax by 1995 and 100 per cent tax by the year 2000. Therefore, we must quickly seek clean ways of generating energy. The new nuclear technology is obviously the way to go. The Japanese are going flat out in developing that technology. They will have a shortfall in energy requirements this year.

In Canberra I appreciated meeting Colin Munro, who is in charge of ABC Rural Radio. I spoke to him about South Australia's concerns in relation to that. He made some very positive comments about how well South Australia's rural radio performs and also gave me some confidence and an assurance that our system will remain as it is. I have spoken about South Africa and iron ore. That is of great concern to me. I have all these notes, the full conference records, and I would offer them to any member who would like to peruse them. I ask the House to note the outcome of the ABARE conference and wish it all the best for the future.

Mrs HUTCHISON secured the adjournment of the debate.

RABBIT ERADICATION

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

That this House strongly supports the establishment of a publicly subscribed national rabbit fund which could be used to form the basis for collecting money to raise community awareness and understanding and support research for the ultimate eradication of rabbits from Australia and indicates its support to the Interim Organising Committee established to promote this cause.

The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I do not believe, Minister, that this is anything to do with the Warren commission at all. I appreciate the Minister's support for the motion before the House.

An honourable member: He's a bit of a rabbit, I think.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Minister has on a number of occasions been referred to as a bit of a rabbit, but we will not go into that. Rabbits cost Australia \$90 million in lost primary production every year. That is not a figure that is just plucked out of the air: it comes from the CSIRO information sheet as part of the national information network. Rabbits in Australia consume more seedlings in a year than would be planted in a decade of tree planting, and that is an important fact. Rabbits are environmental monsters which have wreaked havoc on our native flora and fauna, agricultural crops and the pastoral industry for over 100 years.

I gave notice of this motion at a time when I had received, I believe as had other members of the House, an invitation to attend a special meeting at the University of Adelaide to involve the public in making contributions towards the establishment of a rabbit fund. I would like briefly to provide background to that meeting.

Last year Mr Keith Greenfield, a pastoralist from Billa Kallina Station, suggested the establishment of a publicly subscribed national rabbit fund to form the basis of collecting money to raise community awareness and understanding and to support the search for the ultimate eradication of rabbits from Australia. I was delighted to learn that the Soil Conservation Board system within South Australia has strongly endorsed this idea, and a small interim organising committee comprising Messrs Peter Day, David Moyle and Nicholas Newland was set up to promote this concept. Along with other members from this place, I attended that well organised meeting, and I am pleased to say that that concept has now got off the ground and has received considerable support from the community in South Australia. I am sure it will continue to receive support throughout Australia. I sincerely hope that that is the case, and that is why I believe it is so important that this Parliament expresses its support for those who are keen to set up that fund.

Rabbits are described as one of the greatest agents of land and environmental degradation in Australia. The extent of the problem which rabbits are causing throughout much of Australia is at a level where, unless substantial community commitment to doing something about the problem can be established and put in some meaningful form, many parts of Australia stand to suffer substantial degradation and perhaps desertification.

That is why it is so essential that this fund be established. In Australia, rabbits have the distinction of achieving the fastest rate of spread of any introduced mammal in the world. More efficient biological control techniques are still being developed and it is important that that work be speeded up. At present both biological and mechanical control methods need to be applied to achieve effective control, but the matter of research is particularly important, an area that I understand will receive funding from the organisation to which I have just referred.

I often ask why we appear to spend millions of dollars on superficial propaganda when there is a serious practical problem that calls for CSIRO and similar organisations to step up their research vastly into the literal extermination of the rabbit from this continent.

One of the proponents of such a fund is Dr Reg Sprigg from Arkaroola, who has been very obvious in his expression of concern in regard to this extreme menace and the harm that it is doing, particularly to the inland areas of Australia and of this State. I refer to a letter that I received from Dr Sprigg some little time ago in which he says that he has just returned once again from the central desert. He goes on to say:

I am more than ever convinced that the rabbit is the real 'public enemy' of the outback (and farm) lands. Why go to all the cost of planting a billion trees or whatever when rabbits are destroying as many on a regular seasonal basis and will continue to do so . . . cannot some of us set up an anti-rabbit campaign?

Dr Sprigg suggests the setting up of a movement equal to the 'Greening of Australia' movement and the possibility of a slogan being introduced, such as: 'Wipe out the rabbit and let Australia green itself'; 'Green Australia by destroying the rabbit'; and 'Destroy the rabbit and green the land'. It might be a gimmick, but I believe that anything that can be introduced to make people more aware of this problem and of the damage that is being caused can only be beneficial for all Australians.

Dr Sprigg also recalls a meeting of the Royal Society of South Australia 50 years ago at which Waite research people were able to demonstrate perfectly that, where no native Murray pines were regenerating, a single rabbit-proof fence around a single tree would have 700 or 800 seedlings showing through after the next seasonal rain. He says that the same thing could be demonstrated for mulgas, and he refers particularly to his experience at Arkaroola. Dr Sprigg goes on to say:

So long as we keep the rabbit and goat numbers down the seedlings not only appear in profusion but grow to mature trees. I suggest that a gentleman such as Dr Sprigg, who has had ample opportunity to consider this matter, is in a very good position to promote such a cause. I hope that the majority of members in this place will realise the importance of establishing such a fund and will recognise the problems that rabbits are causing. I repeat: rabbits have cost Australia \$90 million in lost primary production every year, something that this country and this State cannot continue to experience. I urge members to support this motion.

Mrs HUTCHISON secured the adjournment of the debate.

TARIFF PROTECTION

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): I move:

That this House calls on the Federal Government to cease further reduction in tariff protection, particularly for the motor vehicle and textile, clothing and footwear industries, until the national economy has recovered and it can be demonstrated that those industries are in a position to withstand any such reductions.

I am sure all members in the House would welcome the measures taken by the Federal Government in its economic statement last night to assist industry in this State. In particular, two measures that I would like to mention will be of particular benefit to the industries that are under discussion today. First, I refer to the assistance to the textile, clothing and footwear industries to help them adjust to the structural changes taking place in their industries and, secondly, to the reduction in sales tax on motor vehicles from 20 per cent to 15 per cent—a level that would put it below the level of effective taxation that would apply if a consumption tax were to be introduced in this country.

Both those measures will assist those industries in the current recession, and I certainly warmly welcome those measures. However, I believe there is still a case for a review of the timetable for the phasing out of tariffs to be undertaken. If we look at the history of tariff protection in this country in modern times, we will see that most of the problems arose during the Menzies and McEwen eras. Looking back over those times we would have to say that the way that industry was fostered by those Governments was disastrous.

There was a proliferation of domestic manufacturers whose markets were too small to be viable in the longer term. For example, in the motor vehicle industry a large number of manufacturers were encouraged to come into this country under the McEwen plans and, of course, there was never any chance that in the longer term those businesses would be viable, because the Australian market was never likely to be large enough to sustain such a large number of manufacturers. Of course, after the introduction of those industries there was a response to increasing competition. We saw the Japanese car industry come into its own in the late 1960s, and the local response was to seek higher and higher levels of tariffs rather than to deal with the basic structural problems of the industry.

In response to the structural problems that have developed in industry over those 20 or 30 years, many economists see the complete abolition of tariffs as the only solution. In other words, they want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. I think we need to reject that idea. We have now come to realise that it is not the answer to keep on increasing tariff protection for industries that are never likely to be able to cope with world competition. We certainly need to force our manufacturers to come to terms with the fact that they must compete in world markets and that they must adjust.

However, the important thing is—and this is the core of this motion—that the pace of reform in tariffs must be such that those industries can reasonably cope with the structural adjustment that is necessary. This motion addresses that in saying that the phasing out of tariffs proposed by the Federal Government should take into account the recessionary conditions that we have at the moment and the other factors that operate on the industry. The tragedy would be that if the phasing out of tariffs announced by the Commonwealth Government were to take place—that is, 2.5 per cent reduction in the motor vehicle industry each year—there would be a great danger that many companies that are now coming to terms with the fact that they must compete on world markets could fall by the wayside before they were able to adjust properly to the new competitive world conditions.

There are examples within my electorate of companies that have been very successful in adapting to this new environment. One example is a motor vehicle component manufacturer that has come to an arrangement with a German manufacturer. It has introduced new, world-leading technology into this country and it has great benefits. The problem for this company is that it takes time for it to establish the quality levels that are necessary to enable it to gain contracts with the major car assemblers. The problem is whether it can survive the two or three years that are necessary for it to adapt and to adjust to ensure its survival in the longer term.

There is no doubt that this company and many companies like it have a future in the motor vehicle component industry if they can survive the current recession. The danger is that, if they are forced to close now, when the recession recovers we may be in a situation where we just do not have the number of world competitive companies around to ensure the long-term survival of the industry.

The problem that we have in the textile, clothing and footwear and motor vehicle industries is that the highly competitive international environment and the recession we have at the moment is adding to the phasing out of tariffs and squeezing these industries. For these companies to survive in the long term, they must become more efficient and reduce their costs. Many of these costs are outside the control of individual firms, for example, transport costs and

costs relating to shipping their goods overseas, if they are becoming part of world export markets.

That is the other factor in the Commonwealth Government's statement of last night, which is important. As well as assisting the textile, clothing and footwear and motor vehicle industries directly, the Commonwealth Government is also assisting in the provision of infrastructure to industry. In particular I mention the reforms of the rail system, which should reduce bulk freight costs in this country, the assistance for ports and the setting up of a national electricity grid, which should also reduce electricity costs. When these things come about, they should produce lower costs for our world competitive companies, but the problem is that this will take time; the benefits of these reforms will not be seen overnight but will take some years.

Again, I return to the fundamental point of this motion. Whereas these cost pressures on these companies may eventually fall from the steps that the Commonwealth Government is introducing, it will take time for their benefits to flow through to companies, and it is important that these companies be able to survive until these benefits accrue. In particular, if we have a 2.5 per cent yearly cut in tariffs on the motor vehicle industry, it is important that the costs associated with these industries should also be falling by a similar amount; otherwise, they simply will not be able to survive in the longer term.

It is also important that these companies that are seeking to survive in the longer term make technological and organisational innovations, and I believe there are signs that that is happening. Certainly during the 1960s many companies were really quite happy to live behind the tariff wall and not make any attempts at all to come to terms with the changes in world markets. However, that is certainly not the case at the moment, I believe, from many of the companies that I have seen in my electorate. I could name Mitsubishi, for example, as one of our largest motor vehicle assemblers: there has certainly been a great deal of innovation in that company over recent years and, provided that the tariff phase-outs are reasonable, there is every chance that companies such as Mitsubishi will grow and provide great wealth to this country in the future.

It is certainly necessary that we keep pressure on manufacturers to force the pace of change in industries. We certainly should not revert to the situation we had in the 1960s, where every time there was a problem we increased tariffs. The point is at what rate we should phase out tariffs.

Even more difficult than the policies of the Federal Government would be those of the Federal Opposition, and I point out to this House that the Federal Opposition has a policy of totally phasing out all tariff protection by the year 2000. Such a policy would totally destroy the textile, clothing and footwear and motor vehicle industries in this country, and all members would be well aware of what a disaster this would be to South Australia if this were to happen. That is totally irresponsible policy. When members opposite speak on this motion, I will be interested to hear their attitude towards the so-called Fightback! package of their Federal Party, which states that all tariffs should be removed by the year 2000.

This State Government has certainly been forthright in putting the interests of South Australia first. I would like to quote a paragraph from the submission made by the State Government to the Federal economic statement. The statement points out first of all that the State's manufacturing employment fell 18.9 per cent in the two years to November 1991, versus 9.1 per cent nationally. The statement also points out that over half the decline in manufacturing employment in this State has occurred in the

traditional areas—metal products, transport equipment and appliances. The statement continues:

The automotive sector, which is centred around the GMH and Mitsubishi plants, has borne a large proportion of the burden.

Statistics on employment in the transport equipment sector show that employment has fallen from 20 000 in 1989 to 15 500 at the end of 1991.

It is clear that the Federal Government's reform schedule for the motor vehicle industry has, and will continue to have, a major impact on the local economy. Whilst the South Australian Government supports the drive for an internationally competitive industry, it must be recognised that considerable productivity gains would be needed for either of the local assembly plants to survive the reduction to 15 per cent tariff protection targeted for the year 2000. On the other hand, the Federal Opposition's zero tariff policy would almost certainly wipe out South Australia's automotive sector.

We should all have a great deal of fear about what would happen to this State if we had the misfortune of having a Hewson Government elected. The State Government has also taken a positive role in cementing the future of the motor vehicle and the textile clothing and footwear industries in this State. It has set up task forces in each of these two areas to try to help industry survive this difficult period. The State Government also has a policy of cementing the motor vehicle industry in this State. It is important to point out to the House that it is necessary to have world-class component manufacturers as well as assemblers. If we do not have sufficient world-class component manufacturers to complement the basic vehicle assemblers, there is a great danger that the major assemblers will leave this State. It is important that we have a good working relationship between the component manufacturers as well as the major vehicle assemblers. This has certainly been part of this State Government's policy, and it is vitally important for the future of the motor vehicle industry in this State.

Within the textile, clothing and footwear industry, the State Government has also been assisting local producers to come to terms with the difficulties those industries face. In particular, there are many potential overseas markets for our local textile, clothing and footwear producers that are still heavily protected, making market penetration difficult. The small domestic market in this country is also subjected to relatively ineffective dumping legislation, and this makes it very difficult for local companies to survive against import competition when that import competition is unfair. Of course, while it was anticipated that the reduction in tariff protection would speed up reforms within the textile, clothing and footwear industry, resulting in more efficient internationally competitive operations, the depressed demand in the past two years has complicated this expectation.

I shall conclude by saying again that the Federal Government should be congratulated on the measures it has taken to assist these two vital industries and to assist South Australia, as announced in its economic statement last night. However, I believe that, while the measures taken will certainly assist the motor vehicle, textile, clothing and footwear industries, there is a great danger if the Commonwealth's policy of tariff reduction continues, it will simply not give enough time for the better components of that industry to survive. So, I ask all members of this House to support the motion and to call on the Federal Government to reconsider the phasing-out of tariffs in these two vital industries. As I said earlier, I look with great interest to see what members of the Opposition have to say about the policies of their Federal Party on these questions.

Mr S.G. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOSPITAL BOARDS

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That this House—

- (a) strongly supports the role which hospital boards have played in providing essential medical services for rural South Australia;
- (b) strongly rejects the proposition put forward by the South Australian Health Commission in the area health services discussion paper; and
- (c) calls on the Government to give a clear indication that the important role of hospital boards will not be in any way downgraded.

Most rural members in this place will be aware that local communities have put a great deal of effort and time into supporting their local hospitals. The overwhelming majority of hospitals were constructed through a great deal of hard work and financial support from those communities. They are an essential part of the community structure, and any attempt to either downgrade them or affect their operation has been strongly resisted by those communities. It is a small price for the total community to pay to allow the rural areas of South Australia to continue to have reasonable and essential health services and to allow local communities to be involved in their management. If local communities are involved in their management, they will strongly support them and the community will use those facilities. Most people who are unfortunate enough to have to go to hospital want to be in a hospital close to where they live and where their family and friends can visit them. This proposition put forward to further rationalise (which really means 'remove and downgrade') facilities is not only unnecessary and unwise but does not take into account the needs of those communities.

If you remove the ability of the hospitals to manage their own affairs and you take away services, you further run down rural communities. There has been a clear indication from the communities that I represent and from the hospital boards in those areas that in no way do they want to be involved in allowing the Health Commission to further reduce services. If it is necessary to cut back the health budget, the first areas of cut back should be in doing something about the unnecessarily large bureaucracy within the Health Commission itself, rather than taking away services where they are required.

Surely the role of the Government should be to provide services as close as possible to the people who will use them. In the hospitals with which I am associated there is considerable public investment. Many have been upgraded over the past few years and are providing necessary services. They are providing local employment, and an ongoing need exists for those facilities, whether it be at Hawker, Booleroo Centre, Orroroo, Peterborough or elsewhere. Unfortunately the Government has circulated a paper, causing a great deal of annoyance, anger and uncertainty and has not given any clear indication that it will not proceed with this exercise. We are aware that certain people within the administration of the State believe that, once you get to Gepps Cross, South Australia ceases and, when you get to Templars, you are in another State. They have no understanding of the real effect of decisions they are making. If reductions in services are required, let us not start in rural areas.

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

Mr GUNN: If you live in the metropolitan area, you have dozens of facilities available to you but, if you are unfortunate enough to live hundreds of kilometres from Adelaide, as many people do, these facilities are not available. Those people for years have been supporting the economy of this State and have provided the income to help sustain a reasonable standard of living. Not only does the

Government want to attack the hospitals but also take away school facilities, and on it goes. These areas have no facilities. One cannot get on a bus and go down the road as long distances are involved. Too many services have already been curtailed and this attack on the hospital services is not only unnecessary but also unwise, ill-conceived and cannot be allowed to continue.

I have brought this matter to the attention of the House today because there is great concern in rural South Australia that these facilities will be downgraded, and that the Government will do this by all sorts of devious means such as reducing the allocation by so many hundreds of thousands of dollars and leaving the decision to the boards. That is really a backdoor method of reducing the services and facilities. Under a Liberal Government hospital boards in rural areas will not be abolished and these services will not be curtailed. A Liberal Government will not tolerate the further downgrading of these services.

I bring this matter to the attention of the Parliament today to ensure that members of this House are fully aware of the situation. I look forward to the support of members opposite. I want to know where some of them stand. I want to know whether a few members opposite, for the first time in their lives, will profess that they have an interest in rural South Australia.

Where does the enlightened councillor from Port Pirie stand? Does he want to centralise all hospital services to Port Pirie? Where does the member for Stuart stand? Does she want to centralise all hospital services to Port Augusta, do away with Booleroo Centre and downgrade Hawker? It will be interesting to know what these people think, because they will have to stand up and be counted. I can tell members opposite that rural people will not have a bar of it. I challenge that enlightened gentleman from Port Pirie, who suddenly changed his political colours—the political opportunist up there—where does he stand? What is he going to tell the hospitals in Peterborough and Jamestown? We know what his Minister circulated; we know what the green paper proposes.

Where does the member for Stuart stand? We have heard not a whimper from her about the green paper. Will she downgrade Leigh Creek, which is a very good hospital and provides excellent facilities, as there are fewer people there? What about Hawker, which is an excellent, well managed hospital, as are the hospitals at Booleroo Centre, Orroroo, Ceduna and Coober Pedy? Will the Government try to centralise them all back to Port Augusta? Where do members opposite stand on that? That is what I and rural people want to know, and we will not rest until those questions have been answered. Where does the Government stand on this matter?

It is all very well for members opposite to run around country areas and make good fellows of themselves, but I bring this matter to the attention of the House so that people can be informed. In the rural regional centres of South Australia we have excellent hospital facilities that are well served by the Flying Doctor and other organisations. What we have to do is improve them, not downgrade them. The Government should be helping to provide elderly citizen care at Hawker, not attempting to take away the people's right to manage. These hospitals have been well managed. Unlike the experience with the State Bank, SGIC and WorkCover, these people on the management boards of the rural hospitals have been prudent. What is the Government going to do about the Elliston Hospital? The member for Flinders knows all about that. I recall many years ago being involved when that hospital was being built,

helping to get it finished and having to make representations on behalf of the board. I want these questions answered.

We have to continue improving the range of services that are available at these hospitals. We also have to continue to improve, not downgrade, the range of services that are available at places like Whyalla and Port Augusta, but not at the expense of the rest of rural South Australia. It is the Government's role to be responsible. The Government is involved in all sorts of harebrained schemes. It has placed great emphasis on an entertainment centre in Adelaide: not many people from these rural areas will use the entertainment centre, but they will use their hospitals.

The Government must use commonsense and get its priorities right. It does not have long to go because it will not be in government much longer. We want the Government to come clean. I have brought this matter to the attention of the Parliament because there is great concern in rural South Australia about these facilities, for which the local communities have worked for generations to maintain and operate as effective health providers. Once hospitals are downgraded, it becomes difficult for the doctors to remain.

Mr Venning: And the chemist shops.

Mr GUNN: Yes, then there is the problem of losing chemist shops and other facilities. It becomes more difficult to attract professional people from other communities to come to reside and provide their services in those towns.

I commend the motion to the House and look forward to the unanimous support of all members. We do not want any of this nonsense of an attempt to amend the motion, trying to pat the Government on the back, because any attempt could only be interpreted as opposition to the proposal and to continuing the provision of these facilities which are essential to the people living in rural South Australia.

Mr ATKINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ALCOHOL-FREE AREAS

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That this House calls on the Government to give local government the authority to impose 'dry areas' without reference to the Government and as a matter of urgency recommends that the Government take similar action in respect of lands over which it has control.

This matter has caused considerable debate and discussion within the community. I believe there is a strong desire in local communities to restrict the consumption of alcohol in public places such as roads and also in parks, foreshores and other areas where people congregate to enjoy themselves. Unfortunately, with the consumption of alcohol comes vandalism, public disorder and various other acts of anti-social behaviour. People have a right to consume alcohol in licensed premises, clubs, their homes or areas that are set aside for that purpose, but I do not believe that it is either wise or necessary to have alcohol consumed in the streets because it immediately brings with it littering problems and all sorts of other anti-social behaviour.

This restriction has worked very successfully in places such as Ceduna. There is a very strong demand from towns such as Coober Pedy to implement this proposal. They have had a great deal of difficulty, with many petitions and requests, but nothing has happened. Recently, the people at Jamestown called for the introduction of dry areas in that town. Towns in other parts of the State have requested dry areas. We know that the people at Glenelg are keen to have this proposal maintained.

The best way of resolving this issue is to allow local councils to have the authority, and the people in those areas can then make a judgment. If they are unhappy or dissatisfied with how it has been implemented, judgments can be made at council elections. I believe that is how democracy should operate. This matter has attracted a great deal of discussion. I believe the time is ripe to give these local communities that authority now. It is very well to have public servants, who live in Adelaide, travel to Ceduna or other areas and make judgments or assessments, but they do not have to live with their decisions.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GUNN: Whether it is down at Woodville or anywhere else, those people must accept those decisions. If they are unhappy, they could elect a new council.

Mr Ferguson: What about the policing of the dry areas? How can the councils do it?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Henley Beach is out of order.

Mr GUNN: The member for Henley Beach will have an opportunity to participate if he so desires.

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

Mr GUNN: I will come to that. The experience at Ceduna has been that the South Australian Police Department has been able to handle this matter quite adequately. The only difficulties they have had is that a few Legal Aid lawyers have become involved in the escapade and have actually said that, if people have a bottle in their hand and are not actually observed consuming from it, they have not committed an offence.

An honourable member: That's right.

Mr GUNN: It is nonsense, though. That is the sort of difficulty that the South Australian Police Department and the community have had to put up with. That sort of nonsense could be put to rest once and for all, because law-abiding citizens are entitled to go about their business and use the streets and parks without being harassed by people who have been affected by alcohol, who are behaving in an anti-social manner, and who litter areas and break bottles. The only solution is to prevent those people from consuming alcohol.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: They then get upset when the sprinklers are turned on.

Mr GUNN: That is right, and all sorts of other problems flow from it. Surely, in a decent and civilised society, if the community at large want those areas restricted, they should have the right to do so. They should not have to come cap in hand to a Government in Adelaide, which then relies on advice from public servants, some of whom have peculiar outlooks on these sorts of subjects. The sort of nonsense that took place when the people of Ceduna first requested a dry area, included a public servant going there and quoting page after page in reference to Mr Grassby's attitude towards the people of Ceduna. Page after page of that nonsense was

put forward, and it took years to eventually get the dry area. The council now has in place various programs, and it has acted very responsibly, but I do not see why it should have to go through the hassle of having to get it renewed. It should be able to make the final determination, and the role of the Government would be to gazette it.

By its own motion, and after giving proper notice, the council should have the authority to put these provisions into effect as, in my view, should all corporations and district councils in South Australia. If the people who live in those areas are unhappy, they would then have power at the ballot box in relation to how it should be administered. Otherwise, there will be this ongoing, lengthy and unnecessary exercise that has not been very fruitful. I believe that these councils should be given that authority as soon as possible, because responsible local people would make the right decisions, reflecting the views of their community, and that is what democracy is all about. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr HERON secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Holloway:

That this House supports the call of the South Australian Council on the Ageing for a review by the Commonwealth Department of Social Security of the basket of goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index as the basis for indexing pensions.

(Continued from 20 February. Page 2988.)

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): This proposition, put by the member for Mitchell, asks us to support the call of the South Australian Council on the Ageing for a review by the Commonwealth Department of Social Security of the basket of goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index as the basis for indexing pensions. The honourable member's contribution to this important debate, which he made last Thursday, provides us with some insight into the reason for his moving the motion. However, he did not provide us with an exhaustive list of the commodities involved within the eight groups which form the basket of goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index. For that reason, I seek your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the House to have inserted in *Hansard* the most recent list available to me of the CPI expenditure classes and the weights, with the eight capital cities combined. This comes from the December quarter of 1986. It is to be found in a publication entitled 'The Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods', 1987 edition, eleventh series.

The SPEAKER: Is it purely statistical?

Mr LEWIS: It is.

Leave granted.

APPENDIX I
LIST OF CPI EXPENDITURE CLASSES AND WEIGHTS
EIGHT CAPITAL CITIES COMBINED: DECEMBER QUARTER 1986

Group, sub-group, expenditure class	Percentage contribution to All Groups CPI December quarter 1986			Items priced
	Group total	Sub-group total	Expenditure class	
Food	19.013			
<i>Dairy products</i>		1.536		
Milk and cream			0.919	Fresh and flavoured milk; cream
Cheese			0.382	Processed; natural
Butter			0.098	First quality
Other dairy products			0.137	Yoghurt; powdered milk
<i>Cereal products</i>		1.978		
Bread			0.763	Various sizes and types
Cakes and biscuits			0.878	Cakes; biscuits; frozen fruit pies
Breakfast cereals			0.207	Corn and wheat based
Other cereal products			0.130	Flour; rice; pasta
<i>Meat and seafoods</i>		3.495		
Beef and veal			0.960	Steak; roast; mince
Lamb and mutton			0.461	Chops; leg
Pork			0.180	Chops; leg
Poultry			0.390	Fresh and frozen chicken
Bacon and ham			0.364	Middle rashers; ham
Processed meat			0.681	Canned; cooked; salami; sausages
Fish			0.459	Fresh; canned; frozen
<i>Fresh fruit and vegetables</i>		1.921		
Fresh fruit			0.862	Oranges; apples; bananas; pears; pine-apples; peaches; plums; grapes; strawberries; grapefruit; mandarins; watermelons
Fresh potatoes			0.245	Washed and unwashed; loose and pre-packed
Fresh vegetables			0.814	Beans; carrots; cabbages; lettuces; tomatoes; pumpkin; onions; cauliflower; mushrooms; celery
<i>Processed fruit and vegetables</i>		0.852		
Processed fruit			0.162	Canned; dried
Fruit juice			0.421	Fresh; tetra pack
Processed vegetables			0.269	Frozen; canned
<i>Soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery</i>		2.829		
Soft drinks and cordials			0.936	Carbonated—bottles and cans; bottled liquid concentrates; mineral water
Ice cream and ice confectionery			0.403	Various size packs; milk and water-based confectionery
Confectionery			1.490	Chocolate; sugar and savoury confectionery; nuts
<i>Meals out and take away foods</i>		4.671		
Meals out			2.261	Restaurant; cafeteria
Take away foods			2.410	Cooked chicken; pizzas; hamburgers; meat pies; sandwiches
<i>Other food</i>		1.731		
Eggs			0.193	Dozen packs, various sizes
Sugar			0.066	White, granulated
Jams, honey and sandwich spreads			0.133	Jam; honey; peanut butter
Tea, coffee and food drinks			0.405	Tea—packets and bags; instant coffee; chocolate-based drinks
Food additives, sauces and spices			0.256	Sauces; spices
Margarine			0.144	Polyunsaturated and other
Cooking oils and fats			0.096	Cooking oil
Other food			0.438	Soups; baked beans; canned baby food; frozen meat pies; frozen pizzas
Clothing	6.898			
<i>Men's and boys' clothing</i>		1.952		
Men's outer clothing			0.778	Suits; trousers; jeans; overalls; shorts
Men's knitwear			0.161	Jumpers; cardigans; pullovers
Men's shirts			0.396	Business; casual
Men's underwear, nightwear and socks			0.264	Briefs; singlets; pyjamas; socks
Boys' clothing			0.353	Jeans; shorts; shirts; underwear; pyjamas; knitwear
<i>Women's and girls' clothing</i>		3 102		
Women's outer clothing			2.073	Frocks; skirts; blouses; jeans; slacks; coats
Women's knitwear			0.230	Jackets; cardigans; jumpers
Women's underwear, nightwear and hosiery			0.373	Foundation garments; briefs; night-dresses; pyjamas; pantyhose

Group, sub-group, expenditure class	Percentage contribution to All Groups CPI December quarter 1986			Items priced
	Group total	Sub-group total	Expenditure class	
Girls' clothing			0.426	Jeans; frocks; skirts; blouses; underwear; nightwear; knitwear
<i>Fabrics and knitting wool</i>		0.499	0.499	Fabrics; knitting wool; sewing thread
<i>Footwear</i>		1.107		
Men's footwear			0.334	Shoes; boots; slippers; joggers; thongs
Women's footwear			0.543	Dress and casual shoes; slippers; thongs
Children's footwear			0.230	School shoes; casual shoes; boots; thongs
<i>Dry cleaning and shoe repairs</i>		0.238	0.238	Dry cleaning; shoe repairs
Housing	14.062			
<i>Rents</i>		4.450		
Privately-owned dwelling rents			4.058	Houses; flats
Government-owned dwell- ing rents			0.392	Houses; flats
<i>Home ownership</i>		9.612		
Mortgage interest charges ..			5.961	Interest rates charged on first and second mortgages
Local government rates and charges			1.796	Council rates and charges; water and sew- erage rates and charges
House repairs and maintenance			1.455	Repair materials; paints; tradesmen's labour charges
House insurance			0.400	Comprehensive insurance of dwellings
Household equipment and operation	18.429			
<i>Fuel and light</i>		2.442		
Electricity			1.820	Domestic tariffs
Gas			0.534	Mains; bottled
Other fuel			0.088	Heating oil; kerosene
<i>Furniture and floor coverings</i>		4.115		
Furniture			3.096	Kitchen; bedroom; dining; lounge room
Floor coverings			1.019	Carpets; hard floor coverings
<i>Appliances</i>		1.535	1.535	Refrigerators; freezers; washing machines; dryers; stoves; small appliances; dish- washers; microwave ovens; vacuum cleaners; air-conditioners
<i>Household textiles</i>		0.690		
Bedding			0.287	Blankets; bedspreads; sheets; pillowcases; continental quilts
Towels, linen and curtains ..			0.403	Towels; tea towels; table linen; curtains
<i>Household utensils and tools</i>		1.748		
Tableware, glassware and cutlery			0.411	Dinner services; glassware; cutlery
Kitchen and cooking utensils			0.381	Saucepans; frypans; ovenware; kettles; plastic utensils
Cleaning utensils			0.083	Brooms; mops; garbage bins; dustpans
Tools			0.873	Lawnmowers; garden and hand tools; electric drills; paint brushes
<i>Household supplies and services</i>		3.918		
Household cleaning agents ..			0.673	Detergents; polishes; cleaning liquids
Household paper products ..			0.350	Toilet paper; facial tissues
Other household non- durables			0.895	Garden supplies; insecticides; matches; batteries; air fresheners; wrapping film
Stationery			0.484	Ballpoints; pencils; writing pads; exercise books; envelopes
Watches and clocks			0.144	Men's and women's watches; household clocks
Veterinary services			0.122	Veterinarians' fees for treatment of household pets
Pet foods			0.467	Canned; dried
Travel goods			0.326	Suitcases; handbags; wallets; umbrellas
House contents insurance ..			0.232	Comprehensive insurance cover for household contents
Repairs to appliances			0.225	Washing machine service charges
<i>Postal and telephone services</i>		1.478		
Postal services			0.170	Letters (domestic and overseas); parcels
Telephone services			1.308	Local, STD and overseas calls; telephone rental
<i>Consumer credit charges</i>		2.503	2.503	Interest rates charged on personal loans; credit cards
<i>Transportation</i>	17.015			
<i>Private motoring</i>		16.069		
Motor Vehicles			5.598	New cars; new motor cycles
Automotive fuel			4.791	Petrol; leaded and unleaded
Vehicle insurance			1.957	Comprehensive vehicles; third party compulsory; third party property

Group, sub-group, expenditure class	Percentage contribution to All Groups CPI December quarter 1986			Items priced
	Group total	Sub-group total	Expenditure class	
Motoring charges			0.836	Registration; driver's licence; parking fees; organisation membership
Tyres and tubes			0.234	Passenger car radial tyres; retreads.
Vehicle servicing, repairs and parts			2.653	Batteries; oil; replacement parts; smash repair parts; mechanics' labour charges; smash repair labour charges; insurance excess.
<i>Urban transport fares</i>		0.956	0.956	Bus; train; tram; ferry; taxi.
Tobacco and Alcohol	8.173			
<i>Alcoholic drinks</i>		5.955		
Beer			3.604	Full strength and low alcohol draught; bottles; cans
Wine			1.223	Bottles; casks; restaurant wine
Spirits			1.128	Bottles; bar sales
<i>Cigarettes and tobacco</i>		2.218	2.218	Cigarettes (cartons and single packs); pipe and cigarette tobacco.
Health and Personal Care	5.596			
<i>Health services</i>		2.992		
Hospital and medical services			2.087	Health insurance contributions; doctors' fees (net of Medicare and fund benefits)
Optical services			0.187	Consultations; prescription glasses.
Dental services			0.718	Dentists' fees.
<i>Personal care products</i>		1.943		
Pharmaceuticals			0.778	Prescription medicines; proprietary medicines; dressings; vitamins; antiseptics.
Toiletries and personal products			1.165	Cosmetics; toilet soap; tooth-paste; shampoos; razor blades; hair dryers.
<i>Hairdressing services</i>		0.661	0.661	Mcn's; women's; boys'.
Recreation and Education	10.804			
<i>Books, newspapers and magazines</i>		1.229	1.229	Books; magazines; morning, evening and weekend newspaper.
<i>Recreational goods</i>		2.877		
Video and sound equipment			1.105	Colour TV; video recorders; radios; cassette recorders; compact disc players; sound equipment.
Records, cassettes and tapes			0.301	Records; pre-recorded cassettes; blank audio and video cassettes
Sports and photographic equipment and toys			1.471	Sports equipment; cameras; toys; games; bicycles.
<i>Holiday travel and accommodation</i>		3.135		
Holiday travel and accommodation in Australia			1.553	Air, bus and rail fares, hotel, motel and caravan park charges; package tours.
Holiday travel, and accommodation overseas			1.582	Airfares; hotel charges; package tours.
<i>Recreational services</i>		2.305		
Photographic services			0.299	Film processing and printing.
Repairs to recreational goods			0.097	TV and video recorder repair charges.
Entertainment			1.909	Admission charges—cinema, theatre, sporting (participation and non-participation), non-sporting; TV and video recorder hire charges; hire of video tapes.
<i>Education and child care</i>		1.258		
Education fees			0.891	Private (primary and secondary) and government (primary and secondary) schools.
Childcare fees			0.367	Pre-schools; child care centres.
Total All Groups	100.000	100.000	100.000	

Mr LEWIS: The problem I have then with the proposition put by the honourable member is, quite simply, that in his argument he has overlooked the necessity, in my judgment, for us to take into account the quantities of those goods that may be obtained from imported sources. Whilst his motion does not exclude that as an explicit provision in that he says he wants a review of the Commonwealth

Department of Social Security basket of goods and services, in the course of his argument he did not mention it. That distresses me, because I believe it is necessary for us to exclude from our consideration of this concept all goods that are imported, where equivalent goods could be procured from Australian sources.

It is not legitimate, in my opinion, for us to continue to include more expensive imports just because they are status names that people buy; things such as shortbread biscuits. I am not being ridiculous and talking about Mercedes cars or anything else; I am talking about items that could quite easily be found elsewhere in the marketplace, produced by Australian producers, as opposed to those brought in from outside Australia. If we continue to gee up the amount of money we allocate to ourselves as a nation to spend (which we do not produce but which we borrow from overseas), we will further exacerbate the national problem confronting us at the present time. The single most important national problem is our balance of payments.

It is ridiculous, for instance, for us to contemplate putting into the basket of commodities Canadian pork or any other pig meat we bring in from other countries when, in the form in which it is imported, that commodity is more expensive than the Australian alternative. It is no different nutritionally, although there is some danger that it could have within it a greater risk of disease, since the phytosanitary certificates accompanying it do not give a clear-cut commitment from the Canadian Government that the product does not contain some of the diseases we are trying to keep out of this country. That is another example of a very practical thing. I do not think that we ought to be including fancy jams from Europe in this basket of commodities, because we make plenty of jams both in this State and elsewhere in the Commonwealth.

Mr Quirke: What about pickles?

Mr LEWIS: The same applies, I would tell the member for Playford. All things that are procurable in Australia should be included.

Mr Ferguson: What about caviar?

Mr LEWIS: If the member for Henley Beach wants to press the debate some distance farther down the track, that brings me to my other concern, which is that within meat and seafoods, for instance, there are some commodities that quite clearly are not essential for the sustenance of life and not essential in the variety needed in a balanced diet. With regard to caviar, which is not explicitly excluded, the department cannot tell me whether it has been included. The item mentioned by the member for Henley Beach, caviar, could be included—unnecessarily, in my opinion. That comes under the meat and seafoods subgroup.

The last item is fish, expenditure class 0.459, fresh, canned and frozen. That subgroup contains, and ought not to contain, a number of imported items, many, if not most, of which are unnecessarily expensive over and above the local product. Of course, some are cheaper. I can accept the legitimacy of that argument, but I cannot accept the legitimacy of any argument which allows the inclusion of imported goods which cost more, such as mineral water from France, when the same product, available locally, is much less expensive.

I believe that some items included in that basket of commodities need not be there. They are not essential for the sustenance of life or, for that matter, the pleasure that can be derived from living when sustenance in itself is not the only criterion. If we want to please ourselves as a nation, it is about time that we structured our economy, rates of pay and the like, in such a fashion as will enable us to provide ourselves with those little pleasures and not ruin the future of our children by destroying the viability of our balance of payments.

I speak on this matter on this occasion to ensure that, whereas the Opposition is inclined to support the argument that has been put forward, it is nonetheless unwilling to allow the proposition to go forward unqualified in the fash-

ion in which I have explained we believe it needs to be qualified. Bearing in mind that we should exclude those classes of imports and also those items upon which funds could be spent, but which are not necessary for people in receipt of welfare benefits, we support the view that a review is absolutely necessary at this time.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I do not normally praise the member for Murray-Mallee, but on this occasion I must commend him because it appears from his speech, although it was a little difficult to tell, that he is at least supporting the view that there should be a review of the basket of goods that is used for social security purposes. At least we are on the same side, although I cannot agree with the content of his speech because I cannot see why the rest of the community should impose on social security beneficiaries a regime that they are not prepared to impose upon themselves. I would call it the poor house mentality. We are going back to the turn of the last century when we were prepared to feed people in unfortunate circumstances on bread and water.

Mr Quirke: The workhouse.

Mr FERGUSON: And put them in the workhouse. We seem to be getting from the member for Murray-Mallee a proposition that there ought to be a workhouse mentality in restricting people. I suggest it would be the height of hypocrisy for us, as parliamentarians (after all, we receive a reasonable wage from the State), to tell pensioners what and how they should eat. I do not think anyone—

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr FERGUSON: I am sure that that man is ill—he keeps jumping in all the time. I do not see how we as parliamentarians can impose a regime on social security beneficiaries concerning what they should eat. Some of our best citizens receive social security benefits. Some of them are in this unfortunate circumstance through no fault of their own, and I do not see why we should be telling them what sort of diet they should be eating.

To suggest that these people would go into the supermarkets and delicatessens of our country and buy high priced imported mineral water is, I suggest, going beyond the pale. They are not rich people: they live to the fullest capacity on the payments that our society is prepared to give them. To suggest that they go to supermarkets and buy imported goods, particularly expensive things like imported mineral water, is ridiculous.

In support of the situation before us I have to be fair and say that the Federal Minister for Social Security, Dr Neal Blewett, has released a departmental review of the indexation of social security benefits. It indicates that age pensioners are about \$70 a year better off under the current consumer price index system than the one based on a special aged pension index. I have to acknowledge that our Federal Labor Government has so increased social security payments that in real terms pensioners and other people on social security benefits receive more money than they have received since 1949.

We have to go back to 1949 to find a time in Australia's history when pensioners received better support. The real purchasing power of what the Federal Government has been able to provide for our pensioners has increased year by year since we had a Federal Labor Government. Pensioners are better off and are receiving more money in real terms than they ever did under Sir Robert Menzies or any of the other conservative Prime Ministers that Australia has had. I do not have to acknowledge that, because that fact is acknowledged in the *SACOTA News* of December 1991 (page 5).

SACOTA acknowledges that in real terms pensioners are better off now than they have ever been in Australia's history, with the one exception of 1949. Notwithstanding that, I support the proposition in front of us that there ought to be a review of the basket of goods on which social security benefits are based. I do that because, when pensioners go to the supermarket, all they are concerned about is the price of goods in that supermarket. They are not necessarily worried about other factors in relation to the index, such as rents and the price of beer, but what they keep telling me, and I imagine every other member of Parliament, is that prices in supermarkets are going up. Pensioners have told me that prices are rising in supermarkets. It does not matter what the CPI says. It may well say that, overall, prices are going down. I believe that there was no increase in pension payments in the last quarter because the CPI was reduced. Pensioners are worried about the actual prices in supermarkets. *SACOTA News* states—and I totally agree:

In fact, SACOTA believes the CPI does not accurately reflect most older people's costs of living and certainly not pensioners. Most, for example, have much lower housing costs than younger people but spend a higher percentage of their income on food and household items.

That is evident. Like any other local member, I have visited senior citizens clubs and talked to their members—I am sure that most members, at least those on my side of the House, do that—and those senior citizens are complaining about rising costs in the supermarket.

Mr Oswald interjecting:

Mr FERGUSON: I cannot concede that. I am sure that the honourable member must have heard the earlier part of my speech when I conceded that the Federal Government has put these people in a better position than they have ever been in before, but we believe that it should be even better. SACOTA goes on to say:

If our belief is correct, it means that right now your overall costs are going up faster than the 'average' person's. However, it also means that a couple of years ago, when the CPI was escalating, your costs were probably rising more slowly than the average.

That sums up the situation. SACOTA believes that perhaps pensioners were better off in the past, but costs for an older person are increasing, and they are bound by a CPI average figure that is of no help to them.

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

Mr OSWALD secured the adjournment of the debate.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MEMBER'S COMMENTS

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr LEWIS: During the course of his contribution the member for Henley Beach said that he thought I was ill. The honourable member has made such comments before, so I place on the record in this Chamber that I am not ill. Whilst I might suffer physical discomfort from injuries of one form or another sustained throughout my life, I am suffering no illness whatever. If the member for Henley Beach and the member for Napier, who sniggers behind his books, will kindly desist from making comments of that kind, I will not harass them.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT CURFEW

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Matthew:

That this House calls on the Government to abandon its short sighted decision to cease operating public transport at 10 p.m. on Sunday to Thursday each week without providing for an alternative means by which South Australians can gain access to affordable transport.

(Continued from 20 February. Page 2990.)

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier): I move:
That the debate be further adjourned.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (23)—Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, Atkinson, Bannon, Blevins, Crafter, De Laine, M.J. Evans, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings (teller), Heron, Holloway and Hoppood, Mrs Hutchison, Mr Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs McKee, Mayes, Quirke, Rann and Trainer.

Noes (22)—Messrs Allison, Armitage, P.B. Arnold, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, Blacker and Brindal, Ms Cashmore, Messrs Chapman, Eastick, S.G. Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn and Ingerson, Mrs Kotz, Messrs Lewis, Matthew (teller), Meier, Oswald, Such, Venning and Wotton.

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

Motion thus carried.

ECONOMY

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Venning:

That because of the parlous state of the nation's economy, this House demands that the following urgent measures be implemented by the Federal Government immediately—

- (a) abolition of payroll tax;
- (b) abolition of the 17.5 per cent annual leave loading;
- (c) abolition of penalty rates; and
- (d) return to a 40 hour, 5 day week.

(Continued from 20 February. Page 2998.)

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The House will recall that when I last spoke on this motion I concluded by saying that it smacked of the kind of fascism that existed in the 1930s, and those of us who were students of history will recall that fascism became very popular because there were politicians around the world at that time who were prepared to ally themselves with big business and place all the ills of society on the backs of workers. I also said last week that I was rather surprised and saddened that the motion was moved by the member for Custance, who usually shows a fair amount of compassion for his fellow man. So, I can only assume that he is acting on instructions from his Party in moving this motion. Not once in the speech made by the member for Custance, which was an anti-union tirade, did he talk about the wealthy businessmen, the big corporations or those people who have had wealth all their lives, who mismanage their businesses and who, through their own fault, then stand up and cry foul and blame the Government and the workers. Not once did the member for Custance talk about that.

It is fair to say that the member for Custance belongs to that elite band of members in this House who were born with a silver spoon in their mouth—the squattocracy. He has never known poverty, hardship or hunger. I am not jealous of the member for Custance; I am not complaining that, because the member for Custance has had all this wealth all his life, he does not understand what it is all about, but I am just trying to educate him. For some people in our society life will always be a bed of roses. Regardless of how—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Custance moved this motion and spoke at some length on it, and he will have the chance to respond once again at the end of the debate. Interjections are out of order and will not be allowed.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Thank you for your protection, Sir.

Mr S.J. BAKER: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I do not believe it does justice to this House for the honourable member to talk about Nazism in the context of this debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! What is the point of order?

Mr S.J. BAKER: It is not relevant to the debate.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The debates in this House by nature are very wide ranging. I am sure that the member speaking in this debate fully realises his responsibility to link his remarks to the motion we are debating, and I will listen very closely to make sure that he does.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: One of the unfortunate parts of the Parliamentary democracy in which we live is that some people have wealth and will always have it, and others represent those who have lived in poverty for most of their lives. It is a fact of life that it is the members on this side of the House who always champion the cause of the worker and the disadvantaged. I have no problem with that; it is a fact of life and, long after you, Mr Speaker, and I have gone, that will always be the same.

Again, it disappoints me that the only answer that the member for Custance could give to cure the ills of this world, this State and the economy is to take away all the hard-earned rights of the workers. If the member for Custance would put forward a balanced argument about, say, how we could eliminate payroll tax and replace it with an alternative, that would be a valid argument for this House to consider. But he has not done so; he mentions the abolition of payroll tax, the abolition of the 17.5 per cent annual leave loading, the abolition of penalty rates, the return to a 40-hour five-day week, and that is it. It is a wonder that he did not ask children to go down the mines; it is a wonder that he is not asking us to go back into the forced labour camps, because that is the theme; that is his logic.

I will try now to bring this debate back to a rational one in which we can talk about economics. I therefore move the following amendment:

To delete all words after 'that' and insert in lieu thereof 'this House calls on the Federal Government to negotiate with the States on options to replace payroll tax with a more appropriate source of revenue'.

In moving that amendment, I recognise that all State Governments have come to the conclusion that payroll tax, whilst it seemed a good idea at the time, needs to be replaced with something else. No-one would disagree with that. If the member for Custance had moved a motion on those lines, he would have been surprised at the support that he received from this side of the House, because he would then be entering into an economic argument, not a kick-the-workers tirade that usually comes from members opposite.

Mr Lewis: You kick the employers.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I never kick the employers; I kick the wealthy, because they follow the anti-union line that is usually pursued by the members for Custance and Bragg. If we look at an appropriate way of replacing payroll tax, or what the States receive therefrom, with another source of revenue, in conjunction with the Federal Government, the trade union movement and the Employers' Federation, we might get somewhere. With all due respect—and I do class the member for Custance as my friend, he is the only wealthy friend I have—we might find that the

time being spent on this debate could be used for the benefit of the community.

The member for Custance does not realise—and this is in a way a lecture for him—that people read *Hansard* and the words that are uttered in this House. Be it on the shoulders of the member for Custance if people, when they read the speech he made last week on this motion, come to the conclusion that he is a member of the squattocracy and one of those who was born with an amazing amount of wealth. I am not saying that the honourable member has not tried to increase that by diligence: I do not take that away from him.

The member for Custance cannot on the one hand project himself in this House as a compassionate man and, on the other hand, when he has a rush of blood to his head, start to pick up the usual line of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and kick the workers to death. I urge all members to support the amendment and at least get it down to something reasonable that we can send to the Federal Government.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Sir, the amendment is silent on three facets of the original motion moved by the member for Custance. I therefore ask whether the amendment does not negate the motion and therefore should be disallowed by this House.

The SPEAKER: I do not agree with the point of order.

Mr OSWALD secured the adjournment of the debate.

EDUCATION REVIEW UNIT

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr De Laine:

That this House acknowledges the work of the Education Review Unit since its establishment in 1989, notes that it has conducted reviews of 231 schools, three operational and support units and five program and policy areas and calls on the Minister of Education to ensure that final ERU reports are made available to the Parliamentary Library.

(Continued from 20 February. Page 3002.)

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): I intend to move an amendment to this proposition. As it stands, the motion is commendable, but does not go far enough. Quite clearly, the motion ought to not only call on the Minister of Education to ensure that a final Education Review Unit report be placed in the Parliamentary Library in each instance where it has been conducted but, more particularly, it ought to require the Minister and the department itself to observe the substance contained in that Education Review Unit report. There is an instance in my electorate in which the Education Review Unit looked at an area school—the Swan Reach Area School—and found that it contained substantial examples of how a school should be established in its relationship with the community in which it was located, in its relationship with its students and in the relationship between students, staff and parents.

It recommends that changes ought to be made in the way in which the department's administrative processes recognise those desirable aspects of the relationship to which I have just referred because, at present, the department's administrative procedures and the Government's policies in some part do not observe, and therefore ignore, what the Education Review Unit's findings were in this instance, both in the particular case at Swan Reach and in the general case as it relates to the establishment and function of area schools in the education system.

If we are to do something other than be self-serving, we need to ensure when we put a proposition before the House

(and I am not criticising the member for Price) that it goes some distance towards achieving a benefit for the community out there and for the administration of policy by the Government and, in particular, the department, whatever that department may be and whomever the Minister may be in the Government to which the motion addresses itself. If, of course, the departmental administrative procedures had been acted upon in the fashion in which the Education Review Unit recommended, if indeed those recommendations from the ERU had not been ignored, the mess created at Swan Reach this year in the way in which staff have been both moved out of the school and others moved in, would not have arisen.

Last year that school had what was considered to be the ideal combination of teachers providing the most desired spectrum of subjects. A teacher—and I will not embarrass him by naming him—who was due for promotion to a permanent position in the role he was performing in the school could have been appointed to Swan Reach, because the position in which he was performing at Swan Reach, whilst it had been temporary, was made permanent last year.

Swan Reach is no more blessed with amenities than any other area school in the Western area. However, because the department has this rigid approach to its allocation of staff from its central core—that is where the decisions come from—it took this teacher and outplaced him from the Swan Reach Area School to Orroroo. The people at Orroroo are no worse off than the people at Swan Reach, and the children at the Orroroo Area School are no more and no less deserving than the children at the Swan Reach Area School. For the department's rigid approach to staffing allocation to have, in this instance, outplaced that teacher is, to my mind, outrageous because it, first, puts the taxpayer to expense to shift that teacher from Swan Reach to Orroroo—it wastes money and resources—and, secondly, disrupts what was established in the school by replacing that teacher with a teacher who did not have the same academic qualifications to teach those subjects, so different subjects had to be taught.

All this happened last year after the children had made their selection of subjects from the curriculum options available, in the belief that the Swan Reach Area School was deserving and had need of the kind of skills that that teacher had. This was acknowledged in the ERU report, which also said in effect, 'Let's not disrupt things where they are properly established, if that can be avoided.' Nonetheless, we found that the Education Department and the Minister ignored the pleas that I made after the decision had been taken but not consummated, and ignored the pleas of the school council, the people in the wider community and the ERU report.

That is why I say that this motion needs to be amended—to compel the department to take account of the excellent work done by the ERU and not have this kind of disruption where those children, having enrolled at Swan Reach Area School, had to decide whether they wanted to continue in their senior secondary studies and rearrange the subjects, part of which they had started when they took up options in year 11. That was truncated; they could not go on with it. They had to decide whether to stay in that school or whether to relocate to Murray Bridge—at further taxpayers' expense, because almost all of them are on income support of one kind or another, given the effect of other Government policies on their families' disposable income—and continue with the studies that they had commenced the previous year.

Shifting that teacher did not achieve a damn thing; even though that teacher, of the teachers on contract, was judged to be the most worthy in that subject area to be given a permanent appointment, even though he was judged to be so capable as to go to the head of the list and be appointed, upon being appointed he had to be allocated to a job in the Western area.

Decisions like that are ridiculous and stupid; they are rigid, inflexible and insensitive and, to my mind, belong in history. Tragically, they should never have come into existence in the first place. We should require the department and the Minister to take some account of that good work. I commend the honourable member for his proposition and move:

After the words 'the Minister of Education' insert the words 'recognise its findings, respect its recommendations and insists that his department implement such changes of policy as proposed in its reports or otherwise state reasons why he and the department rejects them and further, calls on the Minister to'.

Those words have been added to ensure that it makes more sense and has more bite.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER secured the adjournment of the debate.

THIRD ARTERIAL ROAD

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Matthew:

That this House calls on the Government as a matter of priority to commence construction of phase 2 of the third arterial road in order to alleviate traffic problems on Brighton and South Roads and condemn the Government for attempting to spread the road building project over an unacceptable length of time.

(Continued from 20 February. Page 3003.)

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): I had almost completed my remarks on this motion last Thursday. I had rejected the motion of the member for Bright. The timetable given for the third arterial road project is entirely appropriate, given the expected traffic volumes from the southern suburbs. Last week I pointed out that the problem area for southern bound traffic is the region between Darlington and the junction of South Road and Ayliffes Road—that is, the section of South Road between the Mitsubishi factory and the foot of Tapleys Hill. It is that section of South Road which is proposed to be updated under phase one of the third arterial project. That is where the funds should go in the initial stage, because that is where the problems are.

However, again I point out to the House that the first phase of this project will take into consideration the engineering requirements of the second phase, which is to extend the third arterial south beyond Darlington towards Reynella and the southern suburbs beyond that point. It is inevitable that the second phase of this project would flow on from the first phase. I believe that this motion must be rejected because it would be quite stupid to consider the second phase before the first phase, which is where all the problems occur in terms of traffic flow from the southern suburbs. I ask members to reject the motion.

Mr S.G. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Matthew:

That this House conveys its disappointment to the Commonwealth Government over the failure of that Government to locate at least one of the proposed new Australian Taxation Office

buildings in the vicinity of Noarlunga Centre or Westfield Marion Shopping Centre in preference to central Adelaide.

(Continued from 14 November, Page 1937.)

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I move:

Delete all words after 'buildings' and insert in lieu thereof the following words:

'outside the Adelaide Central Business District on land appropriately zoned'.

I move this amendment, because it seems to me that every member can come into this House and argue that any project currently being undertaken by either the Federal or State Government should be in, or close to, and provide services to their electorate. Indeed, if it would not have fallen foul of your ruling on another matter last week, Mr Speaker, I might well have moved an amendment that it should have been much more closely aligned to my electorate. However, Sir, I took great note of the careful rulings you made last week, and I am sorry that some members sought to argue churlishly about those rulings.

I want you to know that I took your remarks very much to heart and have moved a general amendment wherein it is my view that this particular enterprise—namely, the second taxation office—could well be located on the old SAM-COR paddocks in the electorate of Playford. It is possible that the council there would happily ensure that the zoning was adequately provided for, and that the necessary SDP process could be gone through. We may even be able to fast track the process because, of course, the argument is that such a facility there would provide employment. It could well be argued (and I have heard some members on this side say this) that the facility should be located farther to the north. Indeed, I am sure that many members would argue that, in the Port Adelaide region, such a facility would be an appropriate response to the decentralisation of employment that should take place at both State and Federal levels.

I would argue that, in my electorate, there are vast empty tracts of land awaiting suitable development, and we are in need of employment, so we would welcome the project, provided the residents and the council were satisfied with the location and aesthetics of the enterprise. I do not know whether they would necessarily be keen on having a taxation building as such, because that raises other connotations, but I am sure that I have as many law-abiding tax citizens in my constituency as have most members, certainly those on this side of the House. As a consequence, we could probably quite happily accommodate the relocation out of the CBD of the second taxation building to a more suitable venue.

A call was made in this House for one of the State Government facilities to be located in Angaston. I seem to remember the suggestion made here last week that a train line could be provided to the Department of Agriculture, were it to be located at Angaston, and that it would be a good place for it to go—shifted out of the black tower in Grenfell Street, or even relocating the black tower to Angaston. Perhaps that matter ought to be argued here this morning. One member was concerned about that, and here is an enterprise that could well be appropriately placed at Angaston. One thing that is quite clear is that there are 47 members in this place, and I am sure that any building would be welcomed in any of the 47 districts, provided the land could be suitably acquired and zoned accordingly.

As a consequence, I have moved this amendment, because the principle is that we should not centralise in the central business district of Adelaide all employment and employment opportunities. I think it is puerile to come in here and argue that an enterprise should be located specifically in one area or another, which will advantage that particular

member. I believe that the amendment cleans up the motion and makes it quite specific that we should encourage Government employment outside the Adelaide central business district.

I look forward to other speakers—and I am sure there will be others on this side of the House—who will also have some constructive suggestions as to where this enterprise could go. It may well be that some of the members opposite who are constantly crying for this sort of development in their electorates in the outer metropolitan area and well into the country will participate in this debate. I look forward to hearing an argument for Angaston, a town that I believe in many respects has been sadly passed by.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): Let me help the member for Playford understand that the amendment he has moved to make the motion more general, whilst being laudable in most instances, shows that he did not listen to what the member for Bright had to say when moving the proposition.

Mr Quirke: I always listen to the member for Bright.

Mr LEWIS: Then it would not have been lost on the honourable member that the vast majority of people with jobs in the Australian Taxation Office come from that immediate vicinity, and it would not—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, no.

Mr LEWIS: They do, indeed. The member for Napier is mistaken: he did not listen to the demographic information provided to this Chamber by the member for Bright in moving the proposition. The very large number of people employed by the tax office who happen to live in the immediate vicinity of the location suggested by the member for Bright ensures that not only do we decentralise and advocate decentralising out of the central business district for the benefits of lower costs of land, construction and so on but also, and more importantly, we save on the mean journey length of every employee to and from work and, in the process, we save on the high cost of energy and greenhouse gas emissions that result from this movement to and from work.

Equally importantly, we alleviate the congestion on the arterial roads from those south-western suburbs into the central business district or anywhere else in the metropolitan area. That is at least as important as any other factor in deciding that not only should the building be taken out of the central business district but that it ought to be located where the people who will work in it live. They will, therefore, not need to travel across the western suburbs or to the central business district and, through it, to some other place in the north-eastern suburbs to get from home to work. It seems to me that logic dictates that it is quite appropriate in the motion to recommend that the building be placed in that locality. That is why the Opposition cannot support the amendment.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): In contrast to the member for Murray-Mallee, I would like to support the amendment moved by the member for Playford—and a most worthy amendment it is, too. It lays stress upon something that is very important in modern society, that is, the concept of decentralisation. I must contradict what the member for Murray-Mallee just said regarding the idea that, because employees of the Australian Taxation Office are resident in a particular suburb, that should be the reason why the Australian Taxation Office ought to be located there.

I understand that a survey conducted by the Australian Taxation Office of its employees indicated that it was their overwhelming preference, regardless of their place of resi-

dence, that the new office should be located in the central business district. I assume that that is because of the transport efficiencies that would result from the fact that public transport tends to operate with the central business district as the hub, with transport spokes radiating out from it. Regardless of that argument, there is the one of decentralisation. I believe that the proposition I should like to put before the House as part of my contribution ties in with what the member for Playford said and, at the same time, acknowledges that there are some advantages in being close to the central business district, for transport reasons and because of the preference of Australian Taxation Office employees.

Furthermore, because there is a surplus of office space in Adelaide, not only in the central business district but in its immediate environs, it might be helpful if the Australian Taxation Office could support those local entrepreneurs and building owners who have constructed or taken over buildings in recent years, many of which are lying empty. I have in mind a particularly well placed empty building that is located on the edge of my present electorate, Walsh, and, furthermore, in my proposed electorate, Hanson, that I hope to represent following the next election. That building is located at No. 1 Anzac Highway. I am sure that the person who is the director of the company that owns it will excuse the pun if I say that he would be very 'kean' to have an occupant for that building.

I should like to quote from a *West Side* article of 20 November last, with a photograph of this glass structure, which obviously represents an edifice complex on the part of the architect. The article is headed, 'Vacant \$27 million office block on the market'. It reads:

No. 1 Anzac Highway—a \$27 million office building—is empty and for sale 18 months after it was completed.

As West Torrens Council gives further commercial development along Anzac Highway the go ahead in future city development plans, United Landholdings have put the multi-storey office development at No. 1 on the market.

United Landholdings agent Sallmanns' spokesman Peter Isaksen said that after no tenants had leased the building in the past 18 months the company needed to try a different tack.

He said Sallmanns had not signed up any leaseholders since it took over handling the building from Jones Lang Wootton in May.

He pointed to the advantage of that site having 250 car spaces provided, most of them under cover, and the fact that there were low council rates associated with that business. The article continues:

He said businesses should be lining up to rent floor space for \$125 per square metre at the well recognised building.

He pointed out that the building was in a prime position at the start of Anzac Highway and he also pointed out that it was well known after its 1990 Civic Trust award. I will not bother the House with the details of the type of Civic Trust award that it received. Nevertheless, it received a Civic Trust award in a particular category. That seems a highly suitable building for the Australian Taxation Office to consider. Accordingly, I support the amendment proposed by the member for Playford, with this site in my electorate in mind.

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

STATE FIRE SERVICES

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. T.H. Hemmings:

That this House endorses the current constructive moves to rationalise the communications and training facilities of the South

Australian Metropolitan Fire Service and the South Australian Country Fire Service.

(Continued from 28 November. Page 2496).

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I take up the debate on this issue recognising, having read the statements by the member for Napier, that an attempt was made to question the integrity of two or three Opposition members in respect of the Metropolitan Fire Service and Country Fire Service. A considerable amount of the time was spent by the member questioning the validity of the argument and of the questions put to Estimates Committees over the past two years.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I did mention that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Oh, yes. Also, my colleague the member for Alexandra came in for a bit of a backhander in respect of his attitude towards the Country Fire Service. That is all right, but it does not rest well with the other accolades that the member for Napier subsequently accorded the member for Alexandra. It shows that he runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds. Of course, we have known that for a long time.

I come back to the importance of this issue. Personally, I am not opposed to the proper integration of services for the cost benefit of training and of communication. I know that view has not been expressed by a number of my colleagues, but, as the shadow Minister of Emergency Services on an earlier occasion when this matter was first being mooted, I gave it my concurrence, because I could see that there was a distinct advantage at the interface, and a number of us, who are in the peri-urban area, recognise that the two services need to work together very closely. Rather than having a set of circumstances where one did not know quite what the other was doing, there was a distinct advantage in the two training together on some occasions so that there was a better integration of service. I still hold that view.

Also, as the shadow Minister of Emergency Services I was appreciative of the radio communication service set up between all of the services, including the police, St John and others when a high fire risk day occurred or when a disaster was declared early in an incident. All of that activity has taken place in a special room down at Metropolitan Fire Service headquarters for several years, and it has been a tremendous advantage in making sure the resources are available when they are needed at the time.

Communications in the 1980 Ash Wednesday fire and even in the 1983 Ash Wednesday fire were a problem. There was a lack of interchange between the various organisations. A breakdown in some of the equipment left various groups isolated one from the other and, therefore, the effectiveness of the effort where the services of both the metropolitan and country services were being deployed was in some critical circumstance because they could not communicate with one another, even from one hill to another. All of those matters need to be resolved. However, where I am critical of what is contained in the thrust of the member for Napier's motion is that over a long period the Government has been sitting on the report by Mr Alan Bruce, a former Metropolitan Fire Service chief. The report was prepared at taxpayer expense, made a number of decisions and directed a course of action that successive Ministers have disclaimed or have not been prepared to institute.

By not making the Bruce report available so that the full ramifications can be understood, the Government has made itself vulnerable to questions in the minds of members on this side as to what it will do or what it intends to do in the long term. A considerable advantage could have been obtained if the member for Napier had incorporated in his motion a call for the Government to make the Bruce report publicly available so that all of the organisations could have

a better understanding of the methodology used, the nature of the inquiry undertaken, the recommendations that were put forward and the reasoning behind each of the recommendations.

If that document was out in the open, there would be much less fear in the minds of the people directly associated with the CFS than exists now. The Government ought to allow everyone concerned to better understand the background. I give an example from before your time here, Mr Speaker, when the Hon. Geoff Virgo as Minister of Local Government in about 1973-74 laid on the table of the House a report of the Ward royal commission into council boundaries. It was laid on the table on the basis of, 'Here it is—thou shalt.' Later the Hon. Mr Virgo was to admit that the worst thing he ever did was to lay the report on the table with the 'Thou shalt follow these directions of the Ward royal commission' approach. It immediately caused the hacles of local government to rise, and it created a great deal of problems. It was not instituted.

It is interesting in hindsight to recognise that many of the amalgamations and variations that have taken place since have basically been along the lines of the Ward report, but they were initiated by the people themselves who recognised the value of statements made in that report. It may be that some members of our services would say the same thing about some elements, not necessarily all, of the Bruce report. That is why I concentrate on this aspect: the fear that exists amongst Country Fire Service members.

About six or seven months ago, I attended a major exercise conducted in the pine forests and the rural country in and around Kersbrook and Mount Crawford. About 50 Country Fire Service units attended from 1 a.m. until midday the following day. They integrated their services with the police, St John, the Army, the SES and other services that attended on both a paid and a voluntary basis to integrate their knowledge on particular activities. The members of the CFS with whom I spoke commented favourably on the assistance given to them on that occasion in relation to fighting petrol fires. The Army provided the equipment and assisted the CFS to gain that experience. The Army controlled that aspect of the training, and our firefighters gained an experience which they might confront on any day of the week but which many had never before experienced. St John's integrated with that group of people indicating how they could assist with burns cases and other aspects of this joint disaster activity.

Having mentioned St John's, I will have to say, as some of my colleagues have, that it has been the experience of St John's, where volunteers have been eased out of the favourable activities that they have performed for this State over a long time, that that is foremost in the minds of many CFS members and, indeed, many members on this side of the House.

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

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

'BUY A MATE A JOB' CAMPAIGN

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. T.H. Hemmings:

That this House supports the 'Buy a mate a job' campaign by the South Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. SA Great and Kickstart designed to encourage South Australians to support local jobs and industry by buying Australian made and locally produced items.

(Continued from 28 November. Page 2497.)

Mr McKEE (Gilles): I am more than happy to support this motion. Its theme is consistent with the view of members on this side of the House: people helping people. The world in which we live today is one of world trade, GATT talks, and the Cairns group, etc. World trade is a fact. There is a global reach mentality by free enterprise that ignores national boundaries. World capitalism considers the globe to be one huge market where national boundaries are not considered a barrier and where language and tradition will gradually be eroded.

That approach manifests itself in our State and our country facing direct and sometimes unfair competition between locally produced goods and those imported or dumped from overseas. Everyone is aware of the trouble our rural community is having in competing with, for example, the United States, given its subsidising policies. We must have not only a general and national campaign to buy Australian but also a grass roots campaign in South Australia extolling the virtues of buying Australian and locally produced items.

This motion should be supported by both sides of the House. Not only will it help the ordinary people in our society but also it will be positive for our local businesses and manufacturers. It is common knowledge to members on this side of the House that employers do not employ people out of the goodness of their heart: they employ people for a reason, and they get rid of them for a reason as well. This campaign, if it gets off the ground and is supported by the ordinary people, will assist the ordinary people—such as the 25 per cent of unemployed young people in my electorate—and also the business community. I am happy to support this motion, and I do not imagine there will be too much argument from the other side of the House.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): The intent of the motion is great, and I think SA Great does a good job. The concept of Kickstart has now hit the Federal scene; it appears in the headlines along with terms such as Fightback!, and we will hear a lot of them in the next 12 months.

It is difficult to encourage South Australians to support local jobs and to buy local products. I will give just one example. We have recently been considering a Bill relating to eggs. Members should go to shops around the city to see how many eggs are stamped 'Grown in South Australia' or 'Produced in South Australia'. A citizen buying a particular product cannot always be sure that that product was produced in the State. There are people who bring raw materials from overseas in particular but also from interstate to produce certain goods. They then label the goods 'Made in Australia' or 'Made in South Australia' when, in fact, they are only assembled here—and they are able to do that. I am speaking more specifically about South Australia. That is very deceiving for those who genuinely want to buy South Australian or Australian, because these labels indicate that the goods are totally produced here: they are not. The major part of the processing—the labour component—is undertaken in another land. In some cases the raw material is taken from this country to another country, or from this State to another State, and it is then processed to the assembly stage and brought back here. So, the problem for the consumer is knowing what is genuinely made in Australia and buying such goods to support jobs in South Australia.

The Government itself has a similar problem. If members were to consider the items available in this Parliament, those goods provided by SACON, they would find that, for example, their ruler is made in Taiwan, something else is made in the United Kingdom, and so on. It is difficult to understand how a member of the Government can stand

up and say that the Government supports this motion when it buys goods and services from outside the State.

Members opposite wanted to look at the hospitals and to have consultants investigate the health system. Believe it or not, the Government—and the honourable member who moved this motion is a member of the Government—went not merely outside South Australia but outside Australia; the Government went to the United States of America and gave away millions, saying that the consultants here did not have the expertise. That is an insult, and it shows the hypocrisy of this motion. I could name many other instances where that is the case, and I cannot understand why. In other areas, we will find that consultants have been brought in from other States, not just from overseas.

I see another problem emerging in this State; it is happening on the Gold Coast and, to a lesser degree, in other parts of Australia. Members might have read recently that Taiwan was talking about subsidising its people who wanted to buy Australian farming land because their own land was so degraded or because there was insufficient good quality land to feed their people: they would take over some of our land. First, I do not believe that any foreigner should be able to buy freehold title to our property; they should be able to lease it, but not have freehold title. However, that is another argument. My point is that we now have people in this country who were born in other lands, who have considerable wealth and who have bought businesses in this country—I am talking now of tourist attractions in this State that have been bought by people from neighbouring Asian countries. We are moving down a similar path to the situation on the Gold Coast.

I want to draw a comparison and relate what is being done on the Gold Coast but more particularly in the northern tourist areas of Queensland. People from other lands are buying businesses in sufficient number so that, when people come to Australia for holidays, they can still deal with their own country people, and speak the same language; they would not know whether they are in Tokyo or Cairns. The worst part is that most of the employees are paid from Japan. They avoid our payroll and income taxes because the employees are employed out of Tokyo or some other place overseas; it can happen in relation to Singapore, Malaysia or wherever. So, they are taking the jobs here, they are not paying taxes on the wages earned, and they are able to work their business administration so that the company pays a higher tax overseas, showing more income there and expenses here. The tax rate here is reduced and more of the tax is paid in their own homelands, to the disadvan-

tage of our own people. At the same time, people are brought in to take the jobs.

It is not helping our young people whom we cannot get into the universities for want of places. We tell them that we want a clever country, but there are no places for them, and there is nowhere for them to go to work. The concept of this motion is to create jobs by our buying South Australian or employing consultants who are South Australian. I support that in the strongest terms, but I have difficulty in supporting a motion such as this when there is such hypocrisy attached to it by those who sit opposite and claim to be a Government.

Mrs HUTCHISON secured the adjournment of the debate.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following written answers to questions without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

SAFA

In reply to Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide) 27 November.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The Noarlunga Hospital development was effectively financed by the Noarlunga Hospital Trust. The trustee of the trust was Palahtir Pty Ltd, a company owned by Babcock and Brown Pty Ltd. The principal investor in the trust was Tricontinental Corporation Limited, a merchant bank owned by the State Bank of Victoria.

The investor provided \$22 million financing on 28 September 1988.

The funding arrangements were approved by the Treasurer, the SAFA Board, the South Australian Health Commission (SAHC) and the Noarlunga Health Services (NHS) Board of Management. The arrangements were entered into in September 1988.

This transaction was reported in the 1988-89 SAFA Annual Report.

With the sale of the State Bank of Victoria to the Commonwealth Bank, Tricontinental Corporation Limited approached SAFA with a view to realising on its investment in the trust.

This presented the State Government with a very attractive opportunity to vary the arrangements on favourable economic terms. The investment was terminated on 30 April 1991. The benefit to the State in terms of reduced borrowing costs, after fully taking into account all payments to the investor under the terms of the termination arrangement, was approximately \$2.4 million in present value terms (1988 values).

A list of all current structured financing transactions with net present value benefit of approximately \$134 million involving SAFA is attached along with a reference to where the transactions have already been reported.

CURRENT STRUCTURED FINANCING TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING SAFA

	Commencement Date	Transaction Noted in Annual Reports:
Equity lease on various equipment	May 1984	p. 11 1983/84 SAFA
Island Seaway*	June 1985 to June 1987	p. 11 1987/88 SAFA
ETSA Northern Power Station*	December 1985	p. 11 1987/88 SAFA
ETSA Torrens Island Power Station*	August 1987	p. 11 1987/88 SAFA
Noarlunga Hospital Complex* (partially terminated)	September 1988	p. 11 1988/89 SAFA
Timber Licence Agreement*	March 1990	p. 15 1989/90 SAFA
ETSA Turbine Lease*	March 1986	p. 29 1985/86 SAFA
ETSA Turbo Generators and Plant	December 1986	p. 264 1986/87 Auditor Gen.
ETSA Boiler Lease*	August 1986	p.19 1986/87 SAFA
STA O'Bahn Buses	June 1986	p. 33 1985/86 STA
STA Railcars—West German Cross Border Lease	November 1988	p. 11 1988/89 SAFA
STA Railcars—Japan Cross Border Lease	November 1988	p. 11 1988/89 SAFA
TOTAL BENEFITS—Expected Net	Present Value Benefit	\$133.7 m

*Those transactions arranged for the Government by Babcock and Brown are marked with an asterisk

In reply to Mr MATTHEW (Bright) 13 February.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I refer the honourable member to the response to the question asked by Dr Armitage on 27 November 1991. With regard to the Hallett Cove East Primary School, while the Education Department has not formally approached SAFA to acquire and lease back the school there has been informal discussion about entering a financial arrangement with SAFA which would allow the school land to be sold in the future for residential use when no longer required for school purposes. No decision has yet been made but possible benefits to the Education Department have been identified.

In such a scheme there is:

- no hidden debt obligation of the State as the borrowings needed to finance these arrangements are involved in SAFA's balance sheet;
- no borrowing outside Loan Council borrowing limits;
- no tax effective issues.

Such a scheme would provide substantial financial benefit to the Education Department which would be used for improving resources and facilities throughout the Education system.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: STATE BANK

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I wish to advise the House that the Chairman of the State Bank, Mr Nobby Clark, has today announced the State Bank Group's results for the six months to the end of December. The bank group's half-yearly results show a before-tax loss of \$3.8 million. Non-performing items, which were almost \$4.2 billion in June 1991, have also fallen. It is 12 months now since I first announced the need for the Government to provide support for the State Bank. The Government's priorities since then have been to assess the dimensions of the bank's difficulties and to provide sufficient support to ensure the bank's stability. We all look forward to the time when the bank is reporting strong profitability and negligible bad loans. The past 12 months have been very difficult. While uncertainties remain, I am pleased to say that the bank's half-year result indicates that the bank is moving in the right direction.

Before discussing the half-year result, I would like to remind the House of the major events since the 10 February announcement. Following that announcement, the Government acted swiftly to make major changes to the bank board. Mr Nobby Clark was appointed as Chairman, and a further five new members have been appointed: Mr Ian Webber, Mr Jim Glidden, Mr Michael Shanahan, Mr John Heard and Mr Ted Johnson, the new Managing Director. The Under Treasurer also commenced attending board meetings. Each of the new board members has had substantial business experience, and together they form a formidable team, well equipped to steer the bank back to profitability.

One of the priorities of the new board was to put in place a thorough review of the group's assets. For its part, the Government has acted quickly to provide the support needed by the bank to ensure that confidence would be maintained. Arrangements were also finalised late last year to formalise the prudential supervision of the State Bank by the Reserve Bank of Australia. These efforts have been successful. Although there were some initial reductions in the level of retail deposits between February and August 1991, depositors have since shown renewed confidence in the bank.

Confidence has also been maintained in the professional money markets, on which the bank depends for much of its funding. The markets have generally been impressed by the decisiveness with which the Government has acted in providing support for the bank. At the same time, the board has been laying the foundations for the bank to work its way out of its difficulties and return to profitability. A

specialised Group Asset Management Division has been established to concentrate the bank's efforts on resolving problem loans. Already I understand that division has had a number of successes with a large problem accounts being resolved with smaller losses than expected.

The focus of the bank group has also changed significantly. This is highlighted in the new Mission Statement which was launched in August, which provides for the group to concentrate to a much greater extent on traditional banking functions, with the primary focus being in South Australia. Associated with this refocusing, a number of businesses have been sold: Myles Pearce, Day Cutten and Executor Trustee. Others are currently in the process of sale. The operations of Beneficial Finance have been brought directly under the control of the bank, and many of its former activities have been discontinued. These steps are all part of a comprehensive plan by the bank to focus on its core business in South Australia, reduce risk and increase profitability. As profitability improves, this will offset the costs of the indemnity package.

I turn now to the half-year result. Over the six months to the end of December, the group made a pre-tax loss of \$3.8 million. This result reflects two major elements: the bank's core result and performance with respect to its non-performing portfolio. The group's core business includes its lending for housing, its personal loans and its lending to business. These activities achieved a profit of just over \$85 million, reflecting, in particular, good profits in the bank's retail operations.

There have been a number of abnormal items which have detracted from the bank's core result. In particular, it should be noted that the cost of the royal commission and Auditor-General's inquiry into the bank amounted to \$7 million in the six months to December 1991. The bank would have recorded a small pre-tax profit if it was not for this additional but necessary cost.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Heysen and the member for Adelaide are out of order.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am pleased that the Opposition appreciates the irony of that situation. That was my point in drawing attention to it. As at the end of December, I am pleased to report that the level of non-performing loans has fallen by just over \$200 million from \$4 200 million at 30 June 1991 to \$3 993 million. Loans on which some loss of principal is expected fell to an even greater extent, by almost \$335 million from a level of \$3 791 million as at 30 June 1991. The fall in non-performing items reflects amounts repaid, loans which have returned to performing status and debts written off.

The level of non-performing loans quoted here is on a basis consistent with these figures quoted last August. The State Bank Group's results, however, are now reported on a fully consolidated basis, including off balance sheet items. The level of non-accrual loans under the new AAS24 accounting standard was \$3 676 million at 31 December 1991 compared with \$3 865.2 million at 30 June 1991.

Notwithstanding the improvement in non-performing loans, the bank has maintained its conservative approach to provisioning. Total specific provisions have only fallen by \$46 million compared to a reduction of \$335 million in loans subject to provisioning. Specific provisions have increased from 43.2 per cent of loans subject to provisioning to 46.1 per cent.

After tax and profits attributable to outside equity interests, the bank's half-year result is a loss of just over \$14 million. The large part of this is a future liability in lieu of Commonwealth income tax attributable to the State Government. This amount is arrived at by strict application of Commonwealth income tax legislation to the bank's results.

However, there will not be any payment to the State in lieu of income tax arising from the bank's operations for this half year.

I am pleased to report that the bank's capital adequacy ratio at the end of December was 9.6 per cent which is well above the minimum specified by the Reserve Bank of Australia of 8 per cent.

I turn now to the outlook for the bank over the remainder of the financial year. In doing so, it goes almost without saying that Australia is still experiencing a period of great economic uncertainty. Although we all hope that the recovery from the recession has commenced, there is clearly a long way to go. In these circumstances, there can be no guarantee that there will not be an increase in the bank's level of non-performing exposures or its need for provisions. It was for this reason that approximately \$100 million was retained in the Government's State Bank Asset Valuation Reserve Account at the time of the August announcement. This amount still remains as a contingency allowance.

There has been much speculation about the Myer Centre over the last week or so, based on the 1991 accounts lodged by the Remm Group. Much of this speculation ignores the fact that the centre has been open for less than nine months. Since its opening, the centre has been enormously popular. An average of a quarter of a million people per week are visiting the centre. Also, despite the recession, 120 of the 145 total tenancies are filled.

At the same time, however, it will probably take three or four years for the centre to become established with stable long-term occupancy and a stable cash flow. In the meantime, it is very difficult to predict the centre's long-term value. This is made even more difficult by the fact that the centre has opened in the middle of a recession with a surplus of retail property.

The bank's accounts already contain a provision against possible loss on the centre. The bank will, I understand, monitor the situation and decide whether further provisioning will be required. The extent to which any such provisioning will require further Government assistance will depend on the bank's provisioning situation generally with respect to the full year. As I have noted above, approximately \$100 million was also set aside in August to provide a further general contingency reserve.

Of course, the Myer Centre, as with other such accounts, is covered by the indemnity provided to the bank, and therefore any further provisioning would not result in an additional loss to the bank. As indicated already the Group Management Division has been established to maximise recoveries from problem loans and, at some future date, the division could form the basis of a separate entity. This is an issue which is still being considered. Mr Speaker, as members would recognise it has been a very difficult 12 months for the bank. As I have highlighted, substantial progress has already been achieved in restructuring the bank and returning it to its core business. I believe that the bank's half-yearly results to December 1991 reflect that progress.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: ECONOMIC STATEMENT

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Premier and Treasurer): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I wish to advise the House of the Government's response to the economic statement delivered by the Prime Minister last night. As the title of the statement implies, the program outlined by the Prime

Minister sets out a national response to problems which are affecting all States and all regions of Australia. My Government welcomes the recognition by the Commonwealth that it is time to intervene through an active partnership with private enterprise to get our national economy moving. We believe that the pace of change in our economy not only needs to be maintained but also needs to be directed so that it brings long-term benefit to our community. In this regard the initiatives to renew and add to the economic infrastructure of our nation are to be applauded.

I believe that all Australians are seeking reasons to be confident about the future. They recognise the problems of the past few years but do not wish to be held back by an obsessive concentration on them. This statement sets out a realistic and achievable program which will nurture that confidence. Over the past 12 months the South Australian Government has made a number of submissions to the Commonwealth which have been aimed at promoting the economic recovery of our State and in turn contributing to the economic renewal of the nation.

These submissions have not been based on a random wish list; rather they have stemmed from a coherent vision of South Australia's economic future, and the role we can play in our region. The Prime Minister's statement will allow for the more rapid development of the program we have set ourselves and gives a greater certainty to the vision of our economic future. The elements of this vision receive concrete expression in the development of a transport hub linking the national road and rail network through Adelaide and combining that network with efficient sea and air transport. It is advanced by the development of MFP-Australia. It is given strength by the provision of training and the development of skills within our work force.

The Prime Minister's statement focuses on investment in productive infrastructure and development of the skills of our work force, particularly our young people and people who are unemployed. On top of positive initiatives designed to create dynamic new transport networks, support major infrastructure projects, create a more conducive climate for business investment and boost education and training with an injection of extra funds for TAFE, the Prime Minister has acknowledged the needs of families and the impact the recession has had on them.

There will be substantial gains for South Australia flowing from the investment in transport (the national railway network in particular), in the MFP as an international leader in urban and industry development, and in the expansion of vocational training opportunities. These initiatives have formed the basis of our submissions to the Federal Government for some time now and, together with the range of micro-economic reforms promoted so actively by the States and Territories through the Special Premiers Conference process, provide a dynamic foundation for making our industries internationally competitive and able to look forward to growth, creative expansion and diversification, and long-term prosperity.

The transport initiatives announced in the statement include; the standardisation of the Adelaide to Melbourne rail line (\$115 million), the Port Adelaide loop (\$8 million), and a boost to road funding which, following further discussion with the Federal Government, will enable us to bring forward high priority works. The Adelaide-Melbourne standardisation ensures Adelaide's central position on the national rail network, and the Port loop project will provide a state of the art sea-to-rail interchange at Outer Harbor. This will enable international freight to be off-loaded in Adelaide directly onto block trains for rapid delivery to the

other capital cities. These initiatives are crucial to the development of Adelaide as a transport hub.

It is also pleasing to note that the Port Augusta workshop upgrade will complete re-equipping and enable the workshop to compete more effectively for the National Rail Corporation's maintenance work. The Prime Minister has given a clear, practical commitment by the Commonwealth to the MFP, a unique, long-term national project which will encourage national and international investors.

The allocation of \$40 million will be used to commence major earthworks and other necessary activities to prepare the Gillman/Dry Creek site for development, to bring forward a tree planting program and to begin construction of key landmark buildings such as the Environment Management Centre. Our submissions to the Federal Government emphasised the difficulties faced by our manufacturing sector. The reduction in wholesale sales tax on non-luxury motor vehicles from 20 per cent to 15 per cent is a positive measure for South Australia's large automotive industry. The provision of further assistance for restructuring in the textile, clothing and footwear industries is also welcome, although it must be pointed out that South Australia has not had its share of assistance through the TCFDA to date. We would expect this to be corrected.

The Prime Minister's emphasis on efficient approval processes for major projects coincides with the final stages of South Australia's planning review. The two year review of metropolitan Adelaide planning and development is to report in March. New legislation for development approvals will reform and combine a number of State Acts and approval systems into a single development approval process. Parallel reviews of South Australia's heritage and environmental protection laws will result in further streamlining consistent with appropriate environmental safeguards. These major reforms, already well advanced in South Australia, will complement the Federal initiatives to streamline project approval requirements.

The South Australian Government welcomes the Commonwealth's decision to join with the States, Territories and the Australian Local Government Association in entering into an historic inter-governmental agreement on the environment. It is in the interests of the Australian Federation, the environment and business confidence that the States and the Commonwealth Government embark on a new era of collaboration for improved environmental protection and improved certainty and clearer decision-making processes for business. A significant step forward under the agreement is the proposed establishment of a National Environmental Protection Authority, which will have a vital role in setting national environmental standards and national guidelines. South Australia will be urging the Federal Government and the other States to agree to locate the National EPA at MFP Australia. This would reinforce the cluster of environmental management, research and development and industries and activities that South Australia is planning to attract to the MFP.

The Prime Minister last night announced significant moves to eradicate tax barriers and disincentives to private sector investment in infrastructure projects and development. This is an issue which I first raised with the Federal Government prior to the financial Premiers Conference in May last year, and I am pleased to see that some action in this area has been taken. The statement has picked up the concept of companies issuing tax exempted bonds to encourage private provision of public infrastructure—a possibility raised last year by South Australia. An accelerated depreciation program is to be introduced for longer-term assets and, among other measures designed to stimulate private investment,

there will be an increase in the depreciation allowance for industrial and tourism buildings.

I welcome the Prime Minister's announcement of extra funding for the TAFE system across Australia to ensure a sustained increase in the number of young people participating in vocational education. Those funds—\$720 million over the 1993-95 triennium—will make available thousands of extra TAFE places in South Australia from 1993. It is not clear, however, whether funds will be provided for 1992, and this is something that will be pursued with the Federal Minister. We have, importantly, received an assurance from the new Federal Minister, Mr Beazley, that his approach will be one of building a genuine partnership with the States in the TAFE area, an approach that will allow us to build national standards and support national goals but one which will also have the capacity and the flexibility to respond to South Australia's unique regional economy and its needs.

The State Government also welcomes the ongoing commitment by the Federal Government to boost funding by \$1.4 million to help farmers plant crops. The additional funding for rural counselling services is also a positive decision that will be welcomed by the rural community. A speech with the title 'One nation' inevitably brings into focus the important question of Commonwealth-State relations and highlights the need for the process of cooperative reform between all levels of government to continue. The Prime Minister's statement acknowledges and gives tangible support to many of the key moves in micro-economic reform that have resulted from the Special Premiers Conference exercise and the meeting of Premiers and Chief Ministers that I chaired in Adelaide last November. I am looking forward to the response of the Prime Minister to the wide-ranging reform proposals and ideas put forward in November by the States.

I must, however, introduce a note of caution. I would also point out to members that, while the measures in the Prime Minister's statement will help provide a stimulus for economic growth in this State, they should not be expected to be the panacea to our economic problems. Nor does it absolve us from taking action to help ourselves. I referred earlier to submissions we had made aimed at developing our State and contributing to the nation's development. These submissions have been picked up and reflected in the Prime Minister's statement. The next decade will be a period of immense structural change, in both the Australian economy and the international economy, and it would be unreasonable to expect South Australia to be insulated from such changes in national and international conditions.

In November 1991 I announced that the South Australian Government had commenced work on a study which would analyse these challenges and opportunities facing our economy. Arthur D. Little, the international consultants undertaking the study, have highlighted the growing importance for South Australia's tradeable and service sectors to become truly internationally competitive with the top performers overseas. The South Australian Government recognises that these changes are necessary to our economy and is framing a more detailed economic development strategy in response. The Prime Minister's statement provided us with an appropriate opportunity for a new start by building on our strengths in such areas as the transport hub and technology-based industries.

In conclusion, I point out that we recognise that the Prime Minister's statement is a national one which provides significant assistance to all States. In some cases, this assistance will place South Australian initiatives in direct competition with other States. It is a competition and a challenge which will involve Government and the private sector, and over

the next few weeks my Ministers and I will work with South Australian industry and the community to ensure that South Australia gains maximum advantage from the opportunities the Prime Minister has presented to us. Our nation can be one nation only if all States and all regions are involved in national initiatives. My Government will devote all its energies to ensure that South Australia plays its important part in the future of this country.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: TOXIC ALGAE

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN (Minister for Environment and Planning): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: An important result has been achieved from research being undertaken on toxic algae in South Australia. The Australian Water Quality Research Centre at Bolivar, which is a collaborative venture of the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the University of South Australia and the University of Adelaide, has found that the toxin produced by the blue-green algae *nodularia spumigena* is rapidly destroyed by modest levels of chlorination. This alga is currently present in large numbers in Lake Albert, and warnings are in force regarding its use.

Until now, the only advice that could be offered to stock owners was to keep their animals away from the affected water, and this created practical difficulties if the stock owner had no alternative water supply. Now it is possible for the stock owner to treat water with chlorine prior to its use and to be assured that it is safe. Pool chlorine containing stabilisers such as cyanurates is not satisfactory, but unstabilised products such as calcium hypochlorite and sodium hypochlorite can be used. A fact sheet to assist farmers and stock owners in treating water affected by *nodularia* is being prepared and will be made available as soon as possible.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: WORKERS COMPENSATION

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY (Minister of Occupational Health and Safety): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: In response to a request from the Auditor-General and in keeping with my undertaking to this House, I would like to present to members the first estimates from the Actuarial and Insurance Services Branch of Treasury covering the future liabilities for Government workers compensation.

As previously presented to the House, liabilities under the 1971 Act are estimated at \$6 million and, as an indication of the long-term nature of this Act, many are still being settled. Claims under the 1986 Act were, at 30 June 1991, estimated at \$72 million. Likewise, this is a long-term estimate of payments, expected to stretch over many years and meaning there is no immediate cash requirement for the Government of South Australia.

It is pertinent to note that these figures, when compared with data from WorkCover, show a similarity with the liability levels for private sector exempt employers. However, the Government, in line with its concern for fiscal responsibility, is determined to address the level of liability and is examining ways in which these liabilities, and their exposure to the South Australian taxpayer, can be reduced.

I have instituted initiatives directed at key cost areas as well as general measures to ensure better overall performance. These include quarterly reporting of workers compen-

sation with the requirement that departments commit themselves to reversing unfavourable trends where they occur. A fraud prevention unit is to be established, with a mandate to investigate and recommend the prosecution of those responsible for false, exaggerated and, therefore, expensive claims on the South Australian taxpayer.

Further, our stress prevention initiatives aim to reduce claims in those departments troubled by high numbers of traumatic incidences, such as the Police Department and the Department of Correctional Services. New strategies include referring claimants to psychological and counselling services. But, most importantly, we are tackling the issues before they become problems through programs such as early intervention to identify and rectify the causes of stress.

A measure of this success has been the encouraging fall in stress claims in one of the most sensitive areas of the public sector, namely, the teaching service. In the past six months, claims have fallen by 15 per cent while in the previous year they fell by 3 per cent. We have been experiencing the effects of restructuring Government departments and activities, meaning claims to those employees who have taken voluntary separation have had to be realised immediately. As such, the short-term impact has been to accelerate payments from departments and authorities. So far 1 600 employees have voluntarily separated.

However, across the board workers compensation claims in the Public Service have fallen by almost 3 per cent and government expenditure of \$44 million this financial year is in line with the projections presented to the Budget Estimates Committee on 25 September 1991.

QUESTION TIME

STATE BANK

Mr D.S. BAKER (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Treasurer. How much of the \$2.2 billion paid to the State Bank under the Government's indemnity has been reinvested with SAFA, what interest rate is the bank obtaining on this money and is SAFA making any profit out of the deal?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I will take the detail of that question on notice but, obviously, we have encouraged to the greatest extent possible any reinvestment to be made, as appropriate, because that means that there is a benefit in terms of the State. However, the fact is that the bank is earning money on the \$2.2 billion that is held in the indemnity fund in contingency. That is aimed at partly offsetting the total or overall cost of the non-performing portfolio, as should be clear. The amount is approximately half what was calculated as the total non-performing portfolio so, as well as the work-outs, the bank has to bear the cost of that half of the non-performing portfolio but uses the money it can generate from the indemnity to defray some of that cost.

Members may be interested to know that the timing of the provision of the indemnity resulted, as the Chairman has indicated, in the bank having to bear that cost for the first two months of this half year. If the bank had not had to do that, the result would have been very much more enhanced than it has been. Be that as it may, any amount of appropriate reinvestment—the greatest extent possible—would be welcomed. I guess the important point to be made in this context is that the \$2.2 billion, while provided to support the non-performing loans, is not actually spent as such, if one can identify it in that way. Obviously, it is a complex treatment in the balance sheets and accounts. In

terms of money actually written off, at this stage, as I understand it, it is less than \$100 million. Progressively, as work-outs occur, that figure will increase, but the object of the Group Asset Management Division is to ensure that it gets maximum return and that the purpose of the indemnity is to give the bank the breathing space to work through these assets in an orderly way and not indulge in some sort of fire sale, which would result in even greater loss.

TAFE

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I ask the Minister of Employment and Further Education what impact last night's economic statement by the Prime Minister will have on TAFE, both nationally and in South Australia. In recent times, many constituents who have been unable to obtain a place in further education institutions have come into my office. I am aware that a further 3 300 places were made available in South Australia in 1992, but I understand that last night's statement may result in an even greater expansion.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I thank the honourable member for his interest in the matter. As does the Premier, the Government certainly strongly welcomes the announcement of extra Commonwealth funding for Australia's TAFE system. For years the Australian States have borne the major brunt of funding for our vocational training system. TAFE receives massive funding from the States and little from the Commonwealth except in the area of capital works for new TAFE buildings. Last night, as the Premier mentioned, Mr Keating announced that the Commonwealth is prepared to offer an extra \$720 million for TAFE over three years, over the 1993-95 triennium, to upgrade the TAFE system nationally and to ensure a sustained increase in participation in vocational education.

There has been some strange reporting about this \$720 million, because it includes an additional amount of \$70 million nationally in each of the calendar years 1993, 1994 and 1995: that is \$70 million over and above the extra funds that were announced and negotiated at the end of last year. For South Australia this would mean a real increase of about \$6 million over and above last year's extra \$8.5 million for that three-year period. I am certainly disappointed that it appears from the correspondence we have received that extra funds are not available immediately to address unmet demands in our TAFE system in 1992 except for the continuation of last year's pre-vocational initiatives into 1992-93 which, in South Australia, means about \$3 million and 750 places. A boost to TAFE is especially important for our young people. Upgrading their skills is vital not only to their future but also to Australia's future, and that is certainly a challenge of last year's Finn report into post-compulsory education and training.

Further funding appears to be conditional on the States accepting the Commonwealth offer to take full responsibility for the funding of vocational education and training from 1 January 1993, and that is certainly what one would get out of the newspapers this morning. However, as the Premier mentioned, I and other State Ministers yesterday received an assurance from the Federal Minister, Kim Beazley, that he is interested in a genuine partnership with the States on TAFE and not a takeover bid involving Commonwealth control. That in itself is a significant change from former Minister Dawkins' position last year. Under his proposal, the States would have been left as TAFE's caretakers, with no real policy input. I told Mr Beazley, and other Ministers have told him, that that is simply not on. South Australia has the best TAFE system in Australia, as members on both sides of this House have acknowledged.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Except the member for Alexandra perhaps, but I understand that he has other things on his mind. We have strong ties to industry, and our TAFE system in South Australia is dynamic and forward looking. It is vitally important that our TAFE system remains relevant to South Australia's industry and employment needs and does not become bogged down in Canberra bureaucracy, removed from industry and remote from real people's needs. I have told the Commonwealth that a strong and pro-active TAFE system in South Australia is vital to the success of local industries and to our regional economy, because our children's future is a damn sight more important than bureaucratic power games in Canberra.

I shall be meeting Mr Beazley in Perth next week. We are also seeking meetings with other TAFE Ministers around Australia. By working together, I believe that we can launch a new era in further education and training reform consistent with the Finn report 'Challenge to Australia'. Its focus is obviously excellence. Of course, its hallmark has to be results for our young people. I certainly believe that achieving that goal will be critical to our quality of life and will be the cornerstone of our economic strength and security as we go towards the year 2000.

STATE BANK

Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): How does the Treasurer explain the \$107.8 million difference between the level of State Bank non-performing loans reported in his ministerial statement and the level reported by the State Bank in its media release today? The Treasurer claimed, on page 3 of his statement, that non-performing loans had fallen from \$4 200 million at 30 June 1991 to \$3 993 million at 31 December 1991. However, today's State Bank media release claims that non-performing loans fell from \$4.22 billion to \$4 100.8 million in the same period.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am not aware of that discrepancy. In fact, as I outlined in my statement—and I am looking at the bank's statement—the gross non-accrual loans have decreased slightly from \$4 199.6 million, which I summarised as \$4.2 billion, at 30 June 1991 to \$3 992.6 million at 31 December 1991. Those are the figures that I have in my statement and they are in a media release from the bank headed 'State Bank position stabilised', dated 27 February 1992.

It is also a fact that the Australian Accounting Standard AAS24, because of the way in which those non-accrual loans are attributed under that, shows a lower figure in both cases than the two that I have just quoted. In fact, again quoting from the bank's release, which members will find reflected in my figures, the figures are \$3 865.2 million with a corresponding figure of \$3 676 million, again showing a decrease. Those are the figures on which increasingly one must focus because of the adoption of that accounting standard. The reason that the figures were provided under two headings was to ensure that there was consistency between the figures that we presented in the annual accounts at the end of the last financial year, so that there can be an easy cross-reference back. Gradually that will be phased out as the new accounting standard becomes the only and the common form.

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Can the Minister of Transport advise what impact the Prime Minister's capital

works program will have on the rail network and the local economy in this State?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I thank the member for Albert Park for his very good question. We all know of his longstanding interest in matters rail—a genuine interest, not one effected for the TV cameras. The announcement by the Prime Minister last night is very significant for rail and the whole economy of this State—indeed, for the whole of Australia. The total package is over \$400 million going into rail. In my 27 years in Australia, I cannot recall a larger package for or more attention being paid to the rail sector of our land transport, and I suspect that neither can anybody else here. It is a tremendous package on which everybody, irrespective of political Party, ought to congratulate the Prime Minister.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I shall be coming to the Blue Lake in a moment. Australia obviously needs a national rail network. If we are ever to do anything efficient in land transport, rail is critical to that. There is no doubt that our present system is absolutely uneconomic and unsustainable. To leave the system as it is and try to struggle along with numerous grades and bogie exchanges is not a goer, and I would have thought that not one person in Australia could quibble with that. However, I was very disappointed to read in the *Naracoorte Herald* of 17 February an article headed 'Billion dollar rail plan shortsighted', as follows:

Mr David Hawker has criticised the Federal Government's rumoured plan to spend \$1 billion upgrading the Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane rail link. The Federal member for Wannon—

and the shadow spokesperson in that area—

said the Prime Minister, Mr Paul Keating, was showing his lack of economic credentials by sinking money into a rail system that lost over \$5 billion a year . . .

I will not read all the article because I am sure most people have already read it and have been as appalled as I have been. The article goes on to say, in part:

Rail is the biggest loss-making enterprise in Australia and Mr Keating is willing to throw \$1 billion of taxpayers' money at it for short-term political gain.

How churlish and petty minded can one get?

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will come to that in a moment. How petty can one get? I would have thought that not one person in Australia would have objected to that part of the package last night, yet the spokesperson for the Federal Liberal Party attacked it and said that it is a waste of money and that it should not be done. Members opposite do well to hang their heads in shame by being associated with such an individual.

Of course, there is a down side, and this Government right up front acknowledges the down side. There are great gains for the economy in this State in employment and for the general betterment of our economy. The specific gains include the workshop at Port Augusta, and I know the member for Stuart appreciates that. The gains are significant, but there is a down side. One of the inevitable consequences of standardisation is the isolation of the line between Wolsley and Mount Gambier. That is a great pity, but it is an inevitable consequence.

When the Federal Government is prepared to say, 'We are willing to put in close to half a billion dollars to upgrade rail infrastructure', one cannot say that it does not have a strong commitment to rail. Obviously, the Federal Government has an enormous commitment to rail, but it must have some economic return to the State. I want to remind all members—and it has been mentioned in the House before—of what we were up against in trying to retain the

line. We took it right to the wire; we took it all the way we could.

Again, I refer briefly to that well-read journal the *Naracoorte Herald* because, on 26 February 1990, it contains an interview with the State Leader of the Opposition, Dale Baker. This is before standardisation: this is when the train could run between Adelaide and Mount Gambier on the broad gauge. The report states:

Mr Dale Baker told the *Herald* that while the closure of the service would be a 'tragedy', it appeared a foregone conclusion. 'The closure is inevitable' he said on Friday.

This is in 1990: this is sabotaging our case prior to arbitration. The report continues:

Mr Baker said people could not expect new rolling stock costing more than \$1 million to be bought for the service when they were not using it. 'It is all a case of patronage', he said. 'The patronage does not warrant the renewal of the rolling stock'. He said closure of the train service would put more traffic on the roads when less traffic was wanted, but the service was unprofitable.

I am quoting the Leader of the Opposition, and this is the clincher:

'Do we want the the taxpayer to pay for it? That is the question we have to ask,' Mr Baker said.

I understand that this was said before the Government took the Federal Government to arbitration over closure of that line. So, whilst we all regret the closure of the Mount Gambier line, I think it has been done on a bipartisan basis because, according to the words of the Leader as reported in the *Naracoorte Herald*, the Opposition supports the closure, as does the Federal Government.

MULTIFUNCTION POLIS

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): My question is directed to the Premier. Why was it agreed that the \$40 million earmarked for the MFP should come out of South Australia's already established share of the better cities program, and over what period will the \$40 million be paid to the State?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The MFP is very much part of the better cities strategy. I do not believe that one could better define a project in terms of urban consolidation and refurbishment of a degraded area.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: In the initial stages, when Deputy Prime Minister Howe announced that a better cities program would be inaugurated, the guidelines we were given did not include the better cities program, which was in fact at the top of our list. Therefore, at that stage—that is, before the revision and reassessment of the program undertaken by the Prime Minister when he came to office—the MFP would not have been seen to come within that narrow guideline. In fact, in our belief—and we have said this from day one—it fits very squarely into a better cities concept.

While \$40 million has been mentioned, it may be appropriate that we negotiate an increased sum in relation to the MFP. It will simply depend on how we want to deploy that amount. However, that amount provides a very substantial injection to do the things that I mentioned in my statement. If the honourable member is implying that we should not receive this money or use it in that way, I would like him to say so loudly and clearly.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: What about obeying Standing Orders and not interjecting. The honourable member for Henley Beach.

WORKCOVER

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I direct my question to the Minister of Labour. What action is being taken by the Department of Labour regarding employers who, because of their claims record, pay a penalty rate levy to WorkCover?

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: As members know, amendments have been made to the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act and the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act to enable the exchange of information between WorkCover and the Department of Labour. That exchange of information has enabled Department of Labour inspectors to target companies. They write to a company giving notice that the department will conduct an audit of safety procedures within that organisation so that the responsible people can be present when the audit is done.

Each audit consists of ensuring that the company has proper procedures in place for safety committees, that the members of such committees are properly elected, that the company has proper safety procedures in respect of certain incidents that may happen in the plant, and that the plant has proper safety equipment. When an inspection is being done, occasionally the inspectors find that the Act and the procedures are not being complied with, so they may issue notices of improvement that require the company, over a certain period, to rectify the lack of resources, and occasionally work is halted because the situation is so dangerous. Of the 120 companies that have been inspected over the past 12 months, about 20 per cent have received improvement notices and 10 have been issued with prohibition notices. This is a very proactive way of ensuring that accidents do not happen.

MULTIFUNCTION POLIS

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): My question is directed to the Premier. What expressions of dissatisfaction have been made by the Commonwealth Government to the State Government about the progress of the MFP, and have any conditions been placed on the \$40 million that the Federal Government has now earmarked for the MFP which requires the State Government to relinquish control over the project?

I have heard from two very reliable and senior Federal sources that the Federal Government has told the State Government that its continuing interest in the MFP will be conditional on:

1. The Federal Government's taking over the control and direction of the MFP to make it a truly national project which will appeal to international investors.
2. The replacement of Mr Bruce Guerin as Director of the MFP with someone who has a high profile, private enterprise background with access to international and national boardrooms.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It is a national project, one in which the State Government, the Commonwealth Government and, indeed, local government will cooperate; it will be a good example of all three levels of government working together in the interests of a project that has international significance. Naturally, in that process, we need to work out and develop the relationship between those various levels of government. That is incorporated in the legislation, which is before the House, and it would obviously be out of order for me to refer to it in detail.

However, in passing, I point out that the Commonwealth's role is specifically acknowledged. One of the things I welcome very much about the Prime Minister's statement

yesterday is his up-front acknowledgment of the national significance of this project. There is no question of control and direction being undertaken by the Commonwealth. However, I certainly welcome and would like to see more active participation by the Commonwealth in the development of it. I have discussed with Senator Button, for example, the exchange of officers so that we can have officers from his department collocated within our own office.

That matter was agreed upon some months ago and I hope we see it come into effect. As soon as the legislation is passed we will be able to make the formal appointments, and the board of the corporation will have the responsibility of appointing a chief executive officer. However, I believe that Mr Guerin is doing a very good job indeed as the interim chief executive officer.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: It is very easy to use the forum of this place to make these criticisms.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I think it is pretty outrageous to attack, in that snide way, a senior and capable public servant who is working on behalf of this State. It really is quite disgraceful. Unfortunately, the member for Bragg—who occasionally aspires to leadership and occasionally suggests that he has an open mind about these things—descends into this kind of area and it does him no credit whatsoever. I think I have said enough about that.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL RECORDS

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): Will the Minister of Health advise the House what rights of access members of the public have to their medical records and to whom these records belong in the event of the financial collapse of an entrepreneurial medical centre? Recently a constituent who is a diabetic was unable to gain access to his doctor at the Black Forest office of the Complete Health Care Centre to obtain a new prescription. The business had shut down without warning and carried a notice on the door 'Surgery closed until further notice'.

My constituent advised me that all the office furniture had gone, that the Melbourne based firm was in liquidation and that the nurses and office staff were unpaid because their pay cheques for the past five weeks' employment had bounced. He was unable to gain access to his records to provide verification for a new prescription, as these records had obviously been taken away. In making initial inquiries, I was reminded of a case last year where 3 500 medical records were put on the market by a medical entrepreneur. I am therefore seeking further information to clarify the general principle of the ownership of medical records.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: In answering the honourable member's question I have to make a distinction between ownership and access to information. The honourable member was good enough to give me prior knowledge of this question, so I have an interesting answer with some detail, but at this stage I do not think it will be of any great assistance to his constituent. It is clear that medical records are the property of the medical officer who compiled them and, indeed, they are part of the working tools of the individual doctor.

In the normal circumstances, where a person would request access to information, that information is fairly readily given. Recently, when my wife and I went interstate, her doctor provided us with a full description of her condition, should it need to be offered to a doctor or hospital in the Eastern States. That is the normal arrangement. However,

there are problems when people try to exercise certain legal rights which they have or which they think they have. For example, in relation to records in public hospitals, the Freedom of Information Act seems to cover the situation adequately, but I know of no law of the Commonwealth or the State that would give the honourable member's constituent rights in these circumstances.

It seems to me that there is a further problem, namely that, given that the records are now in the hands of a non-medical practitioner and may well be the property of that non-medical practitioner, even the summarising of the content of those records by that non-medical practitioner would be unfortunate, because the individual almost certainly would not have the skills or the qualifications to be able to make that summary. So, it seems to me that there are some problems in the law here which need to be further considered. I am prepared to consider them, and I am prepared to make the full report, such as I have, available to the honourable member or to any other members who are interested.

TAFE FUNDING

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE (Coles): My question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Further Education. What guarantees does the Minister have from his Federal counterpart, Mr Beazley, that the so-called 'genuine partnership' between Federal and State Governments which Mr Beazley proposes for TAFE will in fact occur following the Commonwealth's decision to take over major financial control of the TAFE system? What mechanisms does the Minister believe should be established to prevent what he described in this House on 16 October last year as 'a disaster for South Australian students and for local industry', representing an example of 'East German centralism imposed on the system'?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I am delighted to answer that question, because I do oppose the Eric Honecker approach to TAFE, and basically I believe it is absolutely vital that the South Australian people and the South Australian Government, through our TAFE system, have real and direct responsibilities in terms of management and administration; that they have a real say in planning and policy. The original Dawkins proposal was to let us just administer it; it was to be a similar situation to that of the universities. We were being told by DEET officials that two different ideas were being floated.

One was to direct funds to individual TAFE colleges, which would be a joke, in the same way as funds are directed to universities. The second approach was to leave us purely in charge of the pencil sharpeners, with no policy input at all. If the Commonwealth wants to put in extra millions of dollars, it has a right to negotiate what its say is to be, and it needs a planning and policy input as well. That is understood: that is partnership, but a partnership involves policy, planning, management and administrative input.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The safeguards are, quite simply, that we would not enter into an agreement which would enable the Commonwealth to have total control and which would remove our say in policy, planning, management and administration. I know that the shadow Minister is trying to pump up her profile this week, following the publication of the 'Mr 18 per cent' poll. I understand that a number of events during the break will centre on the Liberals, and I also understand that the member for Bragg wants to head off Dean Brown at the pass.

I can say that I am prepared to give the honourable member continual briefings on where we are going, because my view is that it is vitally important to South Australia that DEET officials do not have total control over our TAFE system, and that is the view of my counterparts interstate as well. We are interested in a real partnership. There is an absolute right: the Commonwealth is prepared, to put in money, and we will take its money, do not worry about that, but it must be prepared to ensure that South Australia has that responsibility in terms of planning, policy and management, and not just administration.

GOLDEN GROVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Mr De LAINE (Price): Will the Minister of Housing and Construction advise the House of initiatives being taken to assist low income earners with home ownership in the Golden Grove development? It has always been the Government's intention that the community at Golden Grove be a social mix with a reasonable level of public sector involvement. In the past the South Australian Housing Trust has been the vehicle for the integration of public rental housing in that development, but this does not address the need of low income potential homebuyers.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is difficult to hear with the background noise. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I thank the member for Price for his question, because he has an ongoing interest in offering those people on low incomes the opportunity to have their own home. I recently approved an initiative which will enable trust tenants to purchase their own home, particularly in Golden Grove. It is basically a pilot scheme whereby we will allow initiatives for people in the income bracket below \$31 000. We believe that people above that income bracket are at present able to involve themselves in purchasing their own home but that those people below that income bracket need special assistance. We have come up with a special package which will provide an opportunity for not only an affordable house but also a repayment structure that will be affordable by those people.

The package will involve a home loan ranging from about \$71 000 to \$88 000 in that area. The pilot scheme will be a joint venture involving Delfin and two private sector builders. It will be financed by a standard HomeStart loan and, of course, the Urban Land Trust. We believe that that partnership will offer people on low incomes an opportunity to purchase good quality housing at affordable rates, which they can meet and sustain—housing they can finally purchase and have for their, and their families' use. At present, we believe that people with incomes below \$31 000 are not able to successfully purchase in the Golden Grove area, so I am delighted to say that this has been approved, and we think the package will work.

We are delighted to have the private sector as partners in this venture, and I am sure that, with the 23 properties concerned, the program will be very beneficial. I am also very keen to see that, in fact, it expands, and I look forward to being able to approve future developments of the scheme so that others in the community can enjoy the same opportunities to purchase affordable housing not only in Golden Grove but in other parts of the State as well.

FOSTER PARENTS

Mr SUCH (Fisher): My question is directed to the Minister of Family and Community Services. How long has it

been normal practice for FACS officers to ask intimate, sexual details of people seeking to foster children, and why was it found necessary to record this information? I have been contacted by a 26-year-old woman, who was interviewed by a female FACS employee on 10 February as part of her application to foster a child. Among the questions she was asked were, 'When did you lose your virginity?', 'Was it a good or bad experience?', and 'What is the appropriate age to lose your virginity?' When my informant asked why these questions were necessary, she was told that they were part of the new approved guidelines for prospective foster parents. My informant has told me that she and her family are outraged at the intimacy of the questions she was required to answer, particularly since the information is now recorded with her name and photograph in FACS files.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I will get such information as seems appropriate in order to give a sensible answer to that question.

TRAFFIC SIGNS

Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart): I direct my question to the Minister of Transport. Can the Minister advise—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Napier is out of order. The member for Stuart.

Mrs HUTCHISON: Will the Minister advise whether a give-way sign can be installed at the junction of Weeroona Island Causeway and National Highway 1 as well as a run-off lane to exit the national highway at this junction similar to the one at Port Germein? Correspondence from the District Council of Mount Remarkable indicates that this is a dangerous intersection. The council states:

... it is the opinion of council that a bend in the national highway to the north of the junction obscures road vision and, because of the speed of highway traffic, those vehicles making a slow entry onto the highway are in extreme danger from the fast moving traffic.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Under the provisions of the Road Traffic Act the installation of give-way signs at the Weeroona Island turn-off is not warranted, I am afraid. At a T-junction such as this there is an obligation on the motorist on the terminating road to give way to traffic approaching from the left and the right. Appropriate T-junction signs are in place at this location and sight distance at the intersection is considered adequate. Current traffic volumes at this location do not justify the need for a left slip lane.

Notwithstanding this—and I know that the member for Stuart will be pleased—in 1989 the Department of Road Transport (the Highways Department at that time) submitted a proposal to the District Council of Mount Remarkable for joint funding of such a lane. Based upon the greater benefit to local traffic, the department proposed the following distribution of responsibility: that the District Council of Mount Remarkable constructs, at its own cost, the necessary earthworks and pavement for a deceleration lane on the southern approach; that the Department of Road Transport undertakes, at its own cost, the sealing of the deceleration lane and provision of intersection warning signs on both approaches to the junction. That offer was made, as I stated, in 1989. However, the District Council of Mount Remarkable has as yet not acted on that offer. I would ask the member for Stuart to contact the district council as obviously it still has—

Mrs Kotz interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:—an interest in this particular minor road work. I will speak to the honourable member about it privately.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Just wait for it. Is the Minister aware that an anomaly exists under Australian food regulations which will prevent the State's citrus juice producers taking advantage of an exciting technological development which would appreciably improve their yields and profitability, and will he take urgent steps to correct the anomaly? The new technology, called diffusion extraction, was developed by the Australian fruit processing industry with the CSIRO. It enables juice manufacturers to extract the natural juices and fruit sugars from skins and cores in addition to the traditional juices from the flesh of the fruit.

Despite investments of more than \$15 million in the new technology by processors, the National Foods Authority and the State Health Commission have decreed that citrus will be precluded from the process because the juice so extracted will not be classified a legitimate food and therefore cannot be used in cordials and fruit drinks.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I appreciate this question from the perhaps shadow Minister of Agriculture and I will certainly pursue it. I have had drawn to my attention a sales tax anomaly with respect to the juice that the honourable member is talking about and I have already asked my office to prepare correspondence for me to take up with the Federal Government.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Yes, I am aware of that. I am just letting the honourable member know that I am aware of the fact that this new technology has resulted in other issues as well as the one he has raised. To date, I have not been aware of the issue that the honourable member raises. Obviously, it requires some discussion with my colleague the Deputy Premier in his role as Minister of Health, and clearly also with Federal authorities. I am quite happy to do that because the actual principle of juice being extracted from all parts of a fruit is not new and, as many members know, for many years pineapple juice has been extracted not just from the pulp of the pineapple but a significant proportion of it comes from the skin of the pineapple. So, it is not in itself particularly radical to talk about the sorts of things that the CSIRO is doing. Indeed, there have been pressings from the peel of oranges previously, although not as successfully as this new CSIRO technology. I will pursue the matter and bring back a report to the House.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Will the Minister of Agriculture say whether any agency of the State Government is prepared to offer our farmers disinterested financial and management advice?

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I thank the honourable member for the question. In fact, we have announced an exciting new package. At the outset I indicate that it is not a Government agency that will be offering the advice. What will happen is that we will offer money to pay for the advice

that will come from an independent source. This issue has already been pursued in Western Australia and New South Wales, and I give credit to the Federal member for Barker for also discussing with me the possibility of this happening in South Australia. After his approach and other inquiries were received I had work done on whether or not some of the money we have under rural assistance could be used to fund the seeking of financial advice by farmers.

The theory behind the scheme is that there are situations where what farmers really want is access to loans at reasonable interest rates to help with debt reconstruction, farm build-up, carry-on finance or even in situations of loans-cum-grants for leaving farming under part C. Of course, there are other situations where providing money for a problem will not actually resolve it: what is really needed is a much better understanding of the financial crisis that the farming enterprise may be in and looking at alternative ways of working around it.

There is much merit behind that: there are situations where a farmer simply knows better about his or her own financial situation and what kind of options may be available to manage, and that could be worth as much as any accessing of other loan funds under the other parts of rural assistance. This scheme has been announced and will see farmers eligible for grants of up to \$2 000 to seek independent financial and management advice. It will be administered under the Rural Assistance Scheme and will be available under the various categories—part A, part B and part C.

This is exciting because I think it offers the opportunity for farmers to look at their financial situation with an independent assessor—not the department, not the banks, not other financial institutions—providing information. Of course, we will build up a list of independent assessors in association with the farming community and other sources of advice. This exciting program will be effective from 1 March, and I look forward to many farmers applying for that and having the opportunity to take the advantage that the scheme will offer.

COIN OPERATED GAMING MACHINES

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): Will the Minister of Emergency Services confirm that the Police Commissioner gave him his report on coin operated gaming machines on Monday this week? Will the Minister give this Parliament an undertaking that all members will receive an unchanged version of the report prior to debate on the associated Bills and not a report that has been modified or tampered with in any way, such as occurred when the Premier ordered changes to a document prepared by the Lotteries Commission?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: I find the question a trifle insulting, but I point out that the Commissioner has provided me with the report, which has been made available to some of my colleagues who will have some influence over the way in which the legislation when it is eventually passed by this Parliament will be implemented. Consequently, I have given some precedence to those people because they will need to take action to deal with the implementation of the legislation.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: The honourable member is yapping away as usual, trying to make an insulting question even more insulting. Clearly, each and every member of the House will have an equal say in the legislation that

is introduced, and therefore each and every member of this House ought to have a copy of the Commissioner's report on this matter, and I will make that available in due course.

Mr Matthew: Unchanged?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: Of course.

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Will the Minister of Health advise what booking lists tell the community about activity in our public hospitals; are they accurate, and is there any double counting in their compilation?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Apart from obviously telling us what they do tell us, that is, the number of people awaiting non-urgent surgery in hospitals, they also provide an index of the amount of activity in our hospitals, which of course is considerably high, although accident and emergency cases have declined recently. I suppose that the honourable member is prompted partly by the fact that from time to time these figures are manipulated by people for particular purposes. I think I can assure the honourable member that, whatever use or misuse they might be put to, for the most part they are fairly accurate in South Australia and, I hope, around the country.

To be perfectly fair, I have to add that there are those who would disagree with me in relation to their own jurisdiction. I refer here to the Government of New South Wales. I think that I entertained the House about a week ago in relation to a question that revealed that the New South Wales Government intends to close about 4 000 hospital beds in the next 10 years. In the course of that debate, it was revealed that no booking lists at all were available in New South Wales, that Mr Ron Phillips, the New South Wales Minister, had no idea how many people were on booking lists. However, he did promise that information, and we have now been given some sort of information and it is interesting to compare it with the South Australian situation.

Dr Bernie Amos, the departmental head, has written to Mr Phillips saying that the number of patients waiting for elective surgery in New South Wales public hospitals has increased to more than 24 190. Parenthetically, I point out that more than 24 190 could be 24 191 or 40 000 or 60 000. It is a rather strange statistic, but I assume that it was the journalist rather than Dr Amos who indulged in that little bit of precis.

In his letter of explanation, Dr Amos said that waiting lists should not be used as an annual arbiter of performance of the New South Wales public hospital system because the figures were often inaccurate. He went on to say:

You are aware that there is concern about the accuracy of [waiting] lists and it is well accepted that the lists are open to manipulation by doctors and hospitals who are seeking bigger enhancement grants. Added to this are all the problems caused by double booking, lack of cancellation and confusion between doctors' rooms and hospitals.

I am also aware from examples provided by hospitals that separate waiting lists are maintained for individual doctors. This is correct and would be expected for their privately insured patients. However, the lists also incorporate their Medicare (or public) patients.

This morning the New South Wales Government has rejected a call for an inquiry into these allegations, despite the fact that Dr Amos had said that the lists were 'open to manipulation by doctors and hospitals who are seeking bigger enhancement grants'. He went on to say that it is politically advantageous to have a waiting list.

Mr Phillips has promised a more sophisticated system to ensure that the statistics used to compile waiting lists are

not manipulated, but he is not interested in an inquiry into it. That is precisely what we are doing, not because we are concerned about the accuracy of our lists or because we have been coy about them for a long time, as have the Liberals in New South Wales, but because we believe there are ways in which we can improve the management of the lists and, therefore, the waiting times in our hospitals.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The member for Adelaide ought to go to see Mr Phillips. Obviously, I am not the one who needs assistance; Mr Phillips clearly is. I appreciate the offer from the honourable member, but one would have thought he would have more concern for one of his Party colleagues under some pressure in another State. Nonetheless, I am prepared to accept any cooperation he wishes to extend to me. I think we have not heard the end of this, and I urge members to watch this space.

AUSTRALIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture.

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: Another shadow Shadow Minister of Agriculture.

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

Mr GUNN: We have plenty of time if they want to talk. Does the State Government support the recent call by the Federal Director-General of the Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Mr Miller, that the Australian Wheat Board should lose its sole export rights and that the industry should be deregulated to open up export markets to private traders; and will he make the strongest possible representations to ensure that the Australian Wheat Board remains the sole exporter of wheat from Australia?

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: This matter has been canvassed lately. In fact, there was some discussion of the broad issue at the most recent Agricultural Council of Australia and New Zealand, which I attended on behalf of South Australia. I have not come to a firm view on the matter yet; I want to have more consultations with industry in South Australia. In my view, there is one key issue, that is, what will provide the greatest benefit to Australia's economy and to the wheat growers of Australia. The issue of what the different options would deliver requires more analysis. Some options may deliver more, but they may have an even greater cost. Until I have had more opportunity to weigh up the different facts and figures, I am not in a position to come down to a considered view of Mr Miller's opinion.

PORT PIRIE HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart): Will the Minister of Health provide the House with details of the Port Pirie Hospital redevelopment?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am happy to do so. In fact, last Sunday I had the privilege, along with the honourable member and the member for Culance, of attending the opening of the redeveloped hospital. Indeed, I was very happy to pay tribute to the staff, the board of the hospital and all those people who have brought it to its present state of capital excellence. Very briefly, about \$12 million has been spent on a new outpatients-casualty department, designed to cope with something like 20 000 patients a year; a new kitchen and cafeteria; an IMVS laboratory; two operating theatres; a new medical imaging suite for X-rays,

fluoroscopy and ultrasound; and a suite of consulting clinics for visiting specialists and local medical practitioners.

Quite obviously, one of the things we want to do is to build up the number of specialist procedures that are available at our regional hospitals not only at Port Pirie but at Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier and so on. For too long people in these centres have come to town for procedures that quite properly should be carried out in those centres. Part of the answer to the problem is attracting the specialists to these hospitals and, of course, part of that is providing the appropriate facilities. One would hope that, with these facilities, the board and staff at Port Pirie, with the assistance of the commission, will now turn their attention very much to that task.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Napier.

GULF ST VINCENT PRAWN FISHERY

Mr MEIER (Goyder): My question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries. What information has been gained from the survey monitoring of the Gulf St Vincent prawn fishery since the new system of management was established some three months ago? The report of the Select Committee on the Gulf St Vincent Prawn Fishery was handed down on 30 October last year. One of the key recommendations of the report was that a new management committee for the Gulf St Vincent prawn fishery be set up, taking management out of the hands of the Department of Fisheries. The spring and summer monitoring periods have now passed, and the results of surveys made during these periods are crucial to the future of the Gulf St Vincent prawn fishery. Details should be announced to this House.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I appreciate the question from the shadow Minister of Fisheries on the Gulf St Vincent fishery, and I can partly understand why the member for Goyder is no longer—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I can partly understand why the member for Goyder is no longer the shadow Minister of Fisheries because, if he were, he would already have done the homework to find out that the management mechanisms that were recommended are not yet in place.

Members interjecting:

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Goyder.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I as Minister and my department are very eager for those management mechanisms to be in place at the earliest opportunity but, as members who have read the report would know, it requires a joint approach by the department and the industry, and therein lies the problem: the industry is not yet in a position to participate in that management exercise, because it has not yet been able to select its own people for the management committee.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Let us come back to this. The report recommended that this should be done under this management committee, and it recommended that this management committee should have a certain structure. That committee is to represent the interests of 10 prawn fishers in Gulf St Vincent. I would have thought that it should be possible for that group of 10 people to select a person or people to represent them, but the reality is that

they have not been able to, and they have had to go to the Australian Electoral Commission to conduct a ballot of their 10 members to decide who is to be the representative on the management committee. So, at the moment we are in the process of waiting for the Australian Electoral Commission, which is calling for nominations, to determine whether there is more than one nomination and, if there is more than one nomination, a secret ballot will be conducted. When that happens, we will have the opportunity for this management structure to be put in place. If the honourable member really had his finger on the pulse, I would have expected him to know all that; that is what has been holding up the issue until now.

Now, let us come down to the issue of whether or not some investigations should be done. In fact, some survey work was done last year and, if the honourable member recalls, I was criticised at the time for allowing that to proceed in advance of decisions being made on the select committee report. February and March is the period for the next survey to be undertaken (although we are not yet into March) and the department was very keen to see that this survey take place into the later recruitment phase of the prawn fishery. Initially, it said that SAFIC supported that being undertaken in advance of the appointment of this management structure, although it must be noted that the Gulf St Vincent Prawn Boat Owners Association was strongly against its happening in advance of the appointment of this management structure.

I happened to meet with the President and the Executive Officer of SAFIC a few days ago, and made the point that they were not prepared to support that survey work taking place at the moment. This is from the South Australian Fishing Industry Council. They recommended that it should wait until after the management committee had been put in place. It was their considered judgment, as professional fishers, that there would not be a harm to the fishery—which is not being fished at the moment anyway, because it has been closed—by the February/March survey not being conducted.

On the basis of that information from the peak body of the fishing industry, along with Gulf St Vincent prawn boat owners' own views, not to mention their own difficulties in getting together their part of the management structure, I believe that it was not unreasonable that the March survey be not proceeded with. I know that today a view has been expressed by the Spencer Gulf Prawn Boat Owners Association that the survey should proceed, but I have asked the department also to report to me on to what extent any one of the four surveys that have taken place over each year is likely to be out of step in a major way with the findings of other surveys, remembering that the November survey is an early recruitment survey, the February/March survey is a later one, and they all fit into a cycle. It would be expected that, while there may be a gap in the February/March survey, we will still obtain significant results from later surveys this year for a fishery that remains closed until the end of 1993 and therefore still allows us plenty of time next year for a number of surveys, including the one in February/March.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: STATE BANK

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER (Minister of Education): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I read to the House the text of a ministerial statement made by my colleague the Attorney-General earlier this afternoon in another place. This morning, in Executive Council, the Governor approved the extension of the reporting deadlines of both the Royal Commissioner and the Auditor-General inquiring into the financial problems of the State Bank. The Auditor-General, Mr Ken MacPherson, will now be required to report on all terms of reference by 30 September 1992. The Royal Commissioner, Mr Samuel Jacobs, will now make his final report by 30 November 1992. I have been advised that an interim report is proposed to be made by the Royal Commissioner on term of reference 1 as soon as the evidence relating to that term has been concluded and pending receipt of the Auditor-General's Report.

As far as we can ascertain at this stage, the Royal Commissioner anticipates that the hearings of the royal commission should resume by 24 March 1992, certainly no earlier than that date. Given this likely resumption date, the interim report should be available by 30 September 1992. The senior counsel assisting the royal commission and the Auditor-General have also had discussions, and both have agreed that the prompt flow of information to the commission from the Auditor-General at its request is critical to the successful adherence by the Royal Commissioner to the reporting date. The senior counsel has also confirmed that the information flow will enable the commission to take steps to avoid any significant overlap in the work being carried out by the commission and the Auditor-General's inquiry.

One other matter that needs to be addressed is the question of term of reference 3. On 28 January this year I received a letter from representatives of the State Bank requesting that term of reference 3 be removed from the Royal Commissioner, given the inevitable damage of public confidence the hearings were having on the bank. The suggestion that term of reference 3 be removed from the royal commission and given to the Auditor-General was discussed with Mr Jacobs, and the decision was made that term of reference 3 would not be dropped from the royal commission. It will be considered and reported on by the royal commission as originally planned. It is within the interests of everyone concerned in these two parallel inquiries into the State Bank that they be concluded as soon as possible.

Many of the delays of these inquiries had not been foreseen, nor could they have been when the original deadlines were announced on 4 March last year. There is not and never has been any intention of this Government to interfere in the running of the royal commission. It has always been the intention of the Government to ensure that an open and comprehensive inquiry into the State Bank financial problems be conducted. I do not expect further extensions to be sought.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: I put the question that the House note grievances.

Mr De LAINE (Price): So often in this place members are critical of other members or policies, and I have much pleasure this afternoon in departing from that and placing on the public record an acknowledgment of something worthwhile that was done by a member of this place. I refer to the fourth charity walk recently undertaken by my friend and colleague the member for Albert Park. For the fourth year running the honourable member has undertaken to

walk from Adelaide to Port Pirie to raise money for some very worthwhile charities, namely, the Queen Elizabeth and Port Pirie Hospitals.

This year, for the fourth time, the honourable member left Westfield, Kilkenny, at 11 a.m. on Saturday 18 January to walk to Port Pirie. For the first two years he walked from Adelaide to Port Pirie, but last year and this year, the day after arriving in Port Pirie he reversed and walked back to Adelaide as well—a magical effort. This entails two weeks on the road, walking quite a few hours each day. The honourable member arrived back in Adelaide at 12 noon on Saturday 1 February, admitting to being half a stone lighter in weight. However, on talking to him, I perceived that he must have lost much more than that.

Each year the honourable member has raised a record amount. This year he has raised over \$43 000, and there is still some money to come in. Some \$37 000-plus has gone to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to buy specialised equipment to help people, particularly those with heart conditions, and \$4 000 has been given by him to the Port Pirie Hospital from the moneys raised. Overall, the honourable member has raised over \$122 000 in the past four years and every cent of that money has gone to those two hospitals.

A considerable amount of the money that is needed to undertake a walk of this nature comes from the honourable member's own pocket and from sponsors and other helpers. The honourable member gets terrific support along the road, all the way to Port Pirie and back. As he himself has said, it is target country to him and to others on this side of the House as most of the people who live in those areas would be supporters of the Opposition. However, politics are always put aside at these times. The honourable member has received tremendous support and made very many firm and lasting friendships along the way. These people look forward to his walk each year and organise certain functions to raise money which is donated to the charity. As I said, he gets a terrific amount of help and support along the way and creates tremendous good will not only for himself but for the Government and, I might add, for members of Parliament who are not held in very high esteem these days. This sort of thing can only benefit their standing in the eyes of the public.

This year was not as hot as usual. Sometimes the temperature on the bitumen is in excess of 50°C. This year was not as hot, but the honourable member had other problems. Unfortunately, not long after he set off on his walk he contracted quite a serious virus between Snowtown and Port Pirie. The honourable member was very ill and distressed. A doctor said that he had to rest for five days. Of course, that was out of the question and he had to battle on because he did not want to let down his sponsors and other supporters. It has been an amazing effort.

This year he was assisted by Don Ferguson—not the member for Henley Beach, but another person of the same name—who always assists him with his walk and takes annual or long service leave each year in order to do that. The honourable member was also assisted by the Army this year, which helped sponsor and support him. All in all, it was a terrific effort. I should like to place on public record the appreciation of the people he helps and congratulate and thank him for his effort, as I am sure all members will.

Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): In this brief grievance debate I wish to address the matter of the Federal economic statement. It is nothing more than a con trick on the people of Australia and of South Australia. I liken it to a buy-back package—a buy-back of ALP voters who have left the Party in droves, based on its economic

performance in the depression/recession which has enveloped this country. We were talking about prawns and buy-back packages today. We know how well they have worked in the circumstances facing the prawn fishing industry in South Australia. We know that this is a piece of bribery to the people of Australia to vote ALP at the next election. It is nothing more, nothing less. There is no vision; there is no future. It is simply a con trick.

The Prime Minister has decided to play fast and loose with Treasury cash. What he is doing is quite irresponsible. There is no long-term perspective involved with the package; it is short-term measures for short-term gain. Let him never forget the damage that he wrought on this economy when, as Treasurer of this country, he allowed interest rates to destroy small businesses, farms and, indeed, the very economic fabric of this country. This is part of a fix-up package in the hope that people will forget the past and perhaps cling on to whatever future they think they may have with this bit of bribery.

I should like to look at the areas which affect South Australia intimately and pose the question as to whether we are any better off. Certainly I applaud the standardisation measure. We have been looking forward to the completion of line standardisation between Melbourne and Adelaide for a long time. It is now to become a reality, after much talking about this measure. We have a promise that within three years it will be finished. We look forward to that. However, it is nothing new; it now just puts it on a time frame.

I look, for example, at the injection of the one-off increase in allowances for families. Again, it is one off. It provides a special benefit. Perhaps it is in recognition of the damage that has been wrought and the pain that has been suffered particularly by families. It is simply a matter of bribery, because it does not continue as an income stream for those who are impoverished. It happens to be a one-off payment. I refer to the tax scales that have been talked about, because they involve a package of \$8.6 billion. That is the figure put in the budget. How can the Treasurer, with no revenue measures in place, possibly afford \$8.6 billion? The reaction of stock markets and overseas money markets is apparent: they believe that the measures are inflationary.

Finally, and importantly, let us look at the MFP. Members know that the State Government is due to get \$60 million to \$70 million out of the Better Cities Program. We were told that the MFP was going to receive a special boost of cash from the Commonwealth. There is no special boost. The Premier is using part of the \$60 million to \$70 million cash grant to put into the MFP. We would like to know from the Premier exactly what other projects he had in mind, because I am sure other people to the north and south of Adelaide would like to see some infrastructure: we could have the beginning of the north-south corridor, and there is a whole range of projects which are vital to this State and which obviously have been set aside because of the money being earmarked for the MFP.

We cannot let the Premier go out and say that we have won a victory for South Australia, because we have not. There is no extra money: we are simply enjoying part of the Better Cities Program. It is not an additional grant and it does not pay special recognition to the MFP. The Premier simply said, 'I want this money provided for the MFP.' We still have to wait on the Commonwealth to provide its unambiguous support for this project rather than the half-hearted way it has been supported in the past. I finish on this note: the package may look impressive on the outside but it will fix nothing and change nothing.

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Today members heard the temporary Deputy Leader of the Opposition make an interjection in respect of stress claims. I have been a member of this House for about 13 years and the only time I ever hear a response from the Opposition about work injuries is when it can sensationalise or ridicule this Government in its attempts to redress the problems of workplace injuries. Let us look at the figures. Last financial year 75 000 South Australian workers were injured on the job. In other words, one in every eight workers was injured as a result of work. Have we heard a response from members opposite? Nothing. There is no concern about it—just criticism of WorkCover. I have no problem with members criticising WorkCover—that is their democratic right. However, do we hear any criticism in this place of employers who are not accepting their responsibilities to their employees? We hear nothing from members opposite about that matter.

Is it any wonder that the Liberal Opposition wants to decimate the trade union movement in Australia? The reason they want to do that is to protect their mates. That is what the Liberal Party wants to do: it wants to protect its mates from the Department of Labour audits. Today we had a clear demonstration from the Minister of Labour about what has happened over the past 12 months, as follows:

During the past 12 months or so, the department has conducted 120 audits in workplaces across a range of industries. It was noted during audits that, in many cases, the companies in question had been making serious efforts to improve their safety performance. The audits extended these efforts. Nonetheless, inspectors found it necessary to issue notices to roughly 20 per cent of the companies audited: 62 improvement notices and 10 prohibition notices were issued.

I have to say also that there are many good employers in South Australia, so that the record shows that I am trying to be fair in this approach. What I am angry about is the response from members opposite. They have little concern for injured workers.

As a member who has come right from the bottom of the heap, like many others who have gone through this place, I have seen the tragedies and traumas of people on the job, particularly in the industry in which I worked, and little rehabilitation was available in those days. When I first came down from the country I saw some disastrous accidents, particularly in the rail industry, occur to my work-mates. People lost arms, legs and in some cases their heads and thus their lives.

It galls me when I hear attacks on the trade union movement and WorkCover where the record is not a balanced one. When we address the problems of injuries and compensation here in South Australia we should look at the overall picture and not just hear a select attack upon what the workers may get out of it as a consequence of injuries that they do not want. I concede that there are employees who will rot the system, and I do not give any support to them. Equally, I believe that there are employers who rot the system.

It annoys me intensely that we hear attacks on WorkCover, yet we hear little from the Opposition about rehabilitation, and I can go back to 4 October 1979, which is another issue, and the response from members opposite. In my view their concern is not about rehabilitation. It is not about addressing problems and making our workplaces safer in South Australia. I have to put that on the record because I feel strongly about this issue. I commend those employers who do have safe workplaces here in this State.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): This afternoon I want to refer to two matters that have been brought to my attention. The first concerns the Minister of Water Resources,

and the second concerns the same Minister in her capacity as Minister for Environment and Planning. I have been informed that the Aldinga/Port Willunga sewerage scheme is in some doubt following correspondence received by the District Council of Willunga. I believe it is essential that the Minister give an assurance that the proposed Aldinga/Port Willunga sewerage scheme will be completed in eight years as originally indicated now that the funding for the years 1991-92 and 1992-93 have been reduced from \$700 000 per annum (as determined in the submission to the former Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works) to \$300 000 per annum, as indicated in correspondence to the District Council of Willunga dated 18 December 1991.

I refer to a letter that I have received from that council indicating that it has recently been advised by the Minister of proposed funding for five of the eight years of this project. When the project was justified before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works—I was a member of that committee at that time—by the Engineering and Water Supply Department, an annual expenditure of \$700 000 was proposed. For the first three years of the proposal this figure will not be achieved. The council is very concerned about the reduction in the expenditure allocation, and it feels that that level should be maintained so that it can have some degree of confidence that the work will be completed within the eight year time frame.

I know of some of the problems that are being experienced in that area. As shadow Minister I have received a considerable amount of representation from constituents who would be assisted as a result of the implementation of that scheme. I put this matter before the Parliament in the hope that I will receive an assurance from the Minister that this proposal will proceed.

The second matter to which I refer concerns the Minister for Environment and Planning. Is the Minister aware that National Parks and Wildlife Service officers and the police, who are required to enforce regulations relating to duck hunting in this State, are continually being embarrassed because of the selective enforcement of the regulations? It is important that the Minister indicate the number of prosecutions that have not been dismissed by the courts against people protesting about duck shooting who enter water to remove wounded ducks. Again, I have received a considerable amount of correspondence on this subject. I quote from a letter written to me as follows:

I believe that the regulations concerning national parks and reserves, etc. have been selectively enforced—which to me is worse than total non-enforcement. Those regulations, which if enforced would effectively prohibit hunting, have not been enforced upon licensed hunters carrying shotguns, but have been enforced against all others be they anti-duck hunting protesters or tourists. In the case of the protesters the Government has gone even further in selective enforcement by issuing a proclamation banning them from entering the water to rescue wounded ducks and enforcing that proclamation rigidly, even though so far the courts have, I believe, dismissed all cases.

I believe that this matter is of very real concern, and I ask the Minister to address it as a matter of urgency. In South Australia, it seems that there are in practice two sets of laws: one for duck hunters who have bought a hunting licence and one for the rest. As enforced, the law favours the hunters and allows the destruction of wildlife. The law is a continuing embarrassment to wildlife officers and the police who are required to enforce it. I request quite seriously that the Minister consider this matter urgently.

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): In the time available to me I would like to compliment the Federal Government on its economic package. I would also like to address some of the nonsense that we have heard from members opposite. The

Leader of the Opposition is quoted in tonight's *News* as saying that the Keating statement was 'crude, reckless and devoid of economic rationale'. He then went on to say:

While major projects were desirable they were not affordable without major structural change.

I do not know exactly what the Leader of the Opposition read, but I would have thought that going to a national power grid, spending \$400 million on railways and \$600 million on roads, further freeing up the airways, funding rural assistance and textiles, clothing and footwear restructuring and providing money for TAFE was all about major structural change.

That is exactly the whole point of this statement by the Federal Government: to provide structural change. Yet, the Leader of the Opposition in this House does not seem to understand what it is all about—but that is probably not surprising. What upsets the Leader of the Opposition is that the fightback has been knocked out. I think that is what is causing the problems opposite. This State will benefit greatly from the package put forward last night by the Prime Minister, and all South Australians should welcome it.

The MFP will receive funding. The standardisation of the rail line between Adelaide and Melbourne will be of great benefit to this State. The sales tax cuts on motor vehicles will help this State because it is a major producer of motor vehicles. The incentives for investment will help the manufacturing industry in this State, and TAFE funding will help to improve the skills of our work force. Just contrast that with the policies of the Federal Opposition. What are its solutions to the economic problems that we are facing in this recession? Of course, its main solution is to introduce a new form of tax that will lower the living standards of all workers in this country. I will not say that it will lower the living standards of everyone—certainly those who are wealthy will not suffer too greatly—but the poor people in this country will have their living standards lowered.

What else is the Federal Opposition offering? It is offering industrial turmoil. Instead of working constructively, as the Federal Government has done, to try to improve the competitive position of our industry, to remove cost impediments and to work cooperatively with the trade union movement to achieve that, the Federal Opposition is offering industrial turmoil.

Mr John Reid, the Chairman of James Hardie Industries and the Director of Broken Hill Pty Limited, states in an article in the *National Business Bulletin*:

The union leadership in this country is made up of intelligent, thoughtful and good Australians, sometimes more so than their management counterparts.

That statement is by a leading industrialist; yet, Opposition members are offering industrial turmoil. They want to reduce the living standards of the poorest people in this country; then, when they have reduced them to poverty, they want to remove unemployment and welfare benefits for those people. That is hardly the way to get out of this recession in which we find ourselves. In fact, the policies offered by the Federal Government are entirely appropriate. At a time of recession it is economically responsible that we should fund projects that will offer long-term returns to this country. Those projects will not compete for funds from the private sector because we are in a recession.

As the benefits of these projects come on stream in later years, with the economy moving into recovery phase by then, those projects will not compete with the private sector for funds. So, funding infrastructure projects in an entirely rational and responsible way now will provide benefits for this country in the future. The fact is that the fightback by the Opposition has run out of punch. The Opposition has

nothing to offer the people of this country apart from higher taxation that will lower the living standards of workers. I think that members of the Opposition—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HOLLOWAY: As a matter of fact, I have a copy right here. It is one of the greatest loads of garbage that I have ever read in my life. Members opposite should be ashamed to be associated with such a document. Some of the rubbish contained in it is quite unbelievable. It is certainly not an answer to this country's economic problems. All that this fightback offers the people of this country is absolute misery.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bright. *Members interjecting:*

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): Well may my colleague say, 'Saved by the bell.' If that is an example of the sort of opposition that the Liberal Party will face in relation to its Fightback! package, victory is assured; it will be very easy. Much has been said in this Chamber today about TAFE; indeed, as part of his dismal presentation today, the member for Mitchell also said something about TAFE. I too would like to refer to TAFE. I have in my possession a letter dated 10 February 1992 that was sent to participants in courses offered by the Goolwa-based Encounter Coast Outdoor School (ECOS).

The letter claims that the school offers tourism industry and child-care skills presented by lecturers from the Noarlunga and Adelaide colleges of TAFE. The course fees are some \$380 per fortnight, and the letter explains how participants can obtain social security payments to assist their parents in paying those fees. Before dealing with the social security payments, I will read a couple of extracts from the letter so that members can be assured of the manner in which the colleges of TAFE are involved with this school. Under the heading 'Tourism industry courses', the letter states:

Adelaide College of TAFE is the only school of tourism operating at present. Lecturers from this school will be presenting units of their introductory courses in the ECOS link course. These units will be recognised by TAFE should the student wish to proceed further into a certificate, diploma or degree course with Adelaide TAFE.

So, Adelaide TAFE lecturers are involved and, indeed, the studies that the students undertake as part of the ECOS course will be recognised for further studies. Under a heading 'Child-care Skills', the letter states:

Lecturers from Noarlunga TAFE will be presenting and assessing two units of the TAFE child-care certificate course:

- (1) Introduction to child-care skills.
- (2) Out of school hours care.

Once again, we have TAFE lecturers involved. The part of the letter that particularly concerns me relates to the obtaining of social security payments. Under the heading 'Financial Assistance' the letter states:

The ECOS link course has not yet qualified for AUSTUDY assistance to students. We are in the process of negotiating this and expect it to eventually be recognised.

In the meantime, I have determined that providing these young people take the following steps:

1. Formally leave home to live at Rivers End Resort, Goolwa, before applying for Social Security benefits.
2. Register at CES office, Victor Harbor, fill out the necessary forms and take them to the Department of Social Security office, Victor Harbor. (If they are asked by Social Security officers why they left home to live in Goolwa, the answer is that they have chosen to live in a supportive dynamic young person's environment while seeking work and in the meantime gain extra work skills. For this purpose they are 'not a student'.)
3. Be available to seek work and maintain a regular program of job application (one formal job application per week—this is part of the link course concept).

4. Be prepared to accept a job if one is offered or lose the benefit. (There are very few jobs available in this area.)

This amounts to a scurrilous document, which encourages young people to defraud—and I do not use that word lightly—the Department of Social Security by obtaining benefits to which they would not otherwise be entitled for this type of course, a course in which lecturers from Noarlunga and Adelaide colleges of TAFE will be participating.

I am quite happy to make this letter available to the Minister responsible for TAFE and also to the Federal Minister for Social Security. I will ask both of those gentlemen to investigate this outrageous situation. I am sure that no member in this Parliament would like to sit idly by and see a body—particularly one associated with State Government lecturers—encouraging young people to defraud the Department of Social Security. As shadow Minister of Youth Affairs, I am appalled to see any organisations in this State exploiting the Government system but, at the same time, using young people in order to gain financial benefits themselves. To exploit young people in this way would mean that they could face problems too.

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

HOUSING LOANS REDEMPTION FUND (USE OF FUND SURPLUSES) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 12 February. Page 2683.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports this Bill, with amendments. The Housing Loans Redemption Fund has been in operation since about 1962-63. It has performed an essential task in providing a cheap Government-guaranteed life insurance scheme for new home buyers to have their mortgages paid off in the event of death. I presume that many members of this House would have availed themselves of this fund when they were taking up new housing.

To start the fund, the Treasurer provided capital of £50 000. In 1966, the Cottage Flats Act was passed, allowing the Government to take up to \$50 000 per annum—which was later increased to \$75 000 per annum—from the fund to build cottage flats, which were to be administered by the South Australian Housing Trust. So, by 1966 the fund was making a profit, and it was deemed appropriate to put part of that profit into cottage flats administered by the Housing Trust. I am informed that there have been no new contributors since 1985, and the Government now wishes to close the fund to new entrants. I am further advised that the amount held in the fund as at 30 June 1991 was \$8.33 million; as at 30 June 1990 the sum was \$7.279 million and as at 30 June 1989 it was \$6.413 million. So, we can see that the fund has accumulated significantly, one would assume primarily as a result of the high interest rates that prevailed during that period.

Against that sum, over the past six years we have seen no more than \$200 000 taken out during any one year. I will provide the figures to the House as they have been provided to me. In 1990-91 there were two claims totalling \$50 000; in 1989-90 there were six claims, totalling \$149 000; in 1988-89 there were four claims, totalling \$129 000; in 1987-88 there were nine claims, totalling \$203 000; in 1986-87 there were three claims, totalling \$54 000; and in 1985-86 there were four claims, totalling \$61 000. So, we can see

that there has not been a very large call on the pool of money in the fund.

The Government has made quite clear that it wishes to use the money—to milk the fund—for the excess and to put it into housing administered by the Housing Trust. I note that there is a change in the reference in the Act in that it is no longer dedicated to cottage flat accommodation, but is available for all forms of accommodation.

I have checked with the Insurance Council of Australia and have found that it has no difficulty with the closure of the fund to any new entrants because there are many other packages of insurance that do the job equally well, and perhaps at an even cheaper rate. Likewise, the Housing Trust was approached for its comment and it gave the nod of approval. The trust said that, as far as it was concerned, its 21 clients would continue under the existing arrangements; they would continue to be looked after by the remaining part of the fund. Of course, the Housing Trust would also benefit in a wider sense because of the injection of funds proposed in this Bill.

One of my concerns is that this is a windfall gain. Whilst money should not just lie idle and accumulate and it should be put to the best purpose, by putting the moneys through the Consolidated Account into the Housing Trust, this windfall gain or surplus is lost. We all know that money is tight at the moment; there are many competing projects. I believe that if, for example, the sum of \$7 million—which has been mentioned previously—is to be taken out of the HLR fund and placed through the Consolidated Account into the Housing Trust, it will have nothing to show for it. There are alternatives. If we believe that the people who have generated the surplus should be recipients of the surplus from the fund, we could trace back all the people who have contributed, but that would be a fairly meaningless exercise, it would be very costly and it would lead to no constructive result.

So, given my concern that the money will be paid into the Housing Trust and be lost forever somewhere in the great bowl of money that is utilised each year by the trust for whatever purposes for which it is available, it is my belief that the Government has an opportunity to make a stand. I believe this is an opportunity for the Government to say, 'We do have \$7 million available; we will earmark this money for special purposes.'

I have in mind two special purposes so that in five years or 10 years people can look back and say that the Bannon Government, at the suggestion of the Liberal Opposition, put aside some money for some extremely worthwhile causes, which are currently not receiving the attention they deserve. First and foremost on my list I would place disabled persons. Every member of this Parliament has received letters and entreaties from DPI and a number of other organisations, including those representing the brain injured and others dealing with disabled people, on the real problems facing the carers, particularly the carers of the intellectually disabled. Last year we received a submission from a person in Blackwood who said that well over 200 families are in dire need and that 60 families in absolutely critical need because the situation had become intolerable.

I know a number of people in my electorate who have reached that stage. They have intellectually disabled children, those children have grown up, the parents are getting very old, they have given their lives to these children and no alternatives are currently available. We do not know what will happen under these circumstances. I understand that approximately 300 families are in desperate need, probably about 60 are in critical need and about 1 200 would be extraordinarily grateful for any assistance the Govern-

ment could provide in terms of alternative housing. It is an area that will not receive funding, specifically because of the strictures on finance and, because they were not part of the mainstream of receiving money back in the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s, they really have not been recognised in the provision of services in the way in which I believe they should have been.

The second area that I would like to see addressed under the \$7 million windfall is cooperative housing provided by charitable organisations. In my area there are two separate venues, run by the Salvation Army and for emergency housing. The Salvos do a fantastic job, as do a number of other charitable organisations. I know that the Central Adelaide Mission, the Uniting Church and many of the church organisations are providing relief not only for those people who are out on the streets, in terms of meals, but also for those people who are absolutely desperate for housing and who cannot obtain it by normal means. They get due consideration by charitable organisations.

These charitable organisations run a very efficient shop. They really do maximise the benefits that are available under the funding limitations. They know that they have to treat every dollar very carefully, and I would urge members to look at the ways in which these charities, particularly those I have just mentioned, go about their business of providing relief. It is an object lesson to those who believe that the Government can actually provide a good service because, once we get out into those areas, we see that those organisations provide an excellent service with minimum funding.

I believe that, because they are at the leading edge, they do see the down-and-outs every day of the week and the people who have very little future in this world. Those people do not normally go through the Government offices; they do not go through the Department for Family and Community Services, as it is now known: they go to the soup kitchens, the Central Mission or the Salvation Army. That is the point of contact, not any of the Government departments, as some people would have us believe.

So, they are the people who are dealing with the human misery at the leading edge of providing welfare support, housing support, meals and accommodation. I believe it is an appropriate time, because we do have this \$7 million, which we really had not counted on previously, to provide for that purpose and perhaps earn a few brownie points out there in the long-suffering community. I support the funding change in principle, although I want the moneys earmarked for specific purposes.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Finance): I thank the Deputy Leader for his support for the Bill on behalf of the Opposition, and I want to make a couple of comments in response, because I note that there are amendments on file and I do not want to go through the arguments more than once. The money will not be 'lost' if it goes via Consolidated Revenue to the Housing Trust. The Housing Trust has to show in its annual report how this particular amount of money was spent, so that is clearly identified and will be identified in the annual report which, of course, is tabled in the House. As regards the comments by the Deputy Leader about people in necessitous circumstances, of course, we all have a great deal of compassion for those people, and a variety of programs are funded fully or in part by the Government, including those run by some of the organisations that were mentioned by the Deputy Leader.

Whether they be the Salvation Army, the Central Mission or St Vincent De Paul, those very good and worthy organisations do get Federal Government or State Government

and, possibly, some local government support, and I know they appreciate it. Of course, they would like more: we would all like more—there is no doubt that that is the case. Governments do what they can, when they can, to the limits of the public purse. We always bear in mind that it is taxpayers' money that we distribute, so I do not think that, whilst wanting more money, these organisations would not acknowledge that the Government does assist them in a number of ways and that they take part in various programs. So, I will not refer in detail to the amendments; suffice to say that I believe that the Bill ought to be read a second time so that the Committee debate can be held.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—'Insertion of ss. 13 and 14.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: I move:

Page 1, lines 27 and 28—Leave out the last two words from line 27 and all words from line 28 and insert subclause as follows:

(1a) The Treasurer may not direct that a payment be made from the fund under subsection (1) except on the advice of an actuary that the balance of the fund remaining after the payment should be sufficient to meet all present and future liabilities of the fund under section 8.

This is merely a tidying up of the Act, and I am sure it was the intention of the Government that sufficient moneys should remain in the fund to meet future obligations.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Government is happy to accept that amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I move:

Lines 30 and 31—Leave out the last two words from line 30 and all words from line 31 and insert—

(a) assisting the provision of housing for persons in necessitous circumstances by charitable organisations;

or

(b) providing or assisting the provision of housing for disabled persons in necessitous circumstances.

I made it quite clear during the second reading debate what I was interested in doing, and I will certainly not take up the Committee's time by extending further the principle. It is an opportunity—an opportunity not to be missed—for the Government to declare that it has a special interest in an area that has received little attention in the past. I know that members on both sides of the Parliament have consistently received requests for relief which go far beyond the bounds of the normal person who is homeless for a wide variety of reasons, whether through bad luck, bad management or whatever. These people have been forced to grapple with life and to provide care to disabled children under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. I would have thought this was an opportunity for us to give those people relief.

Anyone who has a person requiring constant attention—who must be looked after all the time, and who needs and requires even some of the simplest services to be provided such as lack of toilet control leading to cleaning up messes or changing nappies, even of people as old as 20, 30 or 40 years of age—can appreciate the extreme demand out there for people who have in many ways been the unsung heroes of our society. There are literally thousands of people in this situation but, as I said in the second reading debate, there is a core of people who, as parents—and I know some of them—of 70, 75 or 80 years of age have disabled children 40 and 50 years old, and they can no longer cope, because there are not sufficient mechanisms for them to do so. I have sung the praises of particular charitable organisations which provide a wonderful service. This amendment would provide a boost. They are at the leading edge of welfare delivery, do this particularly well and efficiently, and I

believe this would channel the funds into a very effective area.

In moving this amendment, I note that the Housing Trust, while providing quite a good service over the past 30 or 40 years, has been criticised on a number of occasions for lack of efficiency in particular areas. We note that a number of tenants today who do not pay full rent should be doing so, now that their income levels have increased far beyond the average. I commend the amendment to members.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Government opposes this amendment, essentially for the reasons that I stated in my response to the second reading. Of course, the Housing Trust has a responsibility to all South Australians. I am not quite sure, but I believe there are something like 60 000 tenants, the overwhelming majority of whom are in necessitous circumstances of one form or another, including some of the people described by the Deputy Leader. So it is not fair to suggest that the Housing Trust does not look after people in all necessitous circumstances and all needy people. I think it does so very well. Its list is somewhere over 45 000, perhaps as high as 48 000 now, so there are many needy people who will be helped by the Housing Trust.

As I said in the second reading, this is in no way to disparage the organisations that supply their services to needy people. We do support them, financially and morally and in every other way, to the best of our ability. However, I believe that the amendment, if carried, would unnecessarily restrict the use of these funds; in particular it would restrict the Housing Trust in terms of providing housing for disabled persons only out of this fund, and many other people in needy circumstances would not fall into that category. For those reasons I urge the Committee to reject the amendment.

Amendment negatived.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I move:

After line 10—Insert definition as follows:

'actuary' means a Fellow or Accredited Member of the Institute of Actuaries of Australia.

This is a consequential amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATUTES REPEAL (EGG INDUSTRY) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 26 February. Page 3090.)

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of Agriculture): Briefly last night I indicated that there were some issues I wanted to pursue further on behalf of members who had contributed to the debate. I would now like to close my contributions with those answers. First, there was the matter of the assets of the board and what should happen to those assets, whether they should be transferred to the industry or sold or some or other commercial arrangements arrived at. The arguments supporting the amendment (which I know I cannot canvass in detail except for the principle of the issue) to give the board assets to producers on a *pro rata* basis with respect to quota holdings have serious implications for the future of the industry cooperative. It must be noted that not all producers wish to be members of the cooperative, and it is therefore likely that the assets would have to be sold in order to distribute the proceeds to all producers. It is difficult to see how the cooperative could commence operations on this basis, particularly if some of the largest producers in South Australia did not join the cooperative.

If the assets of the board were to be sold to quota holders, the 45 producers with over 5 000 hens who hold over 80 per cent of the hen quotas would end up holding the major share. Furthermore, the Valuer-General has valued the Egg Board assets at \$920 000, which would then be distributed over 822 981 quotas, resulting in \$1.12 per quota. This amount will be further reduced when expenses associated with the transfer are deducted. The valuation assumes the Egg Board premises will continue to be used as an egg grading and processing facility. If they were not sold for that purpose, the valuation would clearly be optimistic. Egg producers were contributing to the South Australian Egg Board long before the introduction of hen quotas in 1975.

In 1968 there were about 2 500 egg producers in South Australia compared with 260 at the present time. An equitable distribution of the assets to all contributors present or past would be impossible. As to the distribution of benefits from the regulated system, for some years retail egg prices in South Australia have been the highest of all mainland States. While it can be argued that one of the reasons for this has been higher retail margins, it is also clear that producers have also benefited and, at times, there has been a greater margin for the Egg Board itself.

In 1983 average farm gate prices over all grades, after deducting levies in South Australia, were 6c a dozen higher than in New South Wales. By February 1987 the difference had risen to 28c. In 1990, farm gate prices in South Australia were 25c higher than in New South Wales. At the present time, we estimate that South Australian egg producers receive an average of 109c net a dozen from the board compared to 72c to 84c received by New South Wales producers who consign their eggs to a grading floor. Similar prices in Victoria and Queensland are 85c and 88c respectively. While it can be argued that a major reason that the Egg Board is in financial difficulties involves the purchase prices paid for Red Comb and Pritchard, it could also be argued that producers have been paid higher farm gate prices than was justified by prevailing market conditions and the numbers of surplus eggs being pulped at a loss.

On the matter of payments to the Chair of the South Australian Egg Board, the following information is provided. Mr Kessell is paid a fee of \$8 571 for his duties as Chair. Mr Kessell is also paid a consultant's fee of \$90 an hour for other duties that he performs at the board. He has an arrangement that if his time input exceeds 20 hours per week he must seek the approval of the board. This rate is in line with rates recommended by the Australasian Register of Agricultural Consultants for a senior consultant. Recommended rates on the fee scale go as high as \$140 per hour. For the period 20 September 1991 to 17 January 1992, Mr Kessell has been paid consultancy fees of \$29 048.

I turn now to the Egg Board levies. In February 1992 the South Australian Egg Board advised producers that from 15 February to 13 March 1992 levies would be raised from 12c per bird per fortnight to 28c per bird per fortnight. However, as a result of being able to maintain wholesale prices, reduced egg surpluses and cost saving measures, the board has announced the following levies: from 15 February to 13 March, 20c per bird per fortnight, or 24c a dozen, and from 14 March 1992, 16c per bird per fortnight or 19c a dozen.

On the matter of egg quality, following the repeal of the Marketing of Eggs Act 1941, egg quality regulations will be administered under the Food Act 1988 by the South Australian Health Commission. Therefore, any suggestion that there will be no control over the quality of eggs is incorrect. The regulations under the Food Act contain provisions prohibiting the sale of cracked, dirty and contaminated eggs.

Eggs will have to be candled to remove eggs with cracks and thin shells to ensure that cracked eggs are not offered for sale. It is highly unlikely that experienced producers will not remove eggs with blood spots and other defects during the candling process. Similar regulations currently apply in New South Wales and producers continue to candle eggs as they did prior to deregulation. It is predictable that in a more competitive egg market after deregulation producers will continue to take care to supply good quality eggs rather than risk losing market share.

Before finishing on this matter, just coming back to the Egg Board's assets, in identifying that consumers in South Australia have paid on average higher prices for eggs than has been the case in other States, it can well be argued that many of the assets of the South Australian Egg Board have been purchased through surpluses paid by consumers as a result of the premium for egg prices that they have paid and that, therefore, they have a vested interest in seeing some return from those assets so purchased. Of course, they are best represented through their role as taxpayers, namely, in their role as contributors to consolidated revenue.

There is a further point that needs to be taken into account. While the South Australian Egg Board has functioned very well over the years in seeking to carry out its task, it must be acknowledged that, without doubt, it has had financially troubled times in recent years, particularly since deregulation of the egg industry in New South Wales. That deregulation resulted in serious losses being sustained by the Egg Board over recent months. Those losses are already showing up in terms of a consolidated revenue cost, as I indicated in my ministerial statement. I draw the attention of members to that ministerial statement, which appears on page 2669 of *Hansard*, where I say:

The transfer of the South Australian Egg Board assets to industry and the cost to the State Government of deregulating the sector is likely to be between a minimum of \$1.35 million and a maximum of \$3.1 million.

So there will be a cost to the taxpayer notwithstanding the proposals before the egg industry on the manner of the transfer of the assets. What is being suggested by alternative contributions to the debate is that that cost, borne by the taxpayer, should be added to. I have to say that that is not a position to which I will accede.

Finally, I want to pay particular tribute to all those who have worked so constructively over recent months to achieve a resolution of the issues facing the egg industry. There were some suggestions last night that deregulation has been speeded up or that I have acted in a peremptory manner. I reject both suggestions. I told the egg industry in 1989 that deregulation was inevitable, that I would not do it at the same speed as happened in New South Wales and that I anticipated the industry should be prepared for deregulation within a two to four-year scenario. From 1989 to 1992 is a three-year period, and that fits in with the time line that I warned the industry about in 1989. At the time I also told the industry that I would not be supporting the Government's paying compensation, as happened in New South Wales, because we were giving the industry time to phase the deregulation process. Any suggestion that the industry has been caught short by these deregulation moves is incorrect; it has known the agenda from the start.

I appreciate the way in which the industry has worked with the Department of Agriculture and the Government on proceeding with this matter. Some difficult times have been gone through. The role of the industry, particularly under the negotiating committee for industry, under Michael Shanahan, is particularly appreciated by me. I also give credit to officers in the Department of Agriculture, particularly Dr Barbara Wilson. I give particular credit to my

own executive assistant, Kevin Foley, for the significant role that he played in helping discussions to proceed and getting ideas evaluated and the new proposals and alternatives considered, resulting in what I believe is the only realistic set of proposals for a viable egg industry in South Australia with the maximum benefit and minimum cost to the taxpayers and the minimum effective cost to the industry. I thank honourable members for their support for the principle of the legislation and look forward to its passage through Committee.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—'Commencement.'

Mr MEIER: I seek confirmation from the Minister as to when this legislation will be proclaimed. The Minister, in his second reading speech, referred to the levies per hen per fortnight. Whilst he mentioned some dates—15 February to 13 March and then from 14 March on—I know that egg producers are very concerned about those levies in the first instance. In fact, I believe that a meeting is being held this very day by egg producers who are outraged at the massive increase in levies in recent times, namely, as the Minister identified, from 12c per hen to a proposed 28c per hen overnight; in other words, far more than double. The Minister gave a reason why the 28c was not being adhered to. The reason, as he knows full well, is that the producers refused to accept it. They regarded it as outrageous and the industry would not wear it. If he wanted to ruin the industry overnight, he could stick with the 28c. Therefore, a compromise of 20c per hen was agreed to reluctantly by the producers.

It was positive to hear the Minister say it was going to be dropped to 16c, but one should take into account the fact that many producers are behind with their levies right now. In fact, they cannot pay them and are concerned as to how long they have to pay the levies. Other information given to me was that the Minister said that the board would be used as an agent to recoup unpaid levies down the track. Will the Minister comment on this? What happens to growers who have not been able to pay their levies when the new Act comes into place? Will the board act as Big Brother and police it? I thought the board as we know it was to be abolished. There are questions to be answered.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The date of proclamation is clearly contingent on what happens in Parliament but, things proceeding well, it is anticipated that 28 March will be the effective date. The arrangement proposed with respect to the collection of outstanding levies is that the cooperative—not the board, which will cease to exist—after 28 March for a period of three months will collect those fees. After such time it is proposed that that revert to the Government through the instrumentality of the Agriculture Department.

Mr MEIER: As to the cooperative being the collecting agent, what happens where a producer with 20 000 quotas has not met his levies up until 28 March (if that is the date of proclamation) and during the following three months? What if the grower does not join the new cooperative and three months after proclamation he still has not paid the levies? Will legal action be taken against that person or will those levies simply be forfeited?

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I point to my earlier answer. I said that the Agriculture Department would be responsible after the three month period, and I repeat that. I do not know what else I can say about that. If the honourable member is asking me to say whether or not legal action would be taken, all I can say is that it would be quite

inappropriate for me to anticipate that. It would surely be the advice of all members of this place that legal obligations—levies outstanding—should be paid and that those matters should not be still outstanding three months after the date of proclamation but, if they are, they should still be paid.

If I were now to give the answer that after three months they would just be forfeited, it would be a pretty unwise business decision for someone who owes outstanding levies to consider paying them to the board before 28 March or to the cooperative from 28 March to some point three months on because the Minister stood up in Parliament and said that they would be forfeited after that time anyway. It is just not reasonable to ask me to indicate action that would undermine the capacity of the present board to fulfil its legal obligations to pursue those amounts for levies incurred under law, under the existing legislation.

Mr MEIER: The Minister knows what I am on about. I am on about the fact that the levies have increased from 12 cents to 20 cents, which is a massive increase. It is an increase of such proportion that many growers are not able to meet their commitments. Now we hear the Minister saying that he will not indicate whether there would be prosecutions, and I acknowledge that. The Minister has identified that the Agriculture Department will have to pursue it further. I would like to state on the record, as I said in my second reading speech, that it is of great concern and worry to me that we have a new Act about to be proclaimed—if it passes both Houses of Parliament—and we will see producers who have not been able to pay their levies—because they do not have the money—starting off under a new deregulated system where, because of their outstanding debts, they stand little or no chance to make a go of it. The Minister should have weighed up these factors before proceeding in great haste to deregulate the egg market. It is all very well if it works to the benefit of all, but it will be to the detriment of many producers.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I do not call 1989 to 1992 working at great haste.

Mr Meier interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The honourable member interjects, but I do not even call the period of the past six months or so during which substantial discussions have taken place a matter of great haste. The point is that something had to be done. No-one disagrees with that. Everyone acknowledges that something had to be done. If the honourable member is saying that something should be done six months from now, I will tell him what the price would be. The price could be—especially if there was not an opportunity to increase levies—financial haemorrhaging by the board that would have to be picked up by the taxpayer, amongst others. Additionally a price would be paid in terms of a lack of marketing potential by the egg industry of South Australia which would find that the very regulatory framework that has helped it in the past—but which in recent times following the New South Wales deregulation—no longer provides the sorts of protections and assistance to the industry that it seeks.

The industry would be constrained by that regulatory framework and hindered every additional month that it was in place. In those circumstances, the speed at which we have acted in this matter is reasonable, all things being considered. The option as to the levy simply would have been that the board would have haemorrhaged even more, and I guess that that means that the honourable member is simply suggesting that the Government's budgetary situation, which after all is the taxpayers' budgetary concern, should simply have been blown out to that extent.

Clause passed.

Clause 3—'Repeal.'

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I move:

Page 1—

Line 17—Leave out 'The' and insert 'Subject to subsection (3), the'.

After line 20—Insert subclause as follows:

(3) The land comprised in certificate of title register book volume 4001, folio 234 is vested in the cooperative if it is incorporated before, or within six months after, the commencement of this Act.

(4) If the cooperative is not incorporated before the commencement of this Act the land vests in the Minister of Agriculture until the cooperative is incorporated.

(5) Where the land has vested in the cooperative under subsection (3), a person who held a licence under the Egg Industry Stabilisation Act 1973 immediately before the commencement of this Act may require the cooperative to pay to him or her an amount that bears the same proportion to the value of the land as the hen quota attached to his or her licence—bore to the State hen quota immediately before the commencement of this Act.

(6) An amount to be paid under subsection (5) may be recovered as a debt.

(7) The Valuer-General must value the land as soon as practicable after the commencement of this Act and that value will be taken to be the value of the land for the purpose of subsection (5).

(8) In this section—

'the cooperative' means a body corporate the principal function, or one of the principal functions, of which is to assist egg producers in the marketing of eggs and which includes amongst its members a majority of the persons who held licences under the Egg Industry Stabilisation Act 1973 immediately before the commencement of this Act;

'the land' means the land comprised in certificate of title register book volume folio 234.

This amendment is moved because the Opposition has a different view from that held by the Minister regarding the ownership of the property. We hold the view that, because the hen quota is a negotiable item with a considerable value attached to it, that is no different from holding shares in a company. Anyone who sold their quota was very adequately paid from within the industry; in other words, their capital was returned to them. It is not as though the value of the quota was very low. If that were the case, one could argue that the assets belonged to the people who were involved in the egg industry for many years prior to the current situation. We strongly hold the view that persons currently in the industry who hold the quotas own the assets of land and buildings.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I note the points made by the honourable member but, clearly, there is a divergence of opinion on this matter. I repeat the points I made in my closing remarks. First, we believe that the consumers of this State have, over the years, paid higher prices than those in other States. Therefore, that premium has, in part, found its way into the assets of the Egg Board, and they are best represented through Consolidated Revenue by means of their contributions as taxpayers to that fund. Secondly, if one does not agree with that point of view, the question of which producer gets the benefit is impossible to determine fairly. Should we choose only the present producers? If so, why discard those 2 000 plus producers who have been in the industry at some stage in the past at a time when the Act was operative or levies were being paid? That would be an impossible situation to work out. In any event, the actual return under the present basis for the producers who are left in the industry, as I have said, would not be very much per quota.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: As I understood the situation, a producer leaving the industry did so on the basis that he sold his quota and was paid out in the same way as if someone sold, say, BHP shares. The point is made by the Minister that the prices paid over the years in South Aus-

tralia by the consumer were considerably high. One could argue exactly the same situation in relation to any proprietary company.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: That point is certainly valid for the period from 1975 to 1992 when quotas existed. Upon transfer of quotas a benefit was received by the producers. So I concede the point that one could discard that group of producers. Before 1975, all producers were still paying levies, but there was not a quota situation. In that situation, my argument still stands.

Mr MEIER: The rejection of this amendment by the Minister shows his lack of feeling towards egg producers. He has indicated that he believes the consumers have paid. That is fine. If he wants to say that, because the egg industry had a levy imposed on it, the price of eggs will be increased a little, I can see his argument. However, the egg producers did not have that choice: the levy was placed on them many years ago to purchase the building. They had to pay for it through levies. Does the Minister want to say, 'You will have to let that levy disappear and, if you go broke because of the levy, that's too bad,?' If a levy is imposed on consumers, of course it will be passed on. Surely, the Minister has been around for long enough to appreciate that that happens in business all the time.

If a tax or WorkCover premium is imposed, it will be passed on. That has been going on since time immemorial, ever since we first had a monetary system. Now, the Minister suddenly says, 'In this case, the consumers had to pay a bit more for their eggs, so really it is their building.' That is absolute rubbish! That is the weakest argument I have heard in this whole debate. I am very disappointed that the Minister cannot see that the producers will be at such a disadvantage under this new deregulated system, because they will have a huge noose around their neck. They will have this massive bill, whether it be for an outright purchase or for the lease of the building and its equipment. They will not be able to compete effectively interstate because interstate egg producers do not have these sorts of financial weights around their neck.

It will not be a true deregulated system; it will be a totally unfair one. On previous occasions, the Minister has argued for a level playing field, and he has my complete support for that in a variety of areas. However, when he has the chance to create a level playing field he says, 'Hang on, we can't let the Government'—which of course is basically the taxpayers, which in essence is many of the consumers—'be landed with this burden. This new deregulated system has to buy all that. They will have to pay for it and be levied appropriately. Therefore, they will have another financial burden. Too bad! We are going to make it a deregulated system. If they can't work on our uphill playing field, they won't make it.' I can see right now that many producers will not make it, and that is what upsets me.

Yesterday, some of the Government members accused the Opposition of not being deregulators. The Opposition has followed the principle of orderly marketing for many years, and will continue to do so. Now that we have a chance to deregulate—and as I said in the debate last night it is inevitable in many ways—the Government is not prepared to allow that system to go ahead in a fair and equitable way. It is totally wrong, and I am very disappointed that the Minister will not accept the amendment.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I did not say that the consumers were the total payers of the benefit to the industry. If the honourable member listened carefully to my speech or if he read my remarks later, he would see that I said that an argument can be mounted for that to be said. I did not dispute that the producers have contributed over the years,

but I made the point that the Egg Board has been haemorrhaging financially recently and that that cost has been borne in part by Consolidated Revenue. It seems to be a matter of complete indifference to the honourable member that that is having to be paid for by someone. It is certainly being paid for by levies as well by producers in terms of the returns that they get on their farmgate price, but it is also being paid for by the taxpayer—a point that I thought might be of some concern to the honourable member.

Another point is that the Government is assisting the new cooperative by means of favourable terms in the way in which the assets can be transferred. The interest rates that will apply are very favourable. They are better than commercial rates in terms of the overall package. In addition, the Government has agreed to guarantee an amount of working capital. In other words, the taxpayer stands vulnerable to the extent to which that guarantee may be called upon if the cooperative is not able to successfully enter the marketplace.

I would have thought that those points should fairly be taken into account. It seemed to be the point of view of the Government that we needed to do that for the industry to help it to get on to a sounder footing in the deregulated base. Of course, the Government could have said, 'Let's simply give the whole thing to the egg industry and walk away from it.' There would be no guarantee for working capital and no favourable terms to help producers meet the costs that they may face in the future. That is a viable alternative, but the Government did not choose to think of that as a reasonable alternative. The Government has attempted to be as reasonable as possible to the industry while at the same time being as reasonable as possible to the taxpayers to whom the Government is also accountable. In that context, I think that what we are proposing is the most reasonable course of action.

The Government could have gone along the New South Wales road of simply paying out \$61 million in compensation to the industry, and again that would have been funded by the taxpayer to the detriment of other opportunities for Government expenditure such as social services and other human service provisions. However, the Government chose not to do that. I was frank with the industry right from day one. I said that we would not take that course of action. I note the points made by the honourable member, but I repeat that we will not accept the amendment.

Mr LEWIS: If the amendments fail, I do not intend moving the amendment that I circulated earlier. I took that step to ensure that the position, as put to me by a large number of producers in my electorate, was put before this Chamber. I am satisfied to see the measure resolved in the fashion that has been suggested by the Opposition through the member for Chaffey.

However, I wish to place on record some argument that shows the inconsistency in the proposals that have been put by the Minister. I also wish to clarify for the Committee my valid understanding of the current situation. Initially, the Minister did not acknowledge that levies have been collected since hen quotas were introduced. Indeed, over the past 17 years there have been hen quotas.

All the board's financial problems have arisen as a consequence of the political ineptitude of this Government over the past three or, perhaps, four years in the way in which the industry's affairs have been administered without adequate representation of growers' interests. That is where the blow-out in financial mismanagement and the consequent debt have occurred.

At the outset, I am not one to advocate regulated markets, but preceding Governments over many decades established this regulated market. This Government in particular—the Bannon Government—has further compounded the degree of control and regulation, and the penalties for breaking that law.

Mr Ferguson interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I do not know what the member for Henley Beach is saying. I wish I did, because I would be better able to help him to understand the mistake he is making if he thinks that what I am saying is not true. He has not read the accounts if he thinks that what I am saying is not true; he has not checked the historical record, year by year. The board was not in financial difficulty just over four years ago—and that is well and truly after the current Premier and Government came to office. Producers have had to pay a compulsory levy, which has escalated dramatically in recent times. Wherever hen quotas—as they have been established and against which the levy has been struck—have been transferred, notionally the preceding owner has transferred the rights, obligations and responsibilities for the consideration that the owner received in the sale. So, the current owners of those quotas are historically representatives of all producers who have been in the industry in any period that is in any way significant over the past 15 years.

If one were to take the value of a dollar today and discount it at the prime interest rate, month by month, back over the past 15 years, one would end up with peanuts. So, any notional value of a hen quota, or anything else that might have existed in the producers' instance prior to that time, has been expunged. It is specious to argue that that is a consideration in deciding how to disburse the proceeds of the assets. The producers complied with the law. It is all very well for the member for Henley Beach to argue, but how would he like it if the employees under the PKIU—in which he was involved before he came into this place—were required to give up their working tools and were denied any severance pay at the time the employer simply shut down? That is what he is arguing; that is the line of his logic.

Egg producers in this State were not making huge profits. They believed that, by buying hen quotas and by increasing the number of birds they kept, they could, with an economy of scale over a given time, come into profit, and many of them borrowed against those hen quotas that they had purchased to extend, to expand and to improve their facilities to make them more cost efficient in terms of recurrent costs—to reduce those costs by improving control over the temperature in which the birds lived, thereby reducing feed costs. That is an improvement that can be made only by insulating the premises and cutting down on the amount of food consumed to supply energy that is otherwise wasted in an unnecessary exercise. They are the kinds of considerations that were taken into account by the existing producers when they borrowed to improve their efficiency.

The other specious thing that the Minister said in supporting the Government's position was that the consumers have always paid more for eggs in South Australia. That is not true and, even if it were true, the Minister is not comparing apples with apples, because eggs produced and sold in South Australia have had to comply in law with very stringent grade standards. Those grade standards do not apply and have not applied to interstate producers, with whom the Minister makes a comparison on price. The grades that were offered to consumers enabled those consumers to buy the kind of egg they wanted in terms of weight and size. Moreover, the consumers knew that the

eggs they were getting were guaranteed to be free of disease; they had redress if the eggs were in some way unfit for consumption—diseased, cracked or damaged. That does not apply in interstate markets; there is no redress available to consumers interstate other than any goodwill there may be between the retailer and the consumer.

In addition, South Australian producers, through the board, undertook to keep a supply of fresh eggs on the market all the time, regardless of whether the days were cold and short as in winter or in early spring or early summer, when the opposite occurs. On short, cold winter days, very few eggs are produced; on longer days with increased temperatures, production of eggs is stimulated. In consequence, there is a surplus that must be disposed of, and that surplus goes to pulp. The system of marketing ensured that week in, week out, regardless of the climatic effect, fresh eggs were available to South Australian consumers whenever they wanted them.

They are all benefits that the consumer receives as a consequence of having had the existing structure. That is not now fair, given that the producers paid for their hen quotas and stuck their neck out, simply to rip off the asset and say, 'That belongs to the taxpayers of South Australia.' It does not: it belongs to the producers. It should be paid out on the basis of the existing quotas. In my judgment, a simpler method would have been to pay those producers by hen quota for the value of the land, and let the co-op bid for it with all comers. That would establish its true market value. Any producers who wanted to stay in the industry and pledge the proceeds of the sale of that asset to a new organisation or cooperative would be free to do so.

They would be free to join that cooperative and subscribe not only the proceeds from that sale but any other funds they thought appropriate. However, that is not to be. The Opposition's proposal is to enable people who want to go into such a cooperative to have the money credited to it, along with everyone else's money, and require it then to pay out those people who do not join. This can be done in different ways, I guess. That is not the way I would personally have chosen, but it is the way that seems to be most likely to succeed. To say that the taxpayer was haemorrhaging because of something that poultry producers had done—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: By inference, the Minister stated that, if the board continued to haemorrhage, the taxpayer would have to pick up the bill. To say that is also specious, because the producers did not have anything like a reasonable say in the policies that were visited upon the industry by Government intervention—who sat on the board and who was appointed as executive officers of the board, and intervention in the sense that the levies collected from them were used for the purposes determined by that board, and not controlled by producers or producer interests. To my mind, therefore, this is the simplest and fairest of the alternatives. We are not paying any compensation as was paid in New South Wales, and that is why local producers are now under great pressure. Producers in New South Wales have all that money to invest in buying market share.

I conclude on this point. If the Minister and members of the Government want to see a short run benefit in lower prices to the local consumer that will evaporate in months—it will go, and that will be the end of it—if they want to see a long-term price hike, and if they want to see the jobs of the self-employed and those others who are employed by the producers anyway and down the stream to processing and the jobs of the people who work in supplying the industry with feed and everything else go off interstate, they

should go the way the legislation is written, but they should go on the public record honestly as saying that is what they want: they want to be done with egg producers and the people who work in the industry. They should be honest about it.

Mr FERGUSON: I did not intend to enter this debate, but I just cannot sit here and listen and expect to be convinced by the nonsense we have heard from the members for Murray-Mallee and Goyder. I could hardly believe my ears; members opposite were advocating that the public of South Australia should subsidise the production of eggs. That was clearly the suggestion that was made. A comparison was made with the printing industry, and we heard the nonsensical suggestion that it would be the same as PKIU members being made redundant without getting redundancy pay. I was deeply involved with the negotiations that were under way when the Fraser Government produced a free market in the printing industry. Tariffs were slashed and imports were encouraged from overseas countries, directly to replace the local printing industry.

I went to Hong Kong and Singapore to look at the conditions under which that printing was done: there were no safety provisions and slave labour was being used. We would find the conditions unbelievable, and this was encouraged by the Fraser Government in the name of free enterprise. I was among those people who went in a delegation to Canberra to plead for the printing industry, but the answer that we got was, 'It's tough, but we must have competition and a free market, and we in the Liberal Party believe in a free market.' So, I could hardly sit here and listen to two advocates suggesting that the people of South Australia directly subsidise the production of eggs in South Australia by millions of dollars. They point to what happened in New South Wales. Nobody can convince me that the Greiner Government in New South Wales, in spending over \$80 million to prop up an industry which was unlikely to—

Mr Meier interjecting:

Mr FERGUSON: I accept the interjection from the member for Goyder: only \$61 million—absolute peanuts—was spent to prop up an industry that could not be propped up, and it did not work in any case. The Greiner Government subsidy of the egg industry in New South Wales did not work. What happened is that we in South Australia are feeling the results of what the Greiner Government did in New South Wales. As members opposite have so rightly said, that money has been used to penetrate the markets in South Australia, and surely members are not suggesting that that is the way to go.

Also this afternoon once more we heard complaints about Government interference in the egg industry; we heard that the Egg Board was going in the wrong direction. This Parliament—including every member opposite—had the opportunity to do something about that—to abolish the Egg Board. As you would well remember, Sir, because you were a member of that Parliament, we moved to abolish the Egg Board and to introduce a free market in this State years ago, and all the matters regarding the Egg Board and Government interference and everything else about which the member for Murray-Mallee has complained need not have occurred. However, our problem was that, although we got the measure through this House, in the other place, with the assistance of another political Party, conditions were imposed on this Parliament that reflected the very thing that the member for Murray-Mallee is complaining about.

The other matter that has been forgotten (and, do you know, I have not heard one member of the Opposition mention this) is the guarantee—the money—that the South

Australian Government—the people of South Australia—is putting in to assist the new set-up in the egg industry. Why do members of the Opposition not acknowledge the amount of money that the South Australian public is putting into this operation? And it could be as high as \$3.3 million of South Australian taxpayers' money. The member for Murray-Mallee complained about my saying that he was ill, because he interjects into my contribution in the most illogical way, and one can only assume that there is something wrong with him. He has asked me not to mention that, and I will make him this promise: I will never mention it again if he gives me his guarantee that he will not keep interjecting in my contributions in that most illogical and stupid way.

So far in this debate three aspects have yet to be acknowledged by the Opposition. First, it is not our fault that the Egg Board continued and that we were stuck with that legislation. That legislation was forced on us, and it is no good sitting around complaining about the decisions that have been taken in the past four years. The decisions that have been taken in the past four years were as a result of the conditions that were imposed on us by members opposite in conjunction with another Party in another place—and I know that I am not allowed to mention what that other place may be: that is one of the peculiarities of our Standing Orders.

The other point is that the member for Murray-Mallee keeps talking about Government intervention, but he could have fixed that up a long time ago, had he been prepared to support our proposition. I do hope that from now on members opposite acknowledge the financial extent to which this Government is prepared to stand by the egg producers. It involves more money than was ever put into the printing industry. We had to face unfair competition brought in from overseas countries by the Fraser Government. If my industry had had to face up to that, I am afraid that I do not have too much sympathy for another industry that must face up to it. We must realise that orderly marketing is impossible to continue in view of what has happened in the other States, and the Greiner Liberal Government has much to answer for in respect of what happened to the egg industry in this State. If they had not started to interfere in the marketplace in the way in which they did, we would not have the problems we now have. I oppose this amendment.

Mr MEIER: I am completely nonplussed at the outburst from the member for Henley Beach about my comments. I suggest that the honourable member read *Hansard* to see what I did say, because he got it wrong. This legislation will impose an unnecessary burden on producers, and I do not wish to see more unemployment in this State. If the Minister was talking about using public money to prop up the egg industry or whatever, and if it is not State money, it will be Commonwealth money paying the unemployment benefits for those who have to leave the industry, and that will be a great tragedy.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I note the comments made by various members, and I appreciate the comment made by the member for Henley Beach. The member for Murray-Mallee is incorrect when he presumes that South Australia was unique in having a board that performed the functions to which he referred. The same situation has applied at various stages in other States of Australia. The rigorous grading standards to which he referred were not unique to South Australia. The avenues of redress to which he referred for consumers who may have purchased eggs that failed to meet standards were not unique to South Australia, and the other forms of orderly marketing arrangement to which he

referred were not unique to South Australia. They also applied, with the statutory marketing authority for the egg industry, in other States of Australia, so the member for Murray-Mallee's assertions on that were quite incorrect.

Therefore, to use those as an argument for why South Australian consumers paid more for their eggs is non-sustainable, because why did not the same situation of grading standards, of opportunities for redress and the other aspects that he argued in favour of the board, also result in a price premium to consumers in other States of Australia? The other point made is that the assets of the board should be transferred to the growers. It is interesting that there is a desire for the asset to be transferred to the growers but not the liabilities. The board has accumulated enormous liabilities; in fact, its day to day operations were under such threat that the Government had to come in and provide guarantees for borrowing limits for the board. Otherwise, wages would not have been paid, eggs would not have been moved and payments would not have been made to growers. The simple situation is that the egg industry in this State would have collapsed.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Hayward says that it is my fault. Apparently the board's serious financial situation over the past few years is my fault. I see what has actually happened. Apparently I have gone out and said to Greiner in New South Wales, or to Ian Armstrong, the Minister there: 'You should deregulate your industry, because it will wipe the floor with us in South Australia. You should do that, because that will cause our Egg Board problems.' In fact, I was only newly Minister of Agriculture when the New South Wales Government decided to deregulate their industry, and I was on the public record very loudly and firmly opposing that move.

I criticised that Government very strongly because of the effect I knew it would have on the egg industry in South Australia, and I was proved right. But I am not a member of the New South Wales Government nor the legislature, and I am not therefore a decision maker in the decisions they took. The very best role I could play was an intercessory one to put the point of view of the industry in South Australia. So I reject the assertion that it is my fault; that the troubles which the Egg Board faced in recent years were my fault.

Going to the next point referred to—perhaps implicitly by the member for Hayward but certainly by the member for Murray-Mallee—that the board is under ministerial direction and order and is made up of a series of ministerial hats, I would suggest that members look at how the board has been structured, how the Act has operated and what powers the Minister actually has in terms of ordering or not ordering the board to do certain things. It is true that the Minister of the day has had powers with respect to the appointment of certain members of the board, but that is quite different from the day-to-day operations of the board. And the sanction that a Minister often has, in a situation where specific ministerial direction is not provided for in the operations of a board, is to wait until the terms of office are up and not reappoint certain persons.

It is not exactly a very interactive, intervening method of operation if one must wait for a term of office to expire before one can get back at a board member whom one does not believe has operated in the way the Minister wished. The reality is that the board has over many years operated largely free of Government interference. I come to the point about the grower members on the board who seem to have been forgotten. The member for Murray-Mallee would suggest that apparently I have appointed them, too. I would

just point out the way in which those grower members got on the board.

Mrs Hutchison: They haven't done their research.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: They certainly have not done their research. There were some decisions of the board in recent times that have concerned me, and I have been on the public record as saying that. I draw attention to my ministerial statement about the egg industry last year when I identified my concern about some decisions that the board had made. As a matter of interest—not just academic interest, but general interest—I perused the minute book of the Egg Board to find out whether there were massive divisions of opinion about motions or decisions to be made by the board. I wanted to identify consistently whether certain decisions affecting the financial viability of the board had a split vote with the Government ministerial nominees voting one way and the grower representatives voting another way. In other words, I wanted to know whether these things that have been identified by members opposite as leading to the serious financial problems of the board were not the responsibility of growers through their representatives on the board but were to be blamed on all the other members of the board.

The reality is that the minute book does not show that to have been the case. The minute book shows that all members of the board freely and actively participated in the decisions that resulted in a number of things happening, some of which have been points that I have criticised with respect to prices that the board paid for certain assets. It is not really achieving very much for Opposition members to suggest that it is all the Government's fault, that somehow we persuaded New South Wales to take the action that it took, or that the board has been a puppet of the Government—that is incorrect; it has not—and then absolve responsibility from any other members of the board.

Mr Brindal: We are saying that you should have taken more responsibility.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Now the point is that the problems of the board can be blamed on the Government because the Government did not do enough. Apparently the ministerial hacks on the board are not to blame, so it must be the grower members and perhaps we should have done more to control them. The member for Hayward nods. This is called shifting ground. When one cannot win on one point, one changes the argument and swaps to another. It is very courageous of the member for Hayward, but not entirely constructive. The reality is that the industry has faced serious problems. I have done what I can and the Government has done what it can to provide the best framework for the industry to survive.

I take extreme exception to the point on which the member for Murray-Mallee finished when he firmly said that I had no interest in the future of the egg industry in South Australia. It is apparently my malicious intent to see it undermined. I reject that as a scurrilous accusation. It is absolutely incorrect. I, my Ministry, my department and the Government generally have put an enormous amount of energy into what has been required in recent months and years to provide a framework to help the industry to be in the best possible position, given all the circumstances and our responsibilities to the taxpayer, to compete and grow in the years to come. I reject the amendments.

Mr LEWIS: I have only one thing to put on the record. The Minister and those behind him, including not only the member for Henley Beach but the member for Stuart, prate that I have not done my research.

Mr FERGUSON: On a point of order, Mr Chairman, I have not indicated by way of interjection or in any other

way that the member for Murray-Mallee has not done his homework.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Murray-Mallee.

Mr LEWIS: At page 575 of the 1987 statutes I read that the board shall consist of five members appointed by the Minister and of these two must be appointed on the nomination of the United Farmers and Stockowners—that is not a majority—and one must be appointed to represent the interests of consumers of eggs. Presumably they, too, were represented on that board. The Minister determines who the others must be, one of whom shall have some financial management skills. In subsection (6) there are provisions for the removal of anybody who has been appointed and who is incompetent. The Minister knows that and so should the member for Stuart.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Murray-Mallee confirms the point I am making. He implied earlier that the majority were ministerial appointees. Of course, according to the legalities of the situation, all the names go to Cabinet. However, as he has just identified, three of the five members were not entirely within the free rein of the Minister of the day. Two only were in the free rein of the Minister of the day—two out of five—which, by my simple mathematics, is less than a majority. But that is not really the point. The point I wanted to make is that going through the minute book one did not find a division of opinion between those whom the Minister had free rein to appoint and those whom he did not.

The point with respect to incompetence is that, as the member for Murray-Mallee well knows, that has to be identified with substantial evidence as to a particular individual not performing well. Otherwise it is a case for the whole board to be dismissed. We have had more serious problems to face in terms of the financial difficulties of that board than to spend too much time examining the behaviour of individual board members. I again ask members to reject the amendments.

The Committee divided on the amendments:

Ayes (19)—Messrs Allison, Armitage, P.B. Arnold (teller), D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, Becker and Brindal, Ms Cashmore, Messrs Chapman, S.G. Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn and Ingerson, Mrs Kotz, Messrs Lewis, Meier, Such, Venning and Wotton.

Noes (20)—Messrs Lynn Arnold (teller), Atkinson, Bannon, Crafter, De Laine, Ferguson, Gregory, Hamilton, Hemmings, Heron, Holloway and Hopgood, Mrs Hutchison, Mr Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs McKee, Mayes, Peterson, Rann and Trainer.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Blacker, Eastick and Matthew. **Noes**—Messrs Blevins, Groom and Quirke.

Majority of 1 for the Noes.

Amendments thus negatived; clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.43 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 17 March at 2 p.m.