

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 10 September 1992

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. M.J. Evans) took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Deputy Premier): I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting that the Attorney-General (Hon. C.J. Sumner), the Minister of Tourism (Hon. Barbara Wiese) and the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Heritage (Hon. Anne Levy), members of the Legislative Council, be permitted to attend and give evidence before the Estimates Committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill.

Motion carried.

## APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 9 September. Page 584.)

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): This is a deplorable document that we have before us, and it is the most disastrous that I have seen since I have been in this place. It is a document of doubletalk. It is a document which has already sunk one person who was a member of the Cabinet and it will sink others before it is all over. I suggest that each member who has sat around the Cabinet table since 1982 is just as culpable as any other person, more particularly the recently retired Premier. They are culpable for the self-same reason that Cathy Branson indicated in the royal commission yesterday: that the old directors were culpable because they had been part of the failure to manage the bank.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is not canvassing matters presently before the royal commission, is he?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: No. I respect that advice, Mr Deputy Speaker. Nonetheless, it is a culpability that is shared by every person who has sat around a Labor Party Cabinet table since 1982. The member for Napier, former Minister of Housing, Local Government and various other things, the Hon. Roy Abbott, a former member, the Hon. Jack Slater, a former member, the Hon. Gavin Keneally, a former member, the Hon. Ron Payne, a former member, the Hon. Dr Cornwall, a former member of another place, and the Hon. Brian Chatterton, a former member of another place, are all equally culpable for the disaster which has been visited upon this State by successive Bannon Governments. I say to those who may find themselves around a Cabinet table with the continuing Labor Cabinet that their culpability will also be very much enhanced, albeit there are some in the community who believe that by supporting the present Government they are culpable already.

I do not necessarily hold that position in total, because you, Sir, the member for Hartley, in particular, and the member for Semaphore, the Speaker, have sought to pull the Government up. Reports made by the Economic and

Finance Committee already give a fair indication of the culpability of a Government which went unmanaged, which was *laissez-faire*, which lay back, and which was responsible for the damage done to this State—damage which will continue for years to come. Let me refer to a few of the statements in this document which come to the point of the doublespeak that I have mentioned. The former Premier stated:

... the impact of the recession, the uncertain nature and strength of recovery, and the pressure of additional costs which are beyond the control of the Government.

I question that very seriously. Many of the actions taken, and many of the actions not taken that should have been taken, are responsible for those additional costs. A number of our colleagues have outlined already in their analysis of the budget document where those losses and where those costs have occurred, not only in the State Bank but also in SGIC, and in relation to yabby farms, No. 1 Anzac Highway, the on-again off-again and then staying permanently off Marineland, the Mount Lofty development, and so on—the list goes on.

There is one reference in this document which I am very pleased to see, and that is to the Gawler Hospital. The Gawler Hospital was promised originally 10 years ago. It is in the list for commencement in January 1993, and I am grateful for that. I am grateful for the \$4 million proposed in the document to which I refer, and the ongoing costs which will be met in the following year. However, let us analyse the losses directly associated with that. Already over \$1 million in architectural fees has gone down the gurgler, and this is quite apart from the time spent by officers of the hospital and community members in working on the all-important aspects of the development of that hospital. Over \$1 million has gone down the gurgler because there have been seven different versions—Government-sponsored, not hospital-sponsored—requiring redrawing, redrafting and further consultation. So, whilst it will cost \$19 million—a figure which is almost double that which would have applied had it been proceeded with 10 years ago—over \$1 million in additional hidden costs have been sunk, never to be seen again.

They are the sorts of hidden costs which are responsible for the Government's dilemma. They are the ones that should have been properly managed, and every Minister who has sat around the table since 1982, or any who will take on that role in the balance of the term of this Parliament under the guidance of the new Premier, will be culpable and can be held responsible for the damage done to this State. Not one of them has been bold enough to stand up and question. At least the member for Hartley is on the record on a number of occasions in the Caucus of having stood up and questioned what the Government was doing. Where did he finish up? Without a seat. He had the fortitude and the courage of his convictions to question the Government and, in particular, the Premier. He suffered as a result, but more than that, everyone in South Australia has been on the downward drift because of the culpability of a bereft Government. I come to the third paragraph in this document that states:

It continues the management process of reducing the financing requirement while maintaining service quality, particularly in priority services and core areas of Government activity.

It continues the task of stabilising the impact on the State's finances of the State Bank and the SGIC while also taking the next step of restructuring those institutions so that they can return value to the community and maximise the potential for recovery of the losses which have been incurred.

What double talk! Yes, we recognise that a restructuring is taking place. The bank is to be divided into two parts—the good part and the bad part. Of course, the bad part is the BB bank, the Bannon bank, the disaster bank. It will still be there as a cost against the community until such time as that debt is paid off—not by me, not by my children and, I suspect, it will not be entirely paid off by my grandchildren; it will be my great grandchildren who will still be seeking to recover from the activities of the Bannon Government. And we have the doubletalk, which says we are restructuring and making it all clean because we are giving it a different name. Full marks to that section of the State Bank which will trade and which is already trading successfully. I hope it will continue to do so, but we cannot walk away from the fact that the BB bank, the bad bank, the bad debt section, the Bannon section, the Bannon bank, will be a disaster for all times.

It is quite important that we recognise in relation to both the bank and the restructuring of SGIC the failure of the Government collectively and more specifically the Treasurer of the day in calling to task those people in the community who were obviously running rife. One can only ask why it was—when every dog in the street was yapping, when people with a responsibility to the people of South Australia (and I mean members of the Opposition equally as members of the Government) were asking probing questions and bringing forward documentary evidence of failings—at least one member around that Cabinet table did not blow the whistle and say, 'Hey, we have to do something positive.' Not one of them from the top down called the Premier to task, saying it was necessary for that person as the Leader of the group to take greater heed of what everybody knew was happening. However, a group called the Cabinet of South Australia did not want to accept or know what was happening.

It is all very well for the new Premier to come in and say he was unaware of some of the things that were taking place. That is the exact parallel of the comment I made a little earlier from Cathy Branson, QC, to be seen in the *Advertiser* today: very clearly, people who should have and could have done something failed and failed miserably and, as a result, the State is in a parlous condition. We only have to look at the other figure in this document in respect of net immigration. South Australia, which until recent times has had somewhere between 8.5 per cent and 10 per cent of the total of the Australian population and the Australian financial cake, finds itself down at less than 5 per cent with respect to immigration.

There is a message in that—in fact, there has been a message in relation to net immigration in this State and the mass exodus from this State over a long period. We might be the driest State in the driest country of the world; we might have had some problems in having to make sure that we were able to manufacture and get our product to the eastern seaboard at a cost benefit, but certainly those figures have been there and obvious for a long time. We have had complete inactivity by the 13 people who recently made up the Cabinet, the 12 who currently make up the Cabinet and the six other members

to whom I referred earlier and who were members of Bannon Cabinets since 1982.

I repeat the comment that I made in relation to the Independents in this House: if they align themselves with this Cabinet, they will be equally culpable; it will be their decision and it will be one they take at their peril. Further on the document states:

The budget has been constructed within an economic environment which remains difficult, even hostile.

Well, the population is hostile, I will grant you that: the population which trusted but did not elect the last Bannon Government is hostile and is becoming more hostile as the days go by. The document continues:

The severity of the factors which dominated the 1991-92 budget have in no way diminished.

We told the Premier and Treasurer that 12 months ago—that he had pitched a budget that was unobtainable and that he had failed to make provision for wage increases which would inevitably take place during the period of the past 12 months. We indicated our knowledge of the downturn in business and the downturn in revenue that was associated with land transactions, motor car purchases and retail trade, and the inevitable effect that that was going to have on the Government attaining its proposed income.

It was all there, and now pitifully to say that it got worse than was expected is an absolute fabrication of the truth: it was known 12 months ago that the position was bad and was getting worse. It is almost like the Premier (Hon. Lynn Arnold) yesterday criticising members on this side of the House for debts supposedly left by the former Tonkin Government. He referred to the problems of the Bannon Government over a period of time in having to retire debt.

One of the major problems that the Tonkin Government had—and it fulfilled a purpose to the people of South Australia—was to retire the debt of the failed Monarto project, which amounted to many millions of dollars—in fact, if memory serves me correctly, it was about \$19 million.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** And \$23 million for SAMCOR.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** And \$23 million for SAMCOR, as my colleague the member for Mount Gambier—

**The Hon. H. Allison:** And \$10 million for the Frozen Food Factory.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** And \$10 million for the Frozen Food Factory. We can also look at the clothing factory and other areas—all debts that were retired by a Liberal Government before the present Government, in its various forms, came into being. And still, 10 years later, we have the present Premier trying to hide behind the statement that debt retirement was the problem which led to the inevitable consequences that are outlined in this budget. Rot! Absolute rot! The Government has been bereft of ideas, it has failed in its management and was not prepared to stand up and be counted when counting was necessary. I fear, from what we have already seen, that the position will be no better in the immediate future. The first page of the same document contains the following statement:

At the same time the substantial reductions in funding from the Commonwealth during the 1980s have not been reinstated.

I direct members' attention to a number of the statements that have been made in relation to just what the Commonwealth has done for this State in most recent times. Granted, we would like to see more, but the State has definitely been advantaged by a number of the actions that have been taken by the Commonwealth Government—although I do not support it—in the interests of South Australia. The Financial Statement 1992-93 at page 17 lists the budget objectives, as follows:

The principal budget objectives for the Government in 1992-93 have been to: secure an improvement in the State's budget position despite the effects of the cyclical downturn in the State's economy.

I recall not so very long ago the Government lauding the fact that it was better than a Liberal Government, not wanting to accept and acknowledge the reality that a great many of the problems addressed by the last State Liberal Government were directly associated with drought and disaster—floods, droughts and fires. It wanted to pooh-pooh the idea of that Government accepting responsibilities in those vital areas, and now it wants to hide behind the claim of a cyclical downturn in the State's economy. Double talk! The second objective is:

Reduce recurrent expenditure in the overall level of budget borrowing.

What have we done? Borrowed more. What will we have to do? Borrow more. Nothing of any consequence has been done to reduce the amount of spending that is necessary to maintain some of the services and some of the excesses of the present Government, whether they be in relation to consultancies or to selling our soul and buying overseas when the product can be produced locally thus generating funds locally, and so on. The third objective is:

Assist employment in the State's economy through an expanded capital works program and payroll tax relief for industry.

If one talks to members of industry and, more particularly, to the unemployed, at present one sees that they recognise that the Government, hand-in-glove with the Commonwealth, will allow most of the supposed work relief for unemployed to be used on contract. Yes, there will be a generation, but it will not be generated directly for those who believed and were hyped up to believe that they would get the benefit of the large \$324 million of unemployment relief. It is not directed at them: it is going by a very circuitous route, and I suggest a number of them will not see any benefit whatsoever. We should share the burden of restraint in an equitable way.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hutchison):** Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport):** I have been in this House for 25 years, five years in Government and 20 years in Opposition, and I suppose that all members would expect me to attack a Government measure now. We have reached the stage as a State where people have lost confidence not only in the Government but in the future of the State and, in many cases, in their future as individuals. They walk around our community unemployed; some have given up hope of ever having a job or even applying for one. For example, last week a small firm advertised for two trainees in the retail trade. The Federal Government subsidy scheme was applied at

the appropriate rate for those in the younger age group, to which that subsidy applies. To think that we have thousands of unemployed yet only 24 applied for those two positions is an example of how despondent people have become. Many other similar cases will occur within the community.

Once the human race loses faith in itself as a result of a Government that has no interest in the welfare of the State in the economic sense, we have a disastrous situation on our hands. I know that the former Premier was forced to resign or to retire under whatever pressures. He did not come straight out and say, 'Yes, it was my fault; I should have taken a more active interest.' In that, the whole Government must be judged as being to blame.

I believe many in the Government ranks believe that they have been hoodwinked by their own colleagues—especially those who sit on the back bench. I believe that every Cabinet member should have known the disastrous situation into which the bank, SGIC, and other projects such as Scrimber and the New Zealand timber project were falling. If they did not, they should never have held a position in Cabinet. That is obvious, because questions were asked. The Leader of the Opposition at the time, John Olsen, was attacked and condemned for attacking the State. It was said that he was denigrating the State, that it was wrong to challenge and ask questions about the bank or other matters to which I have just referred.

What happened? Either there was a cover up in total by all involved in Cabinet or Ministers were not fit to be there on other grounds because they did not start asking questions. It is obvious to any individual that the Leader of the Opposition at the time, or the present Leader, was not getting information from fairyland. Business people in the community were saying that it would not work, that things are going bad and that we had better wake up and start asking questions. As that was obvious, likewise those business people were talking to ALP members within the trade union movement who did take the terms to the Government of the day, being a Labor Government, and to Labor members. The member for Hartley was getting the message from somewhere, because he was asking questions. We know from where the messages were coming: it was from the business community.

The Premier of the day, the member for Ross Smith, chose to hope that it would run away as, in the final analysis, and all along, he has shown that he does not want to front up to tough decisions. That is one of his characteristics. In normal life it is a good characteristic to be a person with a more compassionate way of handling things. However, when handling taxpayers' money when in government, one cannot do that. One has to be tough and courageous, and face the consequences. The member for Ross Smith as Premier was not that sort of person. He wanted to avoid it. It is a practice in the present Government to avoid issues and, instead of Ministers making statements when the going is tough, in the newspapers, over the air and in other forms of the media a spokesperson for the Minister is quoted. In other words, Ministers hide behind another person.

*The Hon. M.D. Rann interjecting:*

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** The Minister on the front bench indicated in Australian-type language that that is not accurate. It was not the practice in this House 15 years ago, and I challenge the Minister to go back and have a look. It occurred only if a Minister was overseas or ill. However, it has become a modern practice. It is a deliberate practice, and it began with the Hon. Tom Casey as Minister of Agriculture; when a fire ban was to be applied in certain regions, the Department of Agriculture made the announcement. When no fire ban was to be applied, the department would announce, 'The Minister of Agriculture announced today that there would be no fire ban.' That was the beginning of the process of a Minister's not carrying the load. Present Government Ministers have practised it—in particular the immediate past Premier has practised it—on many occasions to try to protect themselves from tough decisions.

Whilst on the subject I refer to one person who was prepared to face up to tough decisions. I want it on the record so that it will be there for all time after I leave this place. I refer to the Hon. Norm Foster. His decision in backing Roxby Downs resulted in great financial benefit to the State, and the Government today is fed on that money. That is all right for the benefit of the State, but the man who saved it was the Hon. Norm Foster. I hope that, after the next election when the Hon. Dean Brown leads the Opposition to government, the first thing we do is make a recommendation to a Hewson Government to acknowledge Norm Foster with an Australian award for sticking up for his State, sacrificing his seat and taking on his Party for the benefit of the people.

There is no doubt that this Government will never recommend that he receive an award. It will never recognise his efforts. It is more likely to give it to the Premier who was forced to resign because he sat, supposedly in control (which he was not) of the State's economy. They will see that he gets some recognition for service, but see if the Hon. Norm Foster gets recognition for service. Roxby Downs has been a great asset to this State, and we should recognise that that one man put all aside in relation to his political career. He tried to win as an independent but did not have the resources.

**The Hon. Frank Blevins:** He was too old.

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** The honourable Minister says he was too old. I have never seen the Government invite Mr Foster along to their functions, shake his hand and say, 'Norm, you're the greatest thing ever.'

*The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:*

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** He has been back, but not with the same welcome that he should have received.

*The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Davenport is making the speech, not the Minister.

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** I challenge the Minister to suggest to his Federal colleagues that they recommend that the Hon. Norm Foster should receive the highest Australian award possible.

I now refer to a letter which each member would have received and which was written by the Royal Automobile Association regarding this budget. It reads:

Motorists are angry that fuel is to be taxed at an even higher rate.

In the present debate, both Federal and State, about the goods and services tax, I should refer to this massive imposition that is being imposed on an ongoing basis on motorists by this Government, which should realise that communication and distances are our biggest handicaps. We can grow any crop; we have nearly every mineral that can be exported throughout the world, if we can produce it cheaply enough through our docks and other areas. Communication and transport costs are therefore matters of which we should be conscious at all times.

*The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:*

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** The honourable Minister suggests that transport counts only if you live in the country. That is not the case at all. A lot of transport to the Eastern States is from people who operate from city to city. He knows that. The biggest amount of fuel is used not just by country people: this also applies to other areas. I realise that this involves only 1 per cent in the country, but there should have been none at all. Indeed, there should be a reduction. The RAA makes the following point:

The hike in the metropolitan fuel tax from 5.5c per litre to 8.9c per litre represents an increase of 62 per cent. This is an enormous increase and takes the State's fuel tax level to the highest in Australia.

If we are trying to compete in business with other States, do we want to make our transport costs the highest? The RAA went on to make another very good point. It said:

Petrol and diesel are not luxuries, yet they are taxed as if they were. They carry one of the highest tax rates of any commodity. Fuel excise (Federal) amounts to 26.15c per litre and, with the new metropolitan State tax of 8.9c per litre, the sales tax rate equivalent for petrol is now a massive 112 per cent.

The Minister and some of his colleagues, both Federal and State, complain about a goods and services tax of 15 per cent, yet a 112 per cent tax on fuel is supposed to be quite appropriate. Anyone outside South Australia looking at that would say that it is an injustice to have such a high rate of taxation. The letter goes on:

The State budget tax increase will lift the cost of all goods and services and impact adversely on every household and business budget.

The Government knows that. It knows that it is pushing up the cost of living significantly by this move, because everything that is to be consumed must be carried. Also, rubbish has to be shifted, and fuel is a high proportion of that operation. The letter continues:

The tax increase gives further credence to the proposition that every service station has become an agent for the State and Commonwealth tax offices. The State fuel tax was introduced to provide revenue dedicated to road improvements when the ton/mile tax on heavy vehicles was abolished in 1979. All of the money was initially dedicated to roads but, since 1983—

that was when this Government was starting its 10 years of failure in serving the State, although it was successful in winning elections—

an increasing proportion has been siphoned off for general revenue purposes. The budget papers estimate collections of \$129.9 million in the current financial year of which now only 19.8 per cent will be credited to the Highways Fund. This is highway robbery.

I agree with the RAA: it is highway robbery. We have roads falling to pieces all over the State; we have danger points all over the State; we have people being injured and killed in these danger points all over the State; and we do not apply in these areas the money that was

promised to be used for this purpose. The letter goes on to state:

A significant part of the additional revenue is to be used to provide 'a new source of revenue for local government'. Our inquiries indicate that local government has previously received about \$40 million per annum from the State Government in specific purpose grants. Effectively the revenue generated by the fuel tax increase will simply replace these grants; it will not provide additional money for local government.

I would like the Minister to respond and indicate whether the \$40 million of grants will be cut out and whether the fuel tax will cover the funds previously supplied by way of grants, so that really the fuel tax would be being used to supplement general revenue. The letter goes on to say:

The fuel tax increase will simply provide more revenue for State Government coffers.

Everyone accepts that that is what it is about. The RAA then goes on to ask about how the tax will be spent. I do not want to go through the whole letter because members have a copy of it. The RAA then makes this point:

The increased tax includes .3c per litre and .15c per litre on leaded and unleaded petrol respectively to provide funding for the proposed Environment Protection Authority.

It then provides some argument about that, and the letter finishes as follows:

The association strongly opposes the provisions contained in the Bill, namely, the increased tax, the environmental levy and indexation.

Indexation is taxation by stealth. In considering revenue, I refer to a letter I received from the Minister of Emergency Services after I wrote to him about traffic problems in Cumming Street, Blackwood. In his reply the Minister states:

The Commissioner of Police has advised that a traffic survey has been conducted at the location. However, during the period of the survey insufficient offenders were detected to justify the use of speed detection devices on a programmed basis.

Nevertheless, Cumming Street will receive attention by police patrols on a random basis in an effort to deter motorists from committing offences.

We have one confounded patrol that covers the whole area comprising about 16 000 houses. How often will the patrol go down that street? The Minister's reply tells me this: that the number of offenders in Cumming Street, Blackwood, is not high enough to provide sufficient revenue to the State Government to warrant its leaving a camera there. In other words, it is a revenue-raising matter in respect of speed cameras and radar. It is nothing more than revenue raising. By admitting that there are offenders but that the police are not bothering to detect them because they will not get enough revenue proves my point. That is the truth of it. Every citizen in the community is complaining about that aspect of what the cameras are mainly used for. A letter from a gentleman who has lived much of his life in the Blackwood area states:

Dear Stan,

In response to your letter, yes, I would like to see our police station permanently manned and an additional patrol up here. The thing I cannot understand is: when we moved here 40 years ago this was a quiet, pleasant little town and we had a manned police station; but now, with all the crime surrounding us, we haven't. Beats me!

I finish on that note: it beats me also. When there is crime all through the community—breaking and entering, bashing, young people being burnt to death and no-one finding out how it happens—why can the community not

have what it believes is proper policing in this modern day and age? It beats me also.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Treasurer):** I thank all members who have spoken in this appropriation debate; quite properly they roamed far and wide. However, I was overwhelmingly disappointed in the level of the debate. I thought it had the potential to be a lot more creative than it was. I was particularly disappointed, as I am sure were all members of the House irrespective of which side they are on, in the Leader of the Opposition's speech. It was little more than one long whinge. When he was not whingeing, he was inaccurate and, in some cases, downright misleading.

The budget was put together in a particular climate to produce a particular result. The climate, as outlined in the budget speech, has probably never been more difficult in Australia in modern times. The degree of influence that world markets have had on our primary production and commodities has been extreme, and adjustments are having to be made. No-one likes making those adjustments, but they cannot be avoided: the market forces will adjust us one way or another.

As stated quite clearly in the papers, the budget was designed to achieve the level of activity that is required in South Australia to supply the services that people need whilst at the same time bringing some control to the level of debt that the State is experiencing. The Opposition criticised both the objectives of the budget and the actual budget itself, the way in which it attempts to achieve those objectives.

Rather than attempting to go through all the points that were made by members, if I deal with them in general terms that will probably be acceptable. As I said, I was disappointed with the Leader's speech, as every member of the House would be, because of what was lacking. There was plenty of complaining, whingeing and misrepresentation and there were lots of figures, but what was lacking were the alternatives. It is not only traditional but expected—and quite properly so—that in a reply to a budget speech the alternative Government has some obligation to put an alternative point of view; not just to say, 'We don't like what you are doing'—that would be simple, but it would not get us very far. No attempt whatsoever was made by the Leader to say in any way to the people of South Australia, 'This side of the House has an alternative point of view, and this is it.' I would have understood if there was not a great deal of detail in that. However, we should have had some indication of what they intend doing with, for example, health services, manufacturing industry and the State Transport Authority. All those things were conspicuous by their absence. There was nothing in the Leader's speech to give South Australia any vision or hope. There was nothing positive in the speech whatsoever.

I do not want to be overly political, but I would like to contrast that speech with the speech of the member for Kavel. There is no question that, whilst I disagreed with the content of his speech, the member for Kavel gave a well constructed and well delivered speech. We could have been forgiven for thinking that the honourable member was Leader of the Opposition. Of course, he is not; he ought to be; he has been and I am sure he will be in the not too distant future. Whatever one says about the

member for Kavel, at least he did put a point of view—one with which I did not often agree but he did put it well. He was not afraid to stand up and say that these were Liberal Party policies and that he would stand by them. We got none of that from the present Leader of the Opposition and that that is a pity. I think South Australia deserves better.

There was a mass of statistics, most of them wrong and plain misleading. In relation to growth forecasts, the Leader was way out as always. It was surprising to read this criticism—and I did read through the speech. It was very boring and the press told me there were a lot of yawns around Parliament House when the speech was given. However, I did wade through it. I must admit that it took me a while; I kept having to put it down and do something else for light relief. But within the Leader's criticisms of the Government's policies there was a great deal made of growth forecasts in the budget and what the growth forecasts have been for South Australia over the years. I would just like to say that I have many more statistics than the Leader has and they show quite clearly that South Australia's average annual growth in real gross State product over the past 11 years had been on a par with that of Victoria and New South Wales. In fact, it has lagged only slightly behind that of Queensland. Those tables are available—the research service in the library will produce them in minutes. It is a great pity that the opportunity was not taken by the Leader to deal with the facts, rather than trying to put forward a perception that was absolutely incorrect. I think it runs down South Australia and there is no need for it.

The Leader, also made great play that fewer than 2 000 jobs will be created in South Australia in 1992-93. That was his claim. The budget papers are based only on working assumptions—none of us can see into the future. All one can do is make an educated estimate and work towards it. It is interesting, and I think a bit cheeky, for the Leader to start talking about the inadequate job growth in South Australia, because there is no doubt that the present policies of the Liberal Party will decimate employment in this State.

Irrespective of one's ideology, it is a fact that, if zero tariffs are brought in, employment in South Australia will be devastated. There has been a great deal of focus on the car industry. Of course, that industry will be eliminated. But what about the white goods and other manufacturing industries? Zero tariffs will decimate a State that depends so greatly on manufacturing industry. I should have thought that the Leader ought to be prevailing upon his Liberal Party colleagues to see that zero tariffs do not come in, not just in the motor car industry, although I know that the Leader has made some comments to the effect that he does not support zero tariffs in the motor car industry.

I think that he is being a bit disingenuous, because I have no doubt that at the Federal election, whether later this year or early next year, he will be pleading with the people of South Australia to vote Dr Hewson into The Lodge, knowing full well that that will decimate our manufacturing industry. If the Leader had any spine at all he would be doing much more about it than he is. It is somewhat hypocritical to be criticising job growth in South Australia when the Opposition's policies quite clearly will decimate jobs in this State.

Again, on population some figures were incorrect and some were misleading. I do not intend to go through them all: I do not want to bore the House in the way in which the Leader did. Suffice to say that, if any member of the House wants correct statistics on any of these issues, they are available from the Parliamentary Library, from Treasury or from Treasury papers.

Another issue of which the Leader made great play was his claim that the Government had milked ETSA. I note that the previous Leader, the member for Victoria, also made the claim that ETSA was being milked. They have short memories. On 7 September 1991 Peter Lewis, then shadow Minister of Mines and Energy, stated:

Rates of return on shareholders capital (on taxes) increased in the electricity authority are low or even negative. There is a desperate need to accelerate micro-economic reform in this sector by . . . increasing competitive pressures and requiring ETSA to earn at least a 4 per cent real rate of return on its capital.

That was the Opposition. Based on this measure, the projected rate of return on the Government's investment (that is, the written down replacement cost of assets) in 1992-93 would be approximately 3.8 per cent. So, the member for Murray-Mallee was calling for 4 per cent and on that calculation in the budget it is 3.8 per cent—but members opposite are still not happy. They ask for a certain course of action to be taken and the Government takes that action—not at their bidding, I may add, but because it is the sensible thing to do—yet they still complain.

It gets better. In January 1991 the shadow Treasurer upped the ante. The shadow Treasurer is on the record as saying that ETSA's minimum real rate of return should be 7 per cent. It was difficult to find from his statement whether he meant return on investment or return on assets. However, based on ETSA's estimated balance sheet for 1992-93, the total equity in ETSA would be about \$1.4 billion. So, a dividend payment of \$95 million, as is pointed out in the budget papers, represents a return of 6.8 per cent. Now, the shadow Treasury spokesman says that it ought to be a minimum of 7 per cent. We have gone from 6.8 per cent, and still the member for Mitcham is not satisfied.

I am not sure what one can do when the Liberal Party makes these statements—statements with which I agree, when the Parties reach a bipartisan position on this—and the Liberal Party then changes its view. I have a very strong view that Government trading enterprises ought to return to the shareholders a dividend. That is what they are in business for. They are business enterprises—

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitcham is out of order.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** The budget papers do say that.

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitcham will have an opportunity in the grievance debate shortly. He should not contribute now. The Minister of Finance.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** As I was saying, I have a very strong view that Government trading enterprises or Government business enterprises, whichever you wish to call them—

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitcham is out of order. The Minister of Finance.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** Thank you, Sir—ought to return a dividend to the taxpayers of this State. However, in relation to ETSA in particular, not only have we been able to return a dividend to the taxpayers of this State, but we have also been able to reduce tariffs in real terms by about 10 per cent over the past few years, and that is a 10 per cent reduction in real terms. I am not arguing that is enough; it is not enough. However, it will continue to go down in real terms; that is the policy of the Government, and we will achieve it. It has been achieved by ETSA and the ETSA unions working together to see how they can make ETSA more efficient. They have done two things: they have reduced tariffs in real terms and returned a dividend to their shareholders—the taxpayers of this State. I think they ought to be applauded and I want to put on the record that I applaud what has happened in ETSA. ETSA is a very good employer working with the unions.

The Leader also made great play about the level of debt in South Australia: he said we were bankrupt and that if this were a private company we would bring in the receivers. I know of many private companies which, if they were working at levels of debt of 25 per cent, would be ecstatic; they would be considered in the marketplace to be fairly lowly geared at 25 per cent.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** You can. I do not want to be diverted, but some honourable member opposite was saying that you cannot sell the waterpipes, the gas pipes or the electricity wires. I can assure you, Mr Deputy Speaker, you could sell them tomorrow. We have absolutely no intention of doing so, but to suggest that you could not is nonsense. Mrs Thatcher made a career out of selling all those things, but she came to a very bad end, so it ought to be a lesson to everybody who goes down that road.

The level of debt as a percentage of gross State product is approximately the same as when this Government came to office in 1982. If the State is bankrupt, if the receivers ought to be called in, was not that the case in 1982? I did not hear anybody suggesting that the State was bankrupt or that the receivers ought to be called in, not one word of that from members opposite, when they were running the Government at that time.

The tragedy of the State Bank and what has occurred is that since 1982 this Government has reduced our debt as a percentage of gross State product to about 15 or 16 per cent from about 23 per cent. That is a remarkable achievement. I take no credit for it whatsoever; it was the former Treasurer, the member for Ross Smith, who achieved that. He almost brought it down to the levels of Queensland, which had a very low level of debt and an abysmal level of services.

It is not something that this Government would want to emulate, but nevertheless the level of debt was brought down. All those funds were salted away for a rainy day. Well, as to the State Bank, it rained—and it rained very heavily. What we were able to do was handle that State Bank problem ourselves. We did not have to go running to the Federal Government, as the Victorian Government did, and say, 'We can't handle this; it is too big for us.'

We were in the position because of prudent management over the previous eight years or so to handle it ourselves. We concede that the level of debt is too high. It was too high in 1982—that was the level that members opposite left us—and it is too high now. The issue is not whether it is too high or not but what will be done about it and in what way.

This is where there is a huge difference, apparently, between this Government and the Opposition. I say 'apparently' because we are not clear as to what the Opposition would do. All it talks about is privatising cleaning in the hospitals. I have not heard one policy, other than their saying that they would privatise cleaning in the hospitals. I can tell the Opposition that that is not likely to do a great deal for the level of debt in this State. It is really not the answer. If the Opposition has any other proposals, I would like to hear them.

The Government is saying quite clearly that the level of debt is too high; it will come down over a period. What we will not do, in the worst recession that we have had in decades, is go into the public sector, slash and burn, and dismiss nurses, teachers and police officers, and so on. We will not do that. We will work at making them efficient but we will not reduce to any significant degree the services to the people of South Australia. We will continue tight financial management. We will encourage this economy to grow. Out of that growth, over a period of years, we will get this State's debt back to where it ought to be, which is certainly a lot lower than what the previous Government left us.

It is not a very novel solution; basically it is a Keynesian handling of the economy. In the good times you salt away your prosperity dividend and in the bad times you spend it in areas such as public works, and that is what we have done in this budget, which I will come to in a moment. Essentially, though, that is what you do. It is not very complex; it is a very simple economic theory to grasp and deal with, and by and large that is what western economies do to one degree or another. There is nothing terribly complicated about it.

Also we have had to rebuild our revenue base, and again we make no apologies for that. Given the low economic activity and the resultant erosion of our revenue base, we believed that something had to be done. You cannot go out into the community and honestly look people in the eye and say, 'Yes, we will give you new schools, new hospitals and high staffing levels in the Police Force' without saying that it has to be paid for. We have gone up front to the community. We have increased taxes in a number of areas. We have explained the reasons why, and I believe that overwhelmingly that has been accepted. We have not to any significant degree increased those taxes in areas where it would damage economic activity and the industrial base of the State. We have done it the hard way. It would have been easier in political terms to have increased those taxes that have an impact on business, but we have not done that. We have increased taxes basically on the non-industrial sectors of our community.

Even having done that, the taxes in this State are still extremely low. We are a low tax State in a low tax country, and it is to the credit of this Government that we have been able to achieve that. It is acknowledged, whether we look at the ABS statistics or at any of the

papers that are put out by EPAC, the Federal and State Treasuries or the Grants Commission, or whatever we like, that South Australia has an above average level of services with a below average level of taxation. That is how tightly our State has been run. Members do not have to take my word for it; in the process of compiling the Arthur D. Little report, KPMG Peat Marwick had in its input some very substantial things to say. They have been quoted in the House on a couple of occasions and I am sure they will be quoted again, but I draw the attention of the House to that report.

There is no doubt that the people of South Australia expect and receive a very high level of services. We have the highest paid teachers, police officers and nurses in Australia. That is the bulk of our public sector employees, and within those areas our student-teacher ratios, for example, are well above the Australian average. Again, in our health system, the number of beds available and all those other indicators show that our health services are very high. We are not just above the Australian average in the number of police officers *per capita*; we have the highest number in Australia. It is a credit to them.

In this budget and in these economic circumstances, this Government is not prepared to sack public servants or to add to the unemployment statistics in this State; we are not prepared to reduce wages and superannuation or to make the workers pay for the follies of the board and the management of the State Bank. We are just not prepared to do that. What we are doing is working carefully, steadily and in a controlled manner to continue to provide the services, to continue to maintain a competitive business climate by having a low tax regime and at the same time to give the people of South Australia the services that they quite properly request.

What does this budget do? I want to run down very briefly some of the positives in this budget. One of the great pities of the budget is that, because of the problems of the State Bank, the very good features of the budget have been overshadowed. I have asked journalists, 'Please, at some stage will you actually look at the budget? I know that the State Bank is the sexy part of it; that is the part that is attracting all the attention, but when you have got tired of that, will you please look at the budget and tell South Australians, through your various arms of the media, just what is in it for South Australia?' And there is plenty.

As an immediate response to the Arthur D. Little report, we put \$40 million into this budget as an assistance package to boost and modernise industry, \$38 million funding also for the MFP—a 12 per cent increase in real terms in capital works. Almost all that money goes into the private sector to create jobs—a huge increase. One of my particularly favourite parts of the budget is the increase in capital works in education—an incredible increase. For maintenance alone, I think something of the order of \$20 million extra is going into upgrading our schools. I can guarantee that there would not be a school in this State that does not get some of that money and get some of the upgrading that they have been asking for. I think that that should be more widely publicised.

There are payroll tax rebates of \$1 700 in this budget for every new employee that a firm puts on—they get

\$1 700 in cash from the Government as a complete rebate, and I am sure that the Minister of Employment and Further Education can outline the increased employment and training programs. There is also a complete overhaul of the State's planning and regulation process and the establishment of a one-stop shop for business. The 2020 Vision review will give a blueprint for this State for the next 30 years, and that is something of which we are very proud.

We have reduced electricity charges again, and that was announced. Many primary producers and much of industry will benefit from that. As this State relies very heavily on trading, the reduction in port charges will also benefit everybody in South Australia. A lot of these policies are for the long term and are not necessarily policies for the next election; they are policies to put this State on a sound footing. On this side of the House our horizons go much further than one election.

I commend this budget to the House. In my view it is an excellent budget—an appropriate budget for the times. Without the State Bank the Current Account would actually have shown a slight surplus, and that has been the measure of the tightness with which we have run the financial affairs of this State. It is not only me who is telling the House that it is a good budget: let us look at the response by the financial commentators and the financial press. The *Financial Review* is probably the most prominent financial newspaper in Australia, and on 2 September it had this to say about the budget:

The Bannon Government's fiscal obituary—

which I suppose is a fair enough term although I do not like it particularly, but in journalese it is one we could have expected—

reeks more of bad luck than bad management.

This is the *Financial Review*, not Frank Blevins or John Bannon.

**The Hon. M.D. Rann:** It is not the *Labor Herald*.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** It is not the *Labor Herald*, as my colleague says. The article continues:

Its watching brief on the operations of commercial statutory authorities failed to detect disastrous investment strategies inside the State Bank and State Government Insurance Commission, exposing the Government to charges of Vic Inc style culpability. However, compared to Victoria, South Australia did a relatively good job of its finances under the 10 year Bannon premiership. It never adopted the more strident interventionism which created risky venture capital experiments such as the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, which was brought down by gross mismanagement and the financial malpractice in the late 1980s.

This bit deserves saying more than once:

South Australia in fact distinguished itself in cutting debt as a percentage of gross State product over the decade, taking the level of public sector indebtedness from 23.4 per cent in 1982-83 to 15.5 per cent in 1989-90.

**Mr S.J. Baker:** It now stands at 25.7 per cent, and that was at 30 June 1992.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I have just gone through that.

**Mr S.J. Baker:** And it will get worse next year.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I regret that interjection. I do not want to respond to it because it would force me to go through the debate again. I have conceded that the level of debt is too high. I have also pointed out that it is exactly the same as when the member for Mount Gambier, for example, was

in the Tonkin Government, and that is the level of debt it left us.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** We discharged Dunstan's debts—\$100 million, and you know that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, the member for Mount Gambier.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I did not want to rehash the debate, but some honourable member opposite wants to go back to the Dunstan levels of debt. I can go back even further to the Playford levels of debt; the levels of debt in some of those years were about 60 per cent of gross State product. But I do not want to go through all that. In commending the budget to the House, I want to acknowledge and give my thanks to the previous Treasurer, the member for Ross Smith. Over the period of the presentation of his 10 budgets, I saw a great deal of what went on behind the scenes. The former Treasurer had the welfare, particularly the financial welfare, of the people of South Australia at heart when he put together those budgets. It will be to his lasting credit that, such was his financial management over those 10 years, when the State Bank got into difficulties South Australians were able to deal with it themselves, pick themselves up and go forward. I believe that this final budget of the member for Ross Smith is, as I said, entirely appropriate for the times. Again, it is a credit to the tight financial management of those institutions that we have under our direct control.

Bill read a second time.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Treasurer):** I move:

That this Bill be referred to Estimates Committees.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before calling the member for Hartley, I remind the House that under Standing Order 267, which is the motion that the Minister has moved, it has not been traditional to debate the matter, but clearly it is within the Standing Orders.

**Mr GROOM (Hartley):** I move:

That, after the words 'Estimates Committees', insert the words 'but this House is of the view that for future years consideration should be given to referring the annual State budget to the standing committees established under the Parliamentary Committees Act for examination and report'.

I will speak briefly to my amendment. The Estimates Committees have really outlived their usefulness. They have become quite a farce in so far as the Parliament is concerned. For some two weeks, the House of Assembly and the staff are tied up in an exercise which simply gains very little.

With the passage of the new Parliamentary Committees Act 1991, the parliamentary process in so far as both Chambers are concerned has taken a different course. The Parliamentary Committees Act set up the Legislative Review Committee, the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, the Social Development Committee and, of course, the Economic and Finance Committee. Each of these committees has extremely wide powers. An enormous amount of responsibility is placed on them as a result of the passage of the legislation through this Parliament.

The committees have been building up expertise; they have links with the Government sector and community organisations; and staff are being trained in the way in which the committees should be administered. So, an

enormous amount of power is entrusted with these committees, and the committees are familiar with the various aspects of the budgetary processes. I say that the Estimates Committees are a farce because they require almost an army of public servants to attend at Parliament House. Sometimes they are here all day to participate in the Estimates Committee for only an hour. That is an enormous visual wastage of resources, which could be better utilised in other ways. Everybody knows how difficult the process is for the Opposition: the Committee starts at 11 a.m. and concludes at 10 p.m. and, even if a topic is exhausted, Opposition members are forced to sit out the time, otherwise a certain section of the media says that there was an opportunity to question the Minister but that the Committee was concluded at 7 p.m., three hours early. It is an awkward practical situation in which the Parliament finds itself.

A far better utilisation of resources and better examination of the public sector could be brought about by the use of the four standing committees of this Parliament. Because those four parliamentary committees in unison encompass all aspects of the Executive arm of Government, looking at all statutory authorities, they ought to be utilised, and the budgetary process should be referred to those parliamentary committees as an ongoing process during the year to avoid this farce of two weeks in September. It would require an amendment to the Parliamentary Committees Act to provide for shadow Ministers, which may involve the Upper House having some representation on these committees via—

*The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:*

**Mr GROOM:** Via the inclusion of a shadow Minister; that is proper, but that is a matter about which the Parliament might have a different view. I can see no problem with a shadow Minister's having representation during the examination of the various departments, and that would also provide for additional Government representation during the process.

I make quite plain that the initiative for this motion came from you, Mr Deputy Speaker. You have been a driving force in so far as the passage of the Parliamentary Committees Act is concerned. You have been a driving force in ensuring that the Parliament takes better control over the Executive arm of Government and all its attendant statutory authorities, Government bodies and so on. The Parliamentary Committees Act is a credit to this Parliament. It has strengthened parliamentary control over the Executive. The four standing committees are building up great expertise and links in the Parliament, and the budgetary process should be ongoing during the year. It should not simply take place for two weeks in September—in a stilted, inflexible and very rigid environment.

Members ask questions of the Minister who then deflects or utilises the services of the advisers. Members cannot question the advisers direct. There are great restrictions on how the Estimates Committees function. We need greater flexibility and an end to the army of public servants sitting around all day at enormous cost. It would be far better for both the Government and the Opposition to participate in the various committees. I acknowledge that contribution and the fact that you, Sir, have been the driving force behind this motion.

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham):** I cannot be as generous as the member for Hartley would like on this occasion. I would counsel the Parliament on the way we are handling this motion. We are taking an in-principle course of action about which I have some reservations, as we have no details whatsoever. The member for Hartley has not had the decency and grace to ensure that all members of the Parliament know exactly what is in his mind or in the mind of those who proposed this motion.

*Mr Groom interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** A letter was sent. We have not had the opportunity to debate this matter in principle in the Parliament. The honourable member could have moved a private member's motion for the next day of sitting, and that motion could have been debated in the fullness of this parliamentary session. If the Parliament was convinced during this session, the scheme supported by a number of members could be implemented for the handling of the next budget.

I suggest that the honourable member has not had the grace and decency to do what all members are required to do and that is to allow full debate on the proposition. He wants a decision in principle in favour of this proposal, yet the Parliament has not been given the opportunity to debate it, as is the normal procedure. We discuss these matters within our own ranks, as every member here is well aware, and we form an opinion. That opinion has not been formed at this stage, and it should be formed so that we have a reasonably clear idea of what the benefits, costs and changes really mean. That is my first point.

My second point is that the member for Hartley makes great play of the suggestion that the Estimates Committees are a waste of time. I have a totally different point of view. He might feel that he is not given, but would like to have, proper access to the Ministers and that in his current position he could have a wild old time requiring information. Let us be quite factual about how these committees stand at the moment. I am assuming, as is everybody else, that we will be in government after the next election and members opposite will be on this side. Let us look at that situation in terms of the capacity of members opposite to ensure that we operate effectively, efficiently and honestly in government.

The Estimates Committees provide that opportunity, because we on this side have total access to Ministers and their advisers. Whilst there might be an argument about the level of detail that can be obtained at that time and in the future, there is no doubt that we can canvass those issues freely. The member for Hartley is suggesting—and we do not know the details—that these standing committees, with their Chairpersons, who are normally selected by the Parties, should have this additional role.

*Mr Ferguson interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Henley Beach is quite correct when he says that the Chairpersons of the committees are selected by the Parliament, but the readers of *Hansard* should be absolutely assured that the Government selects the various office bearers.

If the honourable member believes that the Estimates Committees are not performing to potential, he should recognise that there is greater potential for a lame duck result under this proposal, because the Chairpersons of those standing committees control the agendas, not the

committee members. There may well be merit in the proposal put forward by the member for Hartley, but it is absolutely essential that the Parliament be made aware of the details before we can consider this motion on its merits. As I said, this is a set up. The honourable member knew the proper course of action; that should have been followed, but it was not followed.

I believe that, far from creating better accountability, this proposal has the potential to allow incumbent Governments, including the next Liberal Government, to get away with far more than any South Australian would tolerate. Whilst we will operate in a fashion that I am sure everyone will be proud of, the fact is there has to be a watch on Government. Government should not be allowed to become slipshod; it should not be allowed to indulge itself in any practices that involve any element of corruption. We do need the strongest scrutiny by Parliament, of either a Liberal or a Labor Government. This proposal as it stands does not guarantee that: in fact, it does exactly the opposite in comparison with the present system. I am not particularly pleased that the member for Hartley has moved this motion in this fashion, and I ask that members reject it. If the member for Hartley has the good grace that I am sure he has, he will consider other propositions during the rest of this session.

**Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach):** I support the motion and I emphasise that I am cognisant of the wording of the motion where it is stated that we will consider it. I preface my comments by saying that my Party has not yet considered the proposal, but as time goes by this is something that has to be considered seriously. My own personal—

*Mr S.G. Evans interjecting:*

**Mr FERGUSON:** I am sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am having trouble being heard.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr FERGUSON:** My preference is to support the motion, and I emphasise that. I have had the pleasure every year of attending the newly revamped Estimates Committees and in many of those years I sat in the Chair, like yourself, Sir, and I heard every word of every session for years on end. I can only say that they have been an abject failure. If the idea was to probe the Government and get answers from Ministers, then the poorly presented cases and sets of questions that have been put up year after year by the Opposition have resulted only in this exercise being a complete waste of time.

We have had the resources of the Government being tied up in this Chamber hour after hour, day after day, with departmental heads and advisers, the whole array of parliamentary attendants and members being tied up here when they should have been in their electorates. We have had to listen to some poorly presented arguments. We have had to sit here while shadow Ministers have had to bat out time, believing that they had to occupy the crease.

We know because they have told us of that. Many shadow Ministers have come into an Estimates Committee and said that they would rather be at home and that they would rather finish at 6 o'clock but, because they are shadow Ministers, they have to put up a show for their own Party. They therefore ask inane

question after inane question. No wonder the press gallery is empty on these occasions, because members of the press know that the shadow Ministers are stonewalling and merely putting up questions for the sake of filling in time.

How many times have members come into the Chamber to see shadow Ministers who have never even touched a budget paper until the day they are required? They have not touched a budget paper; they have not done their homework or undertaken preparation; all they have done is fill in time merely to maintain their shadow ministry.

I now refer to policy statements, dozens of which we have had in the Estimates Committees. Shadow Ministers and Opposition members lead off with hours and hours of policy statements. We have all the paraphernalia, including departmental heads, waiting with bated breath to get these searching questions. But what do they get—they get personal policy statements, because they are not Party policy statements: they are personal policy statements of shadow Ministers who go on for hours and hours taking up Parliament's time, its resources and the State's money. They waste hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars of the State's money when it could be put to better use.

This Chamber is not suited to committee meetings: the acoustics are bad and the speakers are too far away from the Ministers; it is a big Chamber, and it is certainly not suitable. In my grievance speeches following the delivery of the budget, I have pointed out year after year the difficulty of conducting committee meetings in this huge Chamber and the problems associated with it. I understand, Sir, that you had input into this proposition, and I think that your idea is a very good one.

Incidentally, I must refer to the previous speaker, the member for Mitcham, who suggested that it is the Government that decides who will be the Chairman of a committee. The Government does not make that decision; it is made by the Parliament. The living proof of that is the member for Hartley, who is an Independent member and the Chairman of the Economic and Finance Committee: the living proof that gives the lie to the proposition put forward by the member for Mitcham.

The Economic and Finance Committee is run in such a way that you could not have a more probing, searching and investigative committee if you tried. At every turn, the members of that committee have been able to extract information from Government departments and statutory authorities that they have never been able to extract before. The proof of its success is the amount of media interest. I have never seen so many media people; it is not unusual to have 20 or 30 media people attending those meetings. I therefore feel that the Estimates Committees could be run more efficiently and that more information could be extracted so that less of the State's resources are tied up in this exercise. That would be a better and more efficient way of doing it.

Industry is faced with restructuring: traditional industries that have been doing things in the same way for 100 years are being restructured out of sight. Change is upon us everywhere, and this august body should accept the fact that it is time for change and time to do things in a better way. I consider that we should not be putting up with the waste of money and, in some ways,

the waste of talent with which we must contend under the current system. I support the motion.

**Mr BLACKER (Flinders):** I think we should draw this debate back to the wording of the motion. The motion moved by the Minister of Finance indicates that this debate should be referred to the Estimates Committees, and the member for Hartley moved an amendment to insert after the words 'Estimates Committees' the words 'but this House is of the view that for future years consideration should be given to referring the annual State budget to the standing committees established under the Parliamentary Committees Act for examination and report'. All this amendment does is to flag to the House that further consideration should be given to the matter being referred to a select committee. In other words, it flags potential debate for further consideration of the matter.

We all know that after every Estimates Committees session many members of this House stand up and indicate their concerns about the way in which the committees are going. The original intent—which we all supported at that time—has not been met. In many ways it has been abused. We have heard members today talk about the way in which the debate has been abused.

I was only too happy to second this amendment. It suggests that we have another look at this and further consider alternative means of consideration of the budget Estimates Committees. That is all this motion does, and I support it for that reason.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier):** Despite the assurance that the amendment says that consideration should be given to referring the budget papers to the standing committees rather than to the Estimates Committees, I find that rather hard to accept. I can assure members opposite that prior to the member for Hartley's standing up and moving this amendment, I on this side—and I am sure there are a few others—had no idea it was going to be moved. So, let us put that to rest: this is not a plot by the Labor Caucus to get rid of the Estimates Committees.

Having said that, I completely concur with everything the member for Henley Beach has said with regard to what the Estimates Committees are all about and what they are achieving. I do not put the blame only on the shadow Ministers or on Ministers—

*Dr Armitage interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** Or, as the member for Adelaide says, on the chairman. But, if the member for Adelaide—and I do digress slightly—is at any time appearing on Estimates Committee B in the forthcoming two weeks and he has any reason to have problems with my chairmanship then he can resort to the Standing Orders. Mr Deputy Speaker, I have given you sufficient praise publicly in relation to the standing committees and what they are all about. I have embraced them from the very beginning. I have always known that it is a part of your game plan that the standing committees should ultimately replace the Estimates Committees. Again, I have no problem with that agenda.

However, I find that I have a certain sympathy with what the member for Mitcham has said, because this has been sprung on us. If the Estimates Committees are not

working then it is the fault of all the members here; it is nothing to do with the structure of the Estimates Committees; it is the fault of those people who are putting the questions to the Minister or of the Minister in responding to those questions. That is the fault of the Estimates Committees. If the standing committee system can be better, then so be it.

However, I do have a certain concern about the way in which the standing committees are working. The member for Henley Beach says that there are no television cameras here while the Estimates Committees are being conducted. Let us be frank; that is the case unless there happens to be a prepared attack by the Opposition, and the media knows about it. We know that that happens; it is the game of politics and I will

cop that. But the reason why there is such a widespread media coverage of the standing committees is not that they are standing committees, because the media is never interested in the Legislative Review Committee; they are not in the least bit interested in the Social Development Committee; and so far we have had only minor interest in the Environment, Resources and Development Committee. The reason we have this widespread media support and coverage of the Economic and Finance Committee is, I dare suggest, because there is always an agenda; there is an ulterior motive. The gentleman who gave a public address and suggested that the Economic and Finance Committee was the 'Re-elect Terry Groom Committee' was not far wrong.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will refer to members by the name of their electorate.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** That was the way of the gentleman from SGIC, and I was quoting, Sir. The Opposition then had the cheek to go in and defend the parliamentary system and attack that officer. It is pretty well known that I object to the member for Hartley's tactics in his attempts to stay in this Parliament, but that is the name of the game. I will cop that, because I am a politician. If the member for Hartley wishes to go down that track, let him do so. But I would suggest that, when one gives serious consideration to whether we eliminate Estimates Committees, one should always take into account some of the other problems that will result from that (and I am talking of the machinery and logistical problems).

The Government may well need to decide that greater resources will need to be put into the standing committees. There may need to be some different representation on the standing committees and it may well be that, because I am making this speech, I may have the job of Chairman of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee taken from me. It may well be that what I am saying is not being well received by members on this side of politics. If that is the case, obviously, I have other ways to counter that.

Let me just remind members—and I think it is valid, Mr Deputy Speaker—that there is a private member's motion on the books that talks about the strengths of the standing committee system and about the pressures being placed on the standing committees, not only on the individual members but on the staff, on *Hansard* and on all the clerical people who provide the backup, and the information that I have is that you, Sir, the member for

Hartley and the Liberal Opposition will give scant regard—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** No, it is very relevant, because I am talking about the problems we could have in the future.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is debating, and that should take place at another time. If he has another motion on the Notice Paper, he is not permitted to debate it now.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** I know, Sir, but let me say this.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is not permitted to debate the two simultaneously. The member for Napier.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** I apologise, Sir, I am not, but what I am saying is that when we give serious consideration to these standing committees, if they are to be a replacement, we must take into consideration at the same time the back-up and support that is vitally necessary.

*Mr Becker interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** The member for Hanson who, in an interjection, obviously is telling me to sit down is quite happy with the role that the Economic and Finance Committee may have. But under the old Estimates Committees system everyone was equal—and the member for Mitcham referred to this. The success of the Estimates Committees is based on the ability of the questioner and the ability of the Minister in answering those questions. Under this system, it depends entirely on the Chairperson. And the red herring that is being put in that it may be necessary to bring shadow Ministers on to standing committees is something I would urge all members seriously to consider.

It is true that the chairperson of a standing committee does set the agenda. I can assure members that, on the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, the setting of the agenda is shared equally between the Chairman and all members. I am sure that any members present who are on the Environment, Resources and Development Committee will confirm that. It is very important that we do that. If we do not, if this Chamber accepts that we are to have a change to the Parliamentary Committees Act that will allow it, we ought to make sure, Mr Deputy Speaker—and I am sure you will have a lot of discussions with the Government on any amendments—that all members have an opportunity of setting the agenda. I have an uneasy feeling that because of the way that the standing committees are now structured, a chairperson of such a committee is able to indulge in personal vendettas against Ministers and public servants. That trend is really worrying me a lot.

**Mr BRINDAL:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, is not the honourable member reflecting on this House in his remarks and on the structure of our committees?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not believe that the remarks as such reflect on the House; they were of a general character. Obviously, if the debate were pursued to a further level of particularisation, it would be a possibility. I ask the member for Napier to take that into account in his remarks on the motion and the amendment. The member for Napier.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was not reflecting on the House; I was saying that there is always that possibility. Referring to what the member for Henley Beach said about television coverage and media interest, I am surprised that one of the reasons why we should move from the Estimates Committees to a standing committees system is television coverage and media interest. There are strict rules governing the television companies in the way that they report the proceedings in this Chamber. Yet, when I watch any of the television news broadcasts of committees, I find that the television cameras take precedence and microphones are being thrust all over the place. I understand that the television cameras and reporters take the front row and the witnesses are herded to the back. I also understand that section 21 or 28—the section number is irrelevant but it is the one that gives protection to witnesses and allows the committee to resolve whether evidence should be taken *in camera*—is in some cases ignored. Evidence is given *in camera* while the television cameras are there. The reason given for their being allowed to remain is 'because we trust you'.

I am talking to my political colleagues on this matter. If all those things can be guaranteed not to happen, by all means let us look at future considerations. There are many questions which need to be considered. I hasten to add that I will vote for this amendment. However, if the Government, as a result perhaps of slight pressure from you, Sir, or the member for Hartley, introduces legislation to allow this change in the Parliamentary Committees Act, we should all be very much aware that the benefits—and there will be benefits—can be outweighed by the dangers. I do not think that I shall have many friends on this side of the Chamber after making this speech, and I may not even have so many friends on the other side, but I suggest that there is no problem with this amendment as it is. The problems could come—and I would like to be proven wrong—in the future when we actually put this vague idea into legislation.

**Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport):** If members were genuine—and I know that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, have an interest in this, and I respect that fact—and if the argument was that the Estimates Committees were not working (and I have never been a keen supporter of the Estimates Committee system), surely the motion should be providing that we should look to strengthening the Estimates Committee system with a view to making them work better. There is no suggestion of that in this motion—whatsoever. It appears that this is the first step to getting rid of the Estimates Committee system and to give the whole of the budget scrutiny to the Economic and Finance Committee. That committee has always been constituted according to Party philosophies. If that situation were changed, there would be no or very little influence by Independent members or minority Parties and, as such, the Government of the day, be it Labor, Liberal, National Party or Democrat, would have absolute control over the committee, so we would have Caesar judging Caesar. That is the sort of thing that would happen if we agreed to this motion.

My answer to the proposition of the member for Napier, who was quite wrong in his attack on an individual, is that the decisions of that committee have

been unanimous, and many of the hard, probing questions have been asked by Government members. I respect the fact that they have done the right thing in that situation, but that committee currently has the right to look at every aspect of the budget, and it has that right by statute. It can also look at the last budget, so why is there a suggestion to eliminate the Estimates Committee system, when Estimates Committees have the power to look at every line, every department, every officer, and every action taken?

You are a highly intelligent man, Sir, and I know that you feel humbugged sometimes at the processes of Parliament. However, for democracy to work and for individuals to have a right to put their point of view, we may need to look at the operation of Parliament, not at its committees. At one time every individual member could stand in this place and ask a question of a Minister, and the Minister did not have a bevy of advisers with whom to consult. The Minister would answer the question, and had to know the answer. When Ministers introduced a Bill, an adviser would not be at their side in the Chamber. Ministers either knew the detail or were considered incapable of doing the job.

What we have done, and what this motion goes one step further in doing, is push this issue further to the back burner, by giving the individual less say and fewer opportunities to probe and question the Parliament. The Estimates Committee system does that and, although my colleagues and I opposed that system, I would sooner stick with it with the Minister answering questions in the Chamber. We have to be here, anyway, in case there is an argument and we are all called in to decide something. I just ask members to stop and think: what are we elected for? Are we here to pass on our responsibilities to some committee? When the Estimates Committees operate, three members from each side have an opportunity to question the Minister, whilst other members sit back and hope that questions about their area will be asked, but that rarely happens. The Estimates Committees have become a political football with each side trying to push their philosophy or their own agenda.

That is the problem with it. It has been said that this motion only puts the view that consideration should be given, and the Minister agrees that it should be given consideration. However, what this motion does not say is that we should look at strengthening the system so the ordinary member has more power to put a point of view in Parliament. Question Time is abused with respect to what we have been promised. I just say that if somebody wants to move a motion as a private member it can be debated in a different way. Members thought this would just slip through without much comment but it cannot, because it is the first stage of saying that Parliament agrees, and that is the way the press will write it up, namely, that the Estimates Committees should go and that the standing committees should take power away in total from the ordinary members of Parliament.

**The Hon. H. Allison:** This is an accepted direction.

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** It is an accepted direction, as my colleague the member for Mount Gambier says. The Economic and Finance Committee has the power and responsibility to look at every line of every budget from when it is first brought down until it is finally used up and the next one introduced. So, why do we need this?

There is only one intention, that is, to get rid of Estimates Committees. I oppose the motion.

**Mr BECKER (Hanson):** I oppose the motion, simply because I was the one who advocated the Estimates Committees back in 1979 and, thankfully, they were introduced by the Tonkin Government while I was Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. I believe the Estimates Committees have served this Parliament well. I am on record on many occasions as saying that those who oppose the Estimates Committees are the members who are lazy. They do not want to do the work. The Ministers are there on an ego trip. Some Ministers want to answer all the questions and not pass them onto their public servants. When we do get an answer from the public servants, half the time it is a snow job.

It has turned into a real game. I well remember an occasion during the Estimates Committees when we were in Government in 1981-82 when the member for Napier did not get his way. He walked out with his colleagues and stayed away for an hour or so, and that was the best the committee ever worked. I was Chairman at that time. The member for Napier gets up here and rubbishes the Economic and Finance Committee. He spat the dummy and has been spitting it ever since. No wonder he does not like the Estimates Committees. The shadow Ministers do a lot of work during the Estimates Committees, and a lot of work is done by all members. If members do not want to do it, they had better retire and let people come into this Parliament who are prepared to do the work for and on behalf of the taxpayers of the State.

What annoys me is that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and your colleagues want the Estimates Committees to go to the Economic and Finance Committee. A total of \$80 000 was spent refurbishing the first floor of the Riverside Building. We had a meeting there yesterday for the first time this year and it was a crowded, clumsy, ineffective and inefficient room, and where is our \$7 000 table? I have had enough. For anybody to want to waste time on this sort of thing is ridiculous. As I said, \$7 000 for a table for the Economic and Finance Committee but we could not find it, so how could we look after Estimates Committees? I oppose the motion.

**Mr GUNN (Eyre):** This escapade we have been asked to consider this afternoon is nothing more than an attempt to weaken the opportunity for average members of Parliament to participate in questioning the Government. I well recall being in this Chamber when a former Deputy Premier, who was not satisfied with the manner in which questions were being answered, answered every question on every line in the Estimates Committee by saying, 'I will get a report.' He got very angry, very stropky about the whole thing and decided he would ignore what Parliament wanted to do. I was fortunate or unfortunate enough to chair the first of these committees, and I well recall the reasons why they were set up. They were not set up for the convenience of Government; they were set up to ensure that the Parliament had an opportunity to question the Ministers effectively and get information.

What has ruined the committee system is Ministers coming here with a bevy of public servants and with typed, prepared answers, reading them like parrots and trying to snow the committees. That is what has ruined it.

If the Ministers came here with a couple of senior public servants and gave precise and brief answers the whole thing would get on very well and people would get information. We have just listened to the member for Napier go on at some length, unfortunately, and I think that the main purpose of that exercise was to try to unload the member for Hartley. Suddenly the member for Hartley has a very high media profile and he is effectively using the committee, and it is making it difficult for the member for Napier because there is some contest going on out there, I understand. The member for Napier is not liking it very much because the member for Hartley does not have to go out door-knocking; all he has to do is hold a press conference once a fortnight, and he is doing it very well. I say to the member for Napier that he should get the television cameras into his committee and conduct a few press conferences, and then the people of Napier would be able to determine who is their best representative.

I think that this is an unwise motion, and I certainly do not support it. If the Parliament wants change, it should be done by consensus and consultation and the Opposition will cooperate, because we want to see the Parliament operate more effectively and precisely. I recognise that the Westminster system has not kept abreast of modern parliamentary practice and modern government. The way to resolve that is through consultation and commonsense, not trying to impose one's will on somebody else, because the Chair will always change. If one gets up to tricks, they will be repaid.

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** I wish very briefly to indicate my opposition to this amendment. Having been a shadow Minister now for two years, I have to say that the Estimates Committees are one of the most efficient opportunities provided to us to get information. That is because Standing Orders as they are at the moment—and I understand that they can be changed and I do not wish to enter into that debate—really do not allow, given the pressures of other political agenda at the moment, a shadow Minister to follow a line of questioning in Question Time.

I believe that that is one of the most important functions for a shadow Minister—to follow the line of questioning—and the only possibility given to us under our present parliamentary system is in the Estimates Committees which, as we all know, provide the opportunity to ask follow-up questions and to hone in on something or other which is of importance. It is my view that it is that function which is paramount in the Estimates Committees. I agree with the member for Davenport that the passage of this amendment would see the end of the Estimates Committees, and for that reason I strongly oppose it.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Treasurer):** I support the amendment. I draw members' attention to the words 'that for future years consideration should be given'. Sir, I have never been afraid to give consideration to anything. Some very fine speeches have been made in respect of this amendment. I wish that members had kept them for their Party rooms rather than for here, because that is where the debate will take place. On a personal

note I add that, if we were debating the substance of what the member for Hartley is trying to do, at this stage I would oppose it, and I would strongly oppose it—and there is nothing I have heard today in these unnecessary speeches that would persuade me to any other view.

In fact, I thought the member for Mitcham made one of the best speeches I have heard him make for a long time, and I agree more with what the member for Mitcham said on this occasion than with what he has said in some of his other speeches. Nevertheless, there is clearly a division of opinion about the Estimates Committees. All the amendment is doing is asking that we give consideration to some changes. I would take a punt now that, given the very deep divisions that have been revealed here, the chance of change is pretty remote. But, let us not be frightened to consider it, and that is all that we are being asked to do. I cannot say I thank members who have contributed to the debate.

The House divided on the amendment:

Ayes (21)—L.M.F. Arnold, M.J. Atkinson, J.C. Bannon, P.D. Blacker, F.T. Blevins, G.J. Crafter, M.R. De Laine, D.M. Ferguson, R.J. Gregory, T.R. Groom (teller), T.H. Hemmings, V.S. Heron, P. Holloway, D.J. Hopgood, C.F. Hutchison, S.M. Lenchan, C.D.T. McKee, M.K. Mayes, J.A. Quirke, M.D. Rann and J.P. Trainer.

Noes (19)—H. Allison, M.H. Armitage, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker (teller), H. Becker, M.K. Brindal, D.C. Brown, J.L. Cashmore, B.C. Eastick, S.G. Evans, G.A. Ingerson, D.C. Kotz, I.P. Lewis, E.J. Meier, J.W. Olsen, J.K.G. Oswald, R.B. Such, I.H. Venning and D.C. Wotton.

Pairs—Ayes—K.C. Hamilton and J.H.C. Klunder.  
Noes—P.B. Arnold and W.A. Matthew.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried; motion as amended carried.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I move:

That the House note grievances.

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham):** I refer to the Auditor-General's Report. I listened to the Minister's response to the second reading debate; he did not justify the budget but spent his time taking apart the contributions of other members. In no way could he stand up in this place and say that this is an honest budget that takes us into the future. I draw together the threads of an overwhelming debt facing this State, in conjunction with the remarks of the Auditor-General. It is absolutely vital that we understand not only that this State is facing a bleak future unless the Government is changed tomorrow but also that the infrastructure of Government is inadequate to handle the challenges that face us. It is totally inadequate in its capacity to respond to the many deficiencies. I commend the Auditor-General on this occasion on a fine job, because he has really looked at the underlying deficiencies within our public sector; he has put them up in big bold lights.

I will take up a number of the issues canvassed in the Auditor-General's Report and suggest to the Government that it take those matters very seriously because, if they are not taken seriously, not only will State finances run away but also some of those areas that have not been properly controlled will continue to be out of control.

First, I refer to the Auditor-General's comment that an amendment to the Public Finance and Audit Act is required. It is obvious from his dealings with Government departments and authorities that certain of those offices have not been forthcoming regarding the detail required by the Auditor-General. The process of his being able to get vital information from those departments and authorities is inhibited by the Act. I recommend that the Government amend that Act soon to enable the Auditor-General to carry out his task competently. If it fails to do that, I will do it myself.

My second observation refers to the internal audit responsibilities of the managers of departments. As the Auditor-General has quite rightly pointed out, it is up to each department to make its own assessment of its efficiencies and inefficiencies. It is up to each departmental manager to ensure that the books are kept up to date and that there is proper financial accountability. For the Auditor-General to suggest in his report that the responsibilities of internal audit remain with managers, where they should remain, reflects on the capacity of the Ministers of this Government to operate their portfolios efficiently. A problem obviously exists in the way in which managers are managing their departments and authorities.

The third item on which I reflect relates to the fact that the Auditor-General goes to considerable length to explain the situation facing the State Bank in its good bank and bad bank parts. One can only read into that, without judging what the Auditor-General was attempting to put on the record, but it is clear to me and probably to any reader of the report that the Auditor-General has a fundamental and abiding concern about the management of the State Bank, at least in the bad bank part as well as perhaps in the good bank. The Auditor-General has gone to great pains to point out what has happened in the recent history of that bank with the level of bail-out required—the \$2 300 million that had to be borrowed to finance the State Bank and meet its indemnity. He has also explained in some detail the \$850 million yet to be paid into the bank to meet its longer-term liabilities, particularly the GAMD. So, it does bear reflection and it does bear further questioning and scrutiny.

The next issue I wish to raise is about special deposit accounts. I put out a release prior to the budget debate saying that much of the information is hidden, and the Auditor-General has said the same thing—that whilst the special deposit accounts are part of the Consolidated Account he could not be overly critical of that process. But we know that the special deposit accounts will hide a number of sins, with the result that we will have a net figure provided to the Parliament without the detail.

I have already said that, if the full expenditure of the Government was taken into account and we did not have offsets of revenue against the expenditure items, the budget is a very large budget. It is \$7.7 billion, not \$4.4 million as the Consolidated Account attempts to suggest. It is important that every time we have budgets presented—and I will be following this up in the Estimates Committee—we have the full facts stated, not half truths.

A further issue that is canvassed by the Auditor-General relates to the financial skills of those people who are managing the finances of departments. For the

Auditor-General to reflect on that matter obviously means that there is insufficient expertise or it is being very badly managed within the departments. The Auditor-General has reflected on the internal audits. He has suggested there is to be tighter control. I note his comment on the South Australian Housing Trust, for example, indicating that the Housing Trust cannot say how much is owed by tenants and how much is being paid out against those debts on their accounts, because the new system does not allow that comparison. So, the pursuit of bad debts is an inherent problem because of the new accounting system, and that is an indictment on not only the Minister but also the department, and one would presume that similar problems are apparent elsewhere.

The Auditor-General also reflects on the use of accrual accounting and the new standards which have been laid down at the Federal level. I have some problems with accrual accounting in terms of meeting the responsibilities that I believe have to be met by the State budgets. Parts of that accrual accounting process are very appropriate for Government, others have far less relevance. He notes that we still do not have an adequate asset register, and that is absolutely imperative because every manager of every department needs to know the total sum of money under his or her control, whether it be in bank account deposits or in the buildings that they are managing. We have to become far more professional in the way that the public sector manages its finances.

There is a very strong word of warning about the information utility in the Auditor-General's Report. If history is any guide, we will pour money down the drain as we have with the Justice Information System, the Engineering and Water Supply computing system and the STA computing system. We are talking about huge dollar expenditures; we are talking about big brother intervention, and the Auditor-General obviously does not believe that the control mechanisms are sufficient; he has commented accordingly. He makes a very strong point about conflicts of interest, and the conflicts that have occurred within the State Bank, SGIC and a number of other authorities have in many ways contributed to the problems that we face.

The last item I refer to is fraud prevention. The Auditor-General obviously believes that there is far more scope than ever before for frauds to be committed, and they are being committed in ever increasing volume. We have to control that situation and appoint people competent to ensure that the capacity for fraud is minimised. The Auditor-General has produced an excellent report which bears full scrutiny.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Gunn):** The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable member for Fisher.

**Mr SUCH (Fisher):** I would like to raise the issue of the funding of Flinders Medical Centre, which is the hospital that serves my electorate and many other electorates in the south. I am particularly concerned about the funding cuts that have been and are being imposed on that fine hospital. I know from personal experience the level of care provided by the excellent staff, and that has been confirmed in a recent survey in the area when local

residents indicated their support and recognition of the fine contribution made by that hospital.

What is happening is of great concern because we have reached the stage where the level of care and the standard of medical treatment are being threatened by the financial cutbacks of this Government. One of the difficulties in raising this issue is the possibility of creating a negative image surrounding the hospital, and I do not wish to do that in any way, but if as the local member I do not raise concerns it is unlikely that the Government will address them.

We are seeing Flinders Medical Centre being put into a situation where it is having to cut back on bed and staff numbers and, in respect of areas such as accident and emergency, I have been informed that people are having to wait up to 15 hours for extended treatment as a result of being admitted to hospital. That is not a situation that anyone should have to tolerate after being in an accident or emergency; through no fault of the hospital or the staff, patients are having to endure pain and suffering for up to 15 hours before they can be admitted to a bed. That is a disgraceful situation.

Indeed, in the past three weeks the hospital has had to turn away patients who were seeking surgery and bed accommodation for treatment. Further, as a result of cuts by this Government we now face a drastic cut to some of the programs the hospital offers, for example, the dialysis program. As to the home oxygen supply program, which has been well received, people will find they are going to have to bear a greater burden and suffer greater inconvenience because the hospital can no longer fund the provision of that sort of service to the same level.

Indeed, for surgery and other medical treatment the local population in the southern area will have to wait longer and suffer greater inconvenience. We have seen Flinders Medical Centre being subject to intensive scrutiny by the Booz Allen organisation at a cost of \$770 000, basically to discover what was already known, that it was an efficient hospital. The tragedy is that the hospital now has to fund the cost of that consultancy which it did not want or need and the review could have been done in a much less costly way than was undertaken at the insistence of the Health Commission.

The tragic irony is that the hospital and the local people are going to pay for the privilege of having that survey by Booz Allen thrust upon the hospital. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

## PETITIONS

### INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED PERSONS

A petition signed by 21 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to provide adequate services to the intellectually disabled was presented by the Hon. D.J. Hopgood.

Petition received.

**PEDESTRIAN CROSSING**

A petition signed by 368 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to install a pedestrian crossing at Golden Grove Road near Park Lake Drive, Wynn Vale was presented by the Hon. R.J. Gregory.

Petition received.

**JUVENILE OFFENDERS**

Petitions signed by 828 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to lower the age to 16 years at which a person is treated as an adult in criminal matters were presented by Messrs S.G. Evans and Such.

Petitions received.

**WATER RATING**

A petition signed by 24 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to revert to the previous water rating system was presented by Mr S.G. Evans.

Petition received.

**GAMING MACHINES**

A petition signed by 55 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government not to introduce gaming machines into hotels and clubs was presented by Mr S.G. Evans.

Petition received.

**BLACKWOOD POLICE STATION**

A petition signed by 80 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to re-open the Blackwood Police Station was presented by Mr S.G. Evans.

Petition received.

**BLACKWOOD AMBULANCE SERVICE**

A petition signed by eight residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government not to close the Blackwood Ambulance Service and support volunteer involvement in the ambulance service was presented by Mr S.G. Evans.

Petition received.

**EDUCATION STRATEGIES**

A petition signed by seven residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to introduce education strategies with regard to social behaviour of children was presented by Mr Such.

Petition received.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Premier):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I wish to announce that the current Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Industry, Trade and Technology, Dr Peter Crawford, will be moving to the position of Chief Executive Officer, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. This underlines my determination to place the State's economic development at the top of my agenda for South Australia. Dr Crawford has a distinguished record of public and private sector experience in this State, New South Wales and Canberra. His experience of management at the highest level in the States, the Commonwealth and private industry will be of great value in this position.

Mr Robert Nichols who has been acting Executive Director of the Department of Premier and Cabinet will be returning to his substantive position as Managing Director of Tourism South Australia. I wish to thank Mr Nichols for his service to the department.

**STATE BANK**

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Treasurer):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** On Friday 4 September, the Premier's office received a telephone call from a State Bank customer expressing her concern about the fact that her name and address had been provided by the State Bank to a telemarketing company. In response to this complaint the Government asked for a report from the State Bank.

On receipt of this report from the State Bank the Government sought advice from the Crown Solicitor as to whether the provision of information in the circumstances was in breach of the State Bank of South Australia Act. From the Crown Solicitor's inquiries into this matter, it would appear that:

1. The bank engaged Data Connection Pty Ltd to provide services to the bank. The extent of those services is not clear from the information available to date. However, the services at least consisted of contacting various customers of the bank to determine whether those customers would agree to the release of confidential information to CUC Ltd.

2. Apparently to enable Data Connection Pty Ltd to carry out its task, the bank released to it certain client information, namely names, addresses, telephone numbers and bankcard numbers. Data Connection Pty Ltd signed a confidentiality agreement with the bank respecting this information.

3. After obtaining customer consent to the release of the information to CUC Ltd, Data Connection Pty Ltd then released the information to CUC Ltd. CUC Ltd then dealt direct with customers and offered goods and services to them.

4. CUC Ltd paid a fee to the bank respecting contracts that CUC Ltd entered into with the bank's customers. It was expected that these fees would raise \$50 000 per annum.

Preliminary advice from the Crown Solicitor suggests that the release of names, addresses and telephone numbers to Data Connection Pty Ltd may have been lawful. However, it is not clear that the release of the bankcard numbers was necessary and the Crown Solicitor has considerable doubts, given the sensitivity and confidentiality of these numbers, that they should have been released. The release of information to CUC Ltd, if done, as it apparently was, with the consent of the customer, would not be lawful.

The Group Managing Director, Mr Ted Johnson, has informed the Government that the State Bank has obtained independent legal advice which indicates that the provision of this customer information by the State Bank was in the 'normal course of business' and as such it is not in contravention of section 29a of the State Bank Act. I have been advised by the bank that the program is the same as that undertaken by other major banks. The confidentiality and privacy of bank customers is a very important matter and one which the Premier and I, at a ministerial and personal level, support very strongly. Indeed, it has been an underlying and fundamental principle in this Government's relationship with the bank.

The Group Managing Director of the State Bank has also expressed his concern about the provision of this information by his bank officers and has immediately stopped the release of customer information, and on 7 September cancelled the State Bank's involvement in the telemarketing program. Notwithstanding the bank's own advice and the positive action taken by the Group Managing Director, and based on the advice the Government has received from the Crown Solicitor, I believe that further investigation is warranted into this matter and I have referred the matter to the Crown Solicitor for more detailed investigation. It is, of course, a matter of importance to the House and I intend to report to the House when further advice is available from the Crown Solicitor.

### HOMESTART

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES (Minister of Housing and Construction):** I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** My statement is in relation to HomeStart, the Government's highly successful low start loans scheme.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I will ignore the interjections and the ignorance of members opposite. HomeStart has, since its launch in September 1989, provided more than \$800 million to assist more than 11 000 families and individuals into a home of their own. Of these loans, 87 per cent are made in the metropolitan area and the remaining 13 per cent in the country. For the first 2½ years, HomeStart's lending criteria applied uniformly across the State. However, it became apparent that, in some country areas, property growth was not keeping pace with inflation. This meant that some borrowers were at risk of making a loss if they sold their property in the early part of the loan.

To protect these people, interim changes were made earlier this year to minimise these risks until a thorough review could be undertaken. These changes required country borrowers to contribute a larger deposit than those in the city—of up to 20 per cent. Some country people were not happy with that system, and their views have been considered as part of the recently completed review. That review has resolved that new country lending guidelines should be developed which overcome the problems previously experienced.

The following guidelines for lending will now apply from 1 October: areas within a 100 kilometre radius of Adelaide will be regarded as metropolitan. For other areas the following guidelines will apply: borrowers with a 5 per cent deposit can borrow up to 2.3 times their income; with a 10 per cent deposit, they can borrow up to 2.5 times their income; and with a 20 per cent deposit, they can borrow to the maximum 2.8 times their income. This means that country people will have the opportunity to secure loans for just a 5 per cent deposit in the same manner as their city counterparts, but also have the option of borrowing greater amounts if they increase their deposit.

It is important to note that house prices in country areas are lower, and therefore country borrowers often do not need the same borrowing capacity as in the metropolitan area. HomeStart's new conditions provide loans of a sufficient size to accommodate country markets while maintaining equity with city deposit requirements.

The new guidelines have been presented to a wide range of country groups and have received strong support. By responding to community and industry needs, HomeStart has very effectively tailored its loans to meet the needs of people in the country.

### WILPENA POUND

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

**Mr LEWIS:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, this seeking of leave on a Thursday, particularly this Thursday, angers me, because it cuts into our grievance debate time. It is a deliberate strategy by the Government.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Is the honourable member refusing leave? Leave is sought and leave is granted. The honourable Minister.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have a very short ministerial statement that I would like to read to the House.

Section 4 of the Wilpena Station Tourist Facility Act 1990 requires that the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act must, on or before 30 September in each year, prepare a report for Parliament in relation to the lessee's compliance with the public information plan and environmental maintenance plan prepared in accord with the Wilpena lease.

The Wilpena project has not commenced and the investment climate nationally and internationally remains very constrained for capital projects, including tourism

developments. The Government is concerned that the project has not been implemented and that the benefits associated with the project remain unrealised. These benefits relate to solving the worsening visitor impact problems at Wilpena Pound, the rehabilitation of the existing resort area, the restoration of the historic structures, and the stimulus to the State's increasingly important tourism industry.

The public information plan and environmental maintenance plan required under the Wilpena lease will not be finalised until the investment structure is established. Both plans require certainty as to the actual nature of the proposed development before they can be completed and adopted. When the preparation and adoption process has been concluded, then the plans will be submitted to Parliament as required by the Act.

### OIL SPILL

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

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** Earlier this week in this House, the member for Hayward asked a question of my colleague the Minister for Environment and Planning in relation to the Marine Environment Protection Act. Despite this being more than adequately answered at that time, later that day during the grievance debate the honourable member again made statements about this Act and the provisions of the Pollution of Waters by Oil and Noxious Substances Act 1987.

The member for Hayward implied that a loophole existed in this legislation. This loophole would mean that no-one would be held responsible for the cost of the oil spill clean-up operations if the damage to the *Era* was found to be an accident.

Once again, Opposition members have shown their lack of understanding of maritime matters and their reluctance to carry out at least cursory research of issues before raising them in Parliament. If they had done this, they would have known that the vast majority of oil tankers are covered on a world-wide basis by insurance under a no-fault scheme for any oil spills that occur (whether intentional or otherwise) and the resultant clean-up operation.

In this case, the owners of the *Era* are covered for liabilities totalling US\$500 million. Part of this cover is provided under the Tanker Owners Voluntary Agreement concerning Liability for Oil Pollution (TOVALOP). The basis of TOVALOP is to reimburse Governments and others who incur reasonable costs in responding to an incident or who suffer pollution damage. Pollution damage is defined as covering loss or damage which results directly from the escape or discharge of the oil. Thus, it can include such things as oiling of fishing boats and gear and contamination of cultivated stocks of seaweed, shellfish or other marine products.

The *Era* has additional specified cover, as a top-up to TOVALOP, for proven economic loss actually sustained as a direct result of contamination resulting from the escape or discharge of oil irrespective of accompanying physical damage. Therefore, cost recovery for the clean-

up operations in the Spencer Gulf are clearly not a concern.

### LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Mr McKEE (Gilles):** I bring up the minutes of evidence given before the committee on court transcript fees and move:

That the minutes of evidence be received.

Motion carried.

### QUESTION TIME

#### PAYROLL TAX

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Premier concede that, with the drop of 3 500 full-time jobs last month, the payroll tax rebate scheme included in his budget is the wrong policy to create long-term jobs? Will he withdraw the scheme and replace it with a more broadly based scheme to provide incentive for employment in a falling job market? Economists point out that the success of the payroll tax rebate scheme depends on rising employment levels. When employment goes down, as at present, the number of employers who qualify for the payroll tax rebate diminishes rather sharply.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I think the Leader of the Opposition has overlooked a number of key points in this matter. First, it is not likely that one can do a proper assessment of any scheme on the basis of something that has just been introduced in a budget that was brought down in this place a couple of weeks ago. It is a bit premature to talk about how that scheme may or may not be going. I would have thought that any scheme that starts to give money back to employers, that starts to say, 'We will not tax you as much as before,' has to be a benefit for the economy of this State.

I come now to another point; the Leader has missed the point about what that scheme involved. He seems to think that it is assessed in the global context, that one has to look at employment over the whole State—the whole size of employment in the State—before anyone gets anything. The reality is that this rebate scheme is measured against the employment practice and performance of an individual enterprise. It is measured against their capacity to put new people on the payroll. If they increase their employment—and this is a real increase in employment—they are beneficiaries of this scheme.

In other words, this scheme actually will be measured by the capacities of business to generate new jobs. It should not be measured on the context of what happens in the State at large. Certainly, the unemployment figures are of concern to us all and, because they are of such concern, we have introduced this scheme. I remind members that, for the second year running, we have given money back under the payroll tax scheme, and we are the only State to have done that within the last decade. Last year we had a reduction in the level of payroll tax, and this year we have a rebate scheme. I think this Government deserves to be given credit for

that. It deserves to be applauded, because money handed back to the employing sector has to be better for the economy of this State.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition is out of order. The member for Playford.

#### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr QUIRKE (Playford):** Will the Premier advise the House whether the Leader of the Opposition has joined the Premier in signing letters to the Leader of the Federal Opposition and the Prime Minister regarding South Australia's opposition to a zero tariff regime in the automotive industry? In a statement to the House yesterday concerning tariffs, the Premier referred to a letter he had signed to both the Prime Minister and to the Federal Leader of the Opposition. The Premier sought the South Australian Opposition Leader's support for a bipartisan approach to our Federal political leaders.

**Mr INGERSON:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I understand that this matter is subject to a motion before the House, and I ask you to rule the question out of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I understand that it is not yet on the Notice Paper but that it will be on Tuesday's. It therefore would not be permissible to canvass that debate if it were on the Notice Paper. As it is not, the honourable member may ask the question. The member for Playford.

**Mr QUIRKE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Premier sought the South Australian Leader of the Opposition's support for a bipartisan approach to save our automotive industry.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Playford has asked his question.

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition is out of order.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! If the House wishes to proceed with Question Time, I suggest that members on my left come to order. The Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank the member for this very important question. I have to say that the answer as to whether or not the Leader signed the letter that I proffered as a bipartisan approach to our colleagues is 'No'. I think it is a great shame that he has not done so; he wrote a letter to me instead. I know it is against Standing Orders to read matters of irrelevance in this place and I do not intend to breach Standing Orders by reading this irrelevant reply that I got from the Leader of the Opposition, but what is important to note about the Leader's letter is that he takes the opportunity to defend his Federal colleague's policy. He takes the opportunity to say that in his view it offers greater opportunities.

I point to one of the paragraphs in his letter where he clearly says on page 2 that Federal Liberal Party policy by the year 2000 will be better for the car industry in this country than Federal Labor Party policy. He cannot tell me that what I have said is a lie, because it is in his own

letter. These are the contents of what he himself has said. I know that he wants to have it every which way.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat. It is impossible to hear the reply to the question that has been asked. I believe the House owes its members the courtesy of listening to that reply. The Premier.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition is out of order. The Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** The Leader of the Opposition wants a two bob each way approach. In fact, I was interested to hear a reporter this morning on Susan Mitchell's radio program, Alex Kerr, comment on the Leader of the Opposition's view on tariffs. She said, 'He is somewhere in the ether; he has no set view at all.' I really think he is caught somewhere between a rock and a hard place here; he does not want to rise to the defence of the industry in South Australia but on the other hand sometimes he wants to cast a few soft words about his own Federal colleagues. I wonder if that means he wants to come somewhere between the 5 per cent policy of the Federal Liberals and the 15 per cent of the Labor Party. Does that make him Mr 10 per cent or Mr 7.5 per cent, depending on which figure we want to go to? I think he really owes this place an answer. It is not for me to try to explain his convoluted, anachronistic position; it is for him to say whether he supports Dr Hewson's zero tariff policy for the automotive industry, simply, yes or no.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Bright is out of order. The member for Morphett.

#### TAB INQUIRY

**Mr OSWALD (Morphett):** I direct my question to the Minister of Recreation and Sport. Given that the TAB Board has known since January about allegations involving the senior management of TAB, a matter only now being investigated by the Crown Solicitor, why has there been an eight month delay in initiating the investigation? I have reliable information that the allegations under investigation involve kick-backs to a senior TAB employee as a result of awarding work to building, electrical and other contractors to the board. I have also been told that these allegations were specifically raised with the TAB board in January and subsequently.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I will give the response to the question in two parts. The question relates to my satisfaction with the board's handling of this matter. I would like to say that I am satisfied that the board is currently dealing with the matter appropriately in calling upon the Crown Solicitor to conduct an investigation. As to whether the board has in other times dealt with the matter appropriately, I will of course be reporting to the House and will be able to comment further on that position when I have received the Crown Solicitor's report.

## AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh):** Has the Premier, or a member of the Government, at any time held discussions with the Prime Minister or the Federal Industry Minister on the future of the South Australian car industry, and is he aware of any discussions that the State Leader of the Opposition may have had with his Federal counterparts?

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Before the Premier replies, I point out that the last part of the question is clearly out of order as it is not within the Premier's responsibility, but I invite the Premier to address other parts of the question.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is true that the State Government has made many representations to the Federal Government about the automotive industry. The member for Ross Smith as Premier was very active and continues to be very active in his concern in this area and I have been very active as well. I can identify the role that both of us played, for example, in the submission to the Industry Commission's automotive inquiry in August 1990 and the Government's response to the commission's report on the automotive industry in October 1990, and since that time a number of discussions and representations by the former Premier and myself with Paul Keating and the Industry Minister in Canberra.

I want to make the point that we are not happy that the tariff level will be reduced to 15 per cent. It is the view of this State Government that it should have been 25 per cent and we intend to keep a close watch on what is happening with the automotive industry—a scorecard, if you like—that will tell us whether or not the industry is suffering under the policies that have been put in place presently. We have made the point and we will continue to make those representations.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** What has happened as a result of the representations we have made? In fact, the Industry Commission recommended that the tariff should be reduced to 10 per cent. It said that it should be down to 10 per cent and the South Australian Government actively pursued that matter, I may say, more than any other State Government in Australia—it actively pursued that matter. What did the Federal Government do?

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** It did not ignore it: it listened. The submission it had before it was that the tariff should be 10 per cent.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader and the Deputy Leader seem to be pursuing a policy of asking questions by way of direct question and then interjecting during the course of the replies. This practice cannot continue.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I point out that all I was doing was asking the Premier to in fact read to the House a letter of which he has a copy.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader will not defy the Chair by way of frivolous comment like that. The Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point is that the proposition before the Federal Government was 10 per cent and this State Government argued vehemently against that, and that is evidence of how the Federal Government listened to us. That is evidence of how they listened to us. What happened with the listening by the Federal Leader of the Opposition to the State Leader of the Opposition? He tells me in his letter that when he became Leader he had discussions with the Federal Liberal Leader, but what we have as recently as today are statements by the Federal Leader that he does not want to listen to the State Leader.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Mr Deputy Speaker—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hayward has a point of order, which I hope is a serious one.

**Mr BRINDAL:** It is very serious, Sir. I understood that you instructed the Premier not to answer the second part of the question because it was out of order. I believe the Premier is defying the Chair.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I am sure the Premier is aware of the ruling I gave. Has the Premier concluded his remarks?

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Yes, Sir.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Light.

## TAB MEMBERS

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light):** My question is directed to the Minister of Recreation and Sport. Considering that the TAB has sat on information for more than seven months, what action will the Minister take against board members, including former Labor Premier Des Corcoran and former Deputy Premier Jack Wright, who did not alert his office to the allegations until early this month?

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** As I indicated to the member for Morphett, that issue is before the Crown Solicitor at this time. My point of view as to whether the board has dealt appropriately with the matter at other times will relate to the report of the Crown Solicitor to the Chairman, which will be forwarded to me. So, I think it would be very premature for me to make any comment about that until I have seen the Crown Solicitor's report.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitchell.

## AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** Will the Premier explain the difference between a negligible tariff and a zero tariff on South Australia's automotive industry? I have been contacted by a concerned manager of an automotive component company in my electorate who is confused by conflicting comments by members of the Federal and State Opposition. He has heard some

members say that their Fightback policy will mean a zero tariff whilst others have said that it means a negligible tariff.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I can well understand the confusion in the mind of the person who contacted the member for Mitchell, because there have been conflicting reports. It has been put to me that we have been unfair to the Federal Opposition regarding its policy on the car industry and that in fact it does not support a zero tariff policy option, but apparently it supports a negligible tariff policy option. Therefore, in terms of analysing the effect on this State's automotive industry, we owe it to the community to analyse the difference between a zero tariff and a negligible tariff on the industry in this State.

The fact is that the difference is nil: there will be no difference between those two policy options. It is sheer sophistry on the part of the Federal Opposition to attempt to somehow or other beguile the automotive industry in this country into believing that there might be a few per cent left in the tariff base if a Liberal Government were elected at the Federal level. The fact is that what it proposes will decimate this industry. The investment decision makers at Mitsubishi, Toyota and the other car companies in this country cannot be fooled.

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Victoria for his repeated interjections.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** These investment decision makers will not be fooled by these attempts to play games with the difference between a zero tariff and a negligible tariff. They have made their assessment that their investments will be at risk; in fact, their investments will not take place under that type of tariff regime. For the Leader of the Opposition to try to hide behind similar sorts of things is not only unsatisfactory but something which the car industry of this State should not put up with and neither should South Australians, and it is something from which he should immediately move away.

### GAMING MACHINES

**Mr BECKER (Hanson):** My question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Has the Government discovered a significant flaw in the poker machine legislation relating to the ability for licensees to raise finance to install machines, and what steps does the Government propose to take to address that loophole? I have been informed that the Government authors of the poker machine legislation have been severely embarrassed to find that a significant flaw in the Act could prevent many hotels and clubs installing poker machines. The Bill establishes that a licensee may be licensed to operate machines only on licensed premises. However, should a hotel or club need to borrow money to have machines installed in its premises, there is no provision in the Act to allow a bank or other financier, which has made finance available, to repossess machines. In the absence of this provision, I am told, banks will not lend money to all those clubs and hotels that will need to borrow before the machines can be installed.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** To the best of my knowledge, no-one has contacted me on this and

expressed any concerns. The industry has not made that contact, but I will check that for the member for Hanson. However, I would have thought that if the industry had any concerns it would give me a call—it has not hesitated to do so in the past.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Ross Smith):** I direct my question to the Minister of Employment and Further Education. In the light of today's labour force survey results and employment trends in South Australia, what would be the effect on South Australia's unemployment figures if the automotive industry in this State is subjected to zero tariffs as proposed by the Liberal Opposition? Monthly figures were issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today showing that South Australian employment fell slightly in August, following sizeable increases in June and July with trend estimates suggesting that employment has bottomed. While nationally unemployment fell by .1 per cent, in South Australia it rose by .2 per cent.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, that is a hypothetical question. The honourable member asked 'What would happen if?' It is hypothetical and I ask you, Sir, to rule it out of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Chair has considered the matter and does not believe the question was hypothetical in that context. I ask the Minister of Employment and Further Education to reply accordingly.

*The Hon. R.J. Gregory interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** The Minister of Labour interjects and asks what sort of car I have. It is a Holden Commodore and, of course, the member for Ross Smith has a Mitsubishi Magna. Let us just put that into perspective. It is quite clear that the hub caps have fallen off the Liberal's Fightback package. It is an absolute tragedy that this State Opposition Leader does not have the guts to stand up for this State. He would rather crawl around John Hewson.

**Mr GUNN:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, the Minister is debating a question which he has no authority to debate, because he is not responsible for that policy.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand the point of order. The Minister will not debate the question but will reply to the substance of it.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Certainly, today's unemployment figures show that South Australian industry does need bipartisan support on the part of both major Parties. Labour force figures released today indicate a rise in South Australia's unemployment rate for August of .2 per cent, from 11.5 per cent to 11.7 per cent. The member for Ross Smith is correct in saying unemployment fell .1 per cent to 10.9 per cent nationally and youth unemployment fell by .8 per cent in South Australia.

However, I think that all of us would agree that it would be an absolute tragedy for workers in South Australia if the Leader of the Opposition refused to cosign with the Premier letters to their Federal counterparts in support of our vitally important local industry. The Opposition has to join the South Australian

Government, the car industry, business and unions in telling Dr Hewson that he is wrong, that the zero tariffs will mean ground zero for the car industry in this State. Members opposite laugh about our car industry; they do not care.

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I will not respond to the interjections from the member for Victoria during Bush Bash week; I do not want to encourage him any more. However, the car industry in this State employs about 15 000 people and, with the multiplier effect, that means about 40 000 jobs that would be directly affected if the Federal Liberal Opposition's Fightback package were ever implemented. Let us remember that the member for Victoria and the member for Kavel both support the zero tariff option. I have read the Senate speeches of the member for Kavel—he was there briefly—and I have seen the member for Victoria's stoic defence of his great mate and his partner in political life, Ian McLachlan. We know where he stands—he is right behind zero tariffs and he has let us know that. We have to get the message across to the Opposition that we must get behind exporting our products, not our jobs, because that is what the Liberal Party's policy will do. We have to belt home the message that it would be suicidal for Australia to embrace some kind of one-way free trade that would write off entire industries because to do so would support more Australian jobs, not more Australian products. Let us look at a few examples; let us get down to some basics.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I ask members to come to order so that the reply can be heard. The Minister of Employment and Further Education.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! And I would caution the Minister again about debating the question.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I want to give a few examples, because this is vital for workers in this State and it is important that all members understand the protection that Korea, for instance, gives to its car industry. A resident of Korea, Mr Deputy Speaker, wishing to buy a Holden Commodore from your electorate could well face Korean Government charges and tariffs of up to 100 per cent on the cost of that car. As good as the Commodore is, I doubt whether many Koreans would be willing to pay \$50 000 for the pleasure. But I wonder how the Koreans would feel if we slapped on the same levels of protection to make their Hyundai cost \$50 000 in South Australia. They would not cop it. That is what I mean about a one-way free trade which is being embraced by the Federal Opposition and is being supported by key members. Two former Leaders are supporting that policy and the present Leader of the Opposition for the time being is refusing to stand up to it. I want to say this, too.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the Minister to bring his remarks to a close.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** A growth of over 7 000 jobs in South Australia over the past three months is not yet enough to indicate a meaningful jobs recovery. That is why it is vital that funding for employment initiatives from the Federal Government, under youth summit initiatives, flow quickly and flow now. All I have to say

to the member for Kavel, who interjected earlier, is, 'It will not be long. Keep hope alive. You will be up there soon.'

#### STIRLING COUNCIL

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** What action will the Premier take to save the Stirling council from inevitable bankruptcy forced upon it by his Government's refusal to vary the conditions of a \$4 million loan to cover damage from the 1980 Ash Wednesday bushfire?

I am told that Stirling council rates have risen by 46.4 per cent in the past five financial years and, despite having paid \$2 million to the Local Government Financing Authority towards the loan, the principal outstanding at the end of the 1992-93 financial year will remain at \$4 million. The interest rate on the loan is a crippling 14.9 per cent, and I am told that the Government has refused to allow the council to refinance the loan at current interest rates without penalty. I am further told that the council is prepared to repay the \$4 million and that the Local Government Financing Authority is prepared to accept the amount if the authority does not incur any penalty in paying out its banker—the Treasury.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I will certainly have this matter looked at. I do not know the immediate details in answer to the question. If there is a case that can be looked at without financial disadvantage to the State Government and without financial disadvantage to the Local Government Financing Authority, as the honourable member seems to be alluding in his question, perhaps there is a case that could be further examined. I will need more details on this matter. I will get a report and bring it back to the House.

#### ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

**Mr McKEE (Gilles):** My question is directed to the Minister of Health. Did the member for Adelaide make a public statement yesterday about possible bed closures at the Royal Adelaide Hospital; was the statement based on a document produced by the hospital; if so, what was the document, and did the honourable member in his statement accurately report its contents?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! On reflection, I believe that that question is out of order, because it relates mainly to the activities of the member for Adelaide and requires the Minister to verify a document which is not before him. Therefore, I rule the question out of order and invite the honourable member to discuss it with the Chair if he wishes.

#### WORKCOVER

**Mr GUNN (Eyre):** What action will the Minister of Labour take to overcome a rot in the WorkCover board which allows members who do not attend board meetings to be paid as well as the proxies that they send in their stead, and what is the remuneration paid to board members and their proxies? I am reliably informed that

Mr Paul Noack, for example, has attended only one board meeting and has sent a proxy to every other meeting, but both have been paid. I am also reliably informed that Mr Les Birch has sent a proxy to the last six consecutive board meetings and both have been paid. What action will the Minister take to rectify this rot?

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister of Labour.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** I thank the honourable member for his question. The matter he raised was referred to me recently in a discussion by the General Manager of the WorkCover board. As members would know, the corporation is managed by a board that has equal numbers of representatives from employer and employee organisations, and it involves some experts. That board makes the decisions as to how people ought to be paid. I have been advised that—

**Mr S.J. Baker:** You have got a majority on that board.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** The member for Mitcham is a very rude little boy, and his mother should have smacked him and taught him manners when he was young so that when he grew up he could behave himself properly.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitcham's interjection is out of order and the Minister should return to the substance of the question.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** The member for Victoria interjects, saying it was child abuse. I did not know that the member for Mitcham was still a child.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister should return to the substance of the question.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** As I said, the information was brought to my attention within the past week. I was advised by the General Manager that it is the view of the board that board members are paid so much based on monthly board meetings and also attendance at other meetings. Whilst they might not attend a board meeting, they are required to read an enormous number of board papers—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**An honourable member:** You're a disgrace to this Government.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition for his repeated interjections during Question Time. The Minister of Labour.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** As I said, they are required to read an enormous amount of material and, despite the interjection of the member for Mitcham, I can assure him that they can read; it is a slur on those people to say that they cannot read. I am also advised that they attend other meetings for which they are not paid. It has been a policy of the board that, if proxies attend in place of board members, they should be paid. The matter was brought to my attention because the board had decided that it needed to be looked at by its finance committee. I understand from what the General Manager has told me that eventually it will determine the policy on how that board ought to behave.

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** The member for Victoria talks about a rot of the system. If he knows so much about rorts, I invite him, as I have invited him previously, to advise the Fraud Prevention Squad of those rorts or, if he knows of any other rorts, to advise the police. My knowledge regarding those allegations is that, despite his being invited by the joint committee, he has not been able to come forward with any substantiated rot, about which he talks so frequently. If he thinks he knows of rorts, he should put up or shut up.

## ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

**Mr McKEE (Gilles):** My question is directed to the Minister of Health. Will there be bed closures at the Royal Adelaide Hospital over Christmas? Is this the normal procedure, and what impact, if any, will it have on patient care?

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD:** I assume that the honourable member's question has been inspired partly by a statement which I understand was made yesterday by the member for Adelaide. While it is almost a ritual for Ministers to get up and thank members for their questions, I particularly do so in this case, because I sat here for the whole of Question Time yesterday expecting a question from the Opposition on this matter and apparently it was not important enough for it to be raised in the House. We have had half an hour now.

In any event, I thank the honourable member for his question. I can assure him that the member for Adelaide was referring to the Chief Executive Officer's newsletter, which was issued to staff at the hospital some weeks ago. The three matters that he raised are contained in the letter, but in a very positive way and I think I would want to indicate to members the context in which these matters were put. First, on page 1 I note that the honourable member did not quote to the ABC the following words:

In achieving this budget the number of inpatients treated for the financial year increased by .81 per cent. This is made up of a 13.6 per cent increase in the number of same-day patients treated and a decrease of 3.6 per cent in the number of inpatients admitted.

So, members can see that this bears out what I have been saying to this Chamber for quite some time, that despite the reduction in beds that has occurred at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, in line with movement to the recommendations of the Sax report some time ago, the amount of activity in our hospitals has increased. We turn to the matter of the extended Christmas closure.

*Dr Armitage interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Adelaide is out of order if he thinks he can conduct a debate in Question Time. The honourable Minister.

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD:** On page 2 the Chief Executive Officer continues:

It is intended to achieve a more extensive Christmas closure involving all areas in the hospital by reduction to emergency services only for the period 22 December 1992 to 16 January 1993.

It goes on to make the point I have just made.

*Dr Armitage interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I caution the member for Adelaide against this repeated interjection in the course of one answer. The member for Adelaide is out of order. The honourable Minister.

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD:** He did not want to talk about this yesterday but now we have provoked him somewhat. It is general procedure at Royal Adelaide Hospital for beds to be closed across the Christmas break. People do not want to go into hospital for elective surgery over Christmas, when doctors are off playing golf and having holidays like many other people, so it is only sensible to reduce activity during that period.

The second point that the honourable member raised relates to the requirement that all patients who are admitted and who have private insurance be automatically classified as private. That only becomes an issue if the patient has to pay out of their own pocket, but the statement goes on to say (and this is very important and appears halfway through the second paragraph, if the member for Adelaide has got lost):

It should be pointed out that patients with private hospital insurance do not have to personally pay any additional amount other than that covered by their insurance and the hospital is one of the few in Australia having an agreement with its medical staff that the scheduled fee only will be charged and, where requested, benefits only paid for medical services. The board believes that this approach which allows conservation of productive jobs is preferred.

Why was that not quoted to the ABC, instead of worrying people that they may have to pay out of their own pockets? The third point is the concept—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I would ask the Minister to proceed with his reply as quickly as he can.

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD:** The third and last point the honourable member made is the periodic low activity day. It was made clear here, as follows:

It is considered that closing all elective services every fourth Friday with all staff required to take paid days off on that particular day can have significant impact on the operating costs with minimal reductions in patient throughput and productivity.

What this is all about is the 38-hour week rostered day off. Is it not sensible to maximise the number of people who are prepared to take their rostered day off on the one day? It is a far more productive way of doing it than having these matters scattered throughout the week. In conclusion, the honourable member did not quote this statement which says, in line with what I have said to honourable members time and time again:

The board believes that there are significant benefits to be achieved by further conversion of inpatient care to same day care. This is particularly so in the area of elective surgery and the staff of the hospital have been asked to actively pursue the continued transfer of patient care in this manner.

This is a very positive document and not one that people should be frightened with.

### SPEECH PATHOLOGY

**Mr BRINDAL (Hayward):** Does the Minister of Education concede that after 10 years of Labor Government there are thousands of children in South Australian schools requiring speech pathology assistance who are not receiving any such assistance at all, and why has the Minister not taken any major new direction in

this critical area in this budget? A July 1990 report from the South Australian Association of Speech and Hearing has estimated that between 5 000 and 17 000 school students require the services of a speech pathologist. The report concludes:

Of those students identified, between 50 per cent and 75 per cent were not receiving speech pathology services.

Education Department sources have confirmed that recommendations in 1990 and 1991 were for a comprehensive follow-up survey to determine the exact number of students in need and that this has been rejected. These sources say the Education Department has great concern about the massive public outcry if the major extent of this problem were to become known.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** I thank the honourable member for his question. One could advance that argument for the general health of young people in our community and then argue that the Education Department should be providing a network of medical services throughout our schools in order to meet the health needs of those young people. The logic of the honourable member's advocacy on behalf of a particular professional group in our community which is advancing its particular cause needs to be put into its proper perspective.

The Education Department for a long time has maintained a network of services among those speech pathologists, but there is also a network of other human service agencies who work to help young people and their families to overcome difficulties that are health and behaviour related, and so on, in order that they can participate fully in the learning programs provided in schools throughout the State.

Yes, we could always spend more money and employ more health professionals, but that raises a philosophical question of what is the primary function of the education system, the education authority, and who should provide those ancillary and associated services that relate to specific needs of students in any given community and its education system. All I can add is that in the current budget a substantial amount of money is provided for children with special needs.

Indeed, some 400 additional salaries have been provided above the staffing formula for children with special needs in our schools. In addition, this State has the highest percentage of ancillary staff provided for our schools of any other education system in this country, with many of those staff working with children with specific learning difficulties. I could go on to outline other support services but, in addition to that, there are supports provided through our general health system through Adelaide clinicians in this area, and so on. They are all accessible under our national health scheme and under other health schemes providing access to such specialist services, and of course that access has the support of the Australian taxpayer. So, one cannot simply finger, if the honourable member is attempting to do so, education as such and blame the Education Department for an inability of some people to access some of those special services in the form they want and in the way they want.

### ENVIRONMENT TECHNOLOGY

**Mr HERON (Peake):** Can the Minister for Environment and Planning advise of the benefits flowing to South Australia by way of the transfer of information on technology for the clean up of contaminated lands and groundwater following her discussions with the Technology Office of the United States Environmental Protection Agency in June this year?

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** I thank the honourable member for his interest in this area; as members would know, he has a particular interest in this whole question of the technologies to be applied to contaminated lands because he has a large number of those in his electorate. During my visit to the United States Environment Protection Authority, I had the privilege and honour of meeting with the Acting Director of the EPA and all the heads of the departments who provided a series of briefings and meetings while I was there.

Following my visit and the meetings, the United States EPA sent me a large amount of information covering a wide range of environmental programs and, in particular, the Innovative Technology Office has transferred its database on clean-up technologies for contaminated land and groundwater at no cost to South Australia. When I explain what this entails, I think members will realise the enormous windfall we have had from this very generous move. The database provides details on alternative treatment technologies and vendor information, including procedures, performance, costs, references and pilot information on methods of treating contaminated soil, sludge, solids and groundwater on site.

It is also important to note that the database has some 2 000 entries and is now installed within the Department of Environment and Planning and will soon be transferred to the new EPA. It is important to note further that this information will be available to consultants and other Government agencies and will provide an invaluable basis for the development of environmental management business and opportunity in South Australia. While it is not possible to put a definitive value on this transfer of technology, I do not believe it would be an exaggeration to say that this windfall for South Australia is worth multi-millions of dollars for the simple reason that we do not have the capacity or the capability to be able to compile this particular information—and neither, might I say, does any other State in Australia. I think we should rejoice that we actually have access to this information: it has been an enormous windfall and will provide the basis of new industry development for South Australia.

### WORKCOVER

**Mr INGERSON (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Why did the Minister of Labour claim that the WorkCover Board sets the fees for board members when, in fact, section 10 of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act clearly provides that the fees are set by the Governor in Executive Council? It is the Minister who sets the board's fees. In his response, will the Minister explain to the House how he can allow this double dipping rort to continue?

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** When I answered the honourable member's question, I was referring to the policy of paying the fees that are determined by the board.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart):** Will the Minister of Labour advise the House whether WorkCover costs are damaging small business in South Australia?

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs HUTCHISON:** I understand that on 3 September the Opposition Leader claimed that WorkCover represented the single largest obstacle to the prosperity of small business in this State.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** What the Leader has said with the support of all his members in this House is plainly wrong, and they have been wrong time and again. The member for Kavel and the member for Bragg attended the launch of the Arthur D. Little report, and the member for Kavel stayed for the whole morning.

They also have copies of the report and they know from that report that WorkCover costs are not a determining factor in gaining employment in this State. They know that and, what is more, the report says that it is a matter of perception. Members of the Opposition know that. They can sing all the choruses of abuse they like, but they cannot escape from that fact. The other thing is that, as in other States, WorkCover in this State is about the third highest in the cost area of employment.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Victoria and the member for Kavel are out of order. The Minister of Labour.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** The employment cost in South Australia, on average, is \$831 out of a total cost of \$25 301, which is 4.9 per cent. That is what it is. But when one then compares—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** If the interjecting member for Bragg would be quiet and listen for a change—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Bragg and Deputy Leader of the Opposition again for his repeated injections during Question Time.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** —he would know that the total cost of employing in New South Wales is actually \$4 000 per annum more than it is in South Australia. As much as the member for Mitcham can open his mouth and keep yelling, the figure is \$4 000 more in New South Wales than it is in South Australia, no matter how he might try to excuse that. If one looks at the figure in Victoria, one sees that it is \$3 300 more than it is here. Members know that if the old scheme had been kept going—the one they fought so hard to keep—the cost would have been through the roof. We in this State know that costs have been brought down by WorkCover.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): What explanation can the Minister of Family and Community Services give to a Murray Bridge man who served out a sentence by completing a community service order in lieu of paying court fees only to be arrested and locked up by police for 12 hours on 16 August because the Department for Family and Community Services failed to notify the police that the required community service had been carried out? What redress is due to him and what disciplinary action will be taken against the FACS officers involved? My constituent, whose name I can give to the Minister, is understandably aggrieved and concerned that a blunder of this kind can occur through the inefficiency of this department. I therefore seek an explanation of what redress will be available and what disciplinary action will be taken.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I will ascertain the facts and report to the House.

### WATER SUPPLY

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I direct my question to the Minister of Water Resources. In line with tradition followed by previous Ministers of Water Resources, including the Hon. Jack Slater, can the Minister inform the House whether our reservoirs—

*Members interjecting:*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members may be familiar with the question, but I still require it to be asked by the member for Henley Beach.

Mr BECKER: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am unable to hear what the member for Henley Beach is saying; can he repeat the question please?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Henley Beach will conclude the question.

Mr FERGUSON: Can the Minister inform the House whether our reservoirs have been recharged by winter rain prior to the onset of summer?

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I thank the honourable member for his question. I know that the members for Heysen and Chaffey will be interested in this answer, as, indeed, will the Minister of Health and any others who were previously Ministers of Water Resources, because it has been a tradition, which Jack Slater, I think, introduced into this Parliament, to claim credit for the filling of reservoirs. I do not intend to do that, but I would like to share with members—

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: In fact, they are not full, and this is a small worry. As of yesterday, the reservoirs—

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I am determined to get this figure on the public record. As of yesterday, the reservoirs held 95 per cent of their total capacity. I am delighted to tell the member for Heysen that four of the reservoirs are full. Mount Bold, Happy Valley, Millbrook and Kangaroo Creek reservoirs are at 100 per cent capacity and the South Para is on 98 per cent capacity. The only reservoir that is not in the high 80s or 90s is, as

my colleague would know, the Little Para reservoir, which is on 66 per cent. The good news for South Australians is that we will have water coming into this summer. We are 20 per cent over capacity compared with the same day last year. We should be able to save quite a bit of money on electricity costs for pumping from the Murray River.

### MOTOR REGISTRATION DIVISION

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): I direct my question to the Minister of Transport.

*The Hon. J.P. Trainer interjecting:*

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

Mrs KOTZ: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Will the Minister tell the House whether major faults in the Department of Road Transport's computer have been rectified and, if not, what additional costs are involved in ensuring that this computer does not continue to make mistakes such as overpaying SGIC \$1.3 million for third party insurance premiums? The computer was originally costed at \$4.5 million. However, the latest Auditor-General's Report shows that costs so far have blown out to more than \$11 million, including \$1 million paid to the JIS last financial year because of continuing problems with the computer, which processes all motor vehicle registrations. One of the faults has resulted in SGIC being paid twice for third party insurance premiums, and the Auditor-General has warned that the risk remains of major errors in the disbursement of moneys through the computer.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I have read that also. It was not very difficult to read. The answer is that discussions with SGIC are occurring. I have no fears that any overpayment will be repaid and that the cause of the overpayment will be rectified.

*Mr Such interjecting:*

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Indeed, as the member for Fisher said, we need every cent, and we will get it. The question of the Motor Registration Division's computer was the subject of some controversy when it was first installed. I have not lately given an update to the House on how the computer is going. I am delighted to inform the House that it is now performing exceptionally well. Recently I registered my own motor vehicle. Wakefield Street, in particular, was one of the really bad offices where the delays were quite extensive, as they were in Elizabeth, but people can now go in, there can be 12 others in front of them, and they can have their car re-registered and be out inside two minutes. I can vouch for the accuracy of that, because I have done it. It is quite remarkable.

The savings in terms of staff has made the purchase of this computer well worthwhile. All computers take some time to bed down. I had to smile when the Motor Registration Division's computer was being criticised in the *Advertiser*. It was shortly after that that the *Advertiser* moved to its new printing premises at Mile End. It has a printing press that is computer controlled. I can tell members that the problems we had with the Motor Registration computer were nothing compared with the problems that the *Advertiser* computer caused,

particularly for the Adelaide News. It put the Adelaide News out of business.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! This is not exactly relevant to the substance of the question. Will the Minister return to the department's computer?

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** Certainly, Sir. As an aside, I was merely making a comparison between the two. I can reassure the member for Newland that the Auditor-General's Report has been noted and the problem is in hand. Discussions have taken place between SGIC and the Department of Road Transport, and I have every confidence in the outcome.

### TRAM BARN

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Yesterday the member for Spence, when contributing to the debate on the motion I moved, indicated the following:

I am sure that Mr Noel Roscrow of North Adelaide, who is on one side of the Barton Road debate, and Dr J.L. Crompton of Barton Terrace West, North Adelaide, could usefully compare notes on what the member for Adelaide has told them regarding his attitude to the Barton Road closure.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Indeed, according to his interjection, the member for Spence indicates that I am telling two different stories.

**Mr QUIRKE:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, the honourable member cannot quote directly from the *Hansard* remarks made in the current session.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The honourable member is not debating the question. That would be out of order in a personal explanation. He is only referring to the debate in order to explain how he claims to have been misrepresented. The member for Adelaide.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** The facts are that, first, I have spoken to Mr Noel Roscrow once, by phone, and the substance of our phone call was my suggestion to the Adelaide City Council that it make alterations to the Jeffcott Road, Park Terrace intersection, which matter was canvassed in a letter that I circulated to all members of the Adelaide City Council. My recollection of Mr Roscrow's reaction to my suggestion was, 'I would accept that as a good compromise position.'

With regard to Dr J.L. Crompton of Barton Terrace West, he has not approached me on this subject and I have not approached him on this subject. Quite clearly, Mr Deputy Speaker, that means there has been no contact at all between us on this matter. The member for Spence quite clearly has incorrectly accused me of unprofessional conduct. Given the information I have provided to the House today, that is clearly not the case, and I await his public apology.

### ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** I seek leave to make a further personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** In Question Time today, the Minister of Health accused me of selectively quoting from the newsletter of the Chief Executive Officer, Royal Adelaide Hospital, of several weeks ago. In order to clarify the matter, I wish to quote the document completely:

The implications of the budget strategy and the effects on the hospital have been discussed on several occasions with the South Australian Health Commission. However, it appears that the finances of the State are such that there is little hope of relief from the savings target that has been set for the hospital.

The board has approved in principle the following strategies to address this problem:

(i) Extended Christmas Closure

It is intended to achieve a more extensive Christmas closure involving all areas in the hospital by reduction to emergency services only for the period 20 December 1992 to 16 January 1993.

Thus far the Minister has quoted. I would now like to read the next sentence in the CEO's newsletter which the Minister forgot to read out and which states:

To achieve this it is proposed that during this period 320 beds will be closed.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker; while the honourable member was talking, he was debating the question.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Chair is not aware of that debate having taken place, and I am sure the member for Adelaide would not have infringed that Standing Order had I been concentrating on it.

### GRIEVANCE DEBATE

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has now concluded his remarks. The question before the Chair is that the House note grievances. The Leader of the Opposition.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition):** Earlier this afternoon during Question Time I challenged the new Premier to read to the House the letter I had given to him yesterday afternoon. Did you all notice how the Acting Premier would not take up that challenge? I would like to read to the House the letter I gave to him yesterday afternoon, as follows:

Dear Premier, I refer to the letters you propose to send to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Federal Opposition. You had them delivered to my office at 1.55 p.m. this afternoon, no doubt with the intention of immediately raising the matter in the House. Your actions are nothing more than a stunt which achieves nothing in addressing the current economic and financial crisis faced by South Australia as a result of State and Federal Labor Government policies over the past 10 years.

You refer to the direct employment of 14 000 in motor vehicle production in South Australia which represents '15 per cent of South Australia's manufacturing base'. However, I have not heard you say anything about the loss of almost 21 000 jobs in total manufacturing employment in South Australia over the past two years. As Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology throughout that time, you must accept your share of the direct responsibility for such massive job losses, yet even after becoming Premier, you have not indicated any change in policy to address our jobs crisis.

WorkCover alone imposes a further 7.5 per cent penalty on the vehicle manufacturing industry and yet your Government refuses to reduce this penalty. If you were genuine in your desire to preserve jobs in motor vehicle production and other important industries in South Australia, you would have supported much

needed reforms to business taxation and our industrial relations system.

Government members are all extremely silent now, because they are embarrassed by this. The letter continues:

This includes insisting upon the abolition of payroll tax as proposed by the Federal Liberal Party. The fact that the Federal Labor Government has embarked on a policy to reduce tariffs without giving business the capacity to reduce costs to absorb the impact has contributed already to job losses in South Australia yet you have been conspicuously silent in your public statements about this vital issue.

On evidence presented to me by the car industry the 15 per cent tariff proposed by the Federal Labor Party for the year 2000 but without major industrial and taxation reform will disadvantage the industry more than the 5 per cent tariff with payroll tax, fuel tax and industrial reform as proposed by the Federal Liberal Party by the year 2000. Your letter only criticises the Federal Liberal Party but ignores, obviously for political reasons, any equal criticism of the Federal Labor Government, whose policies are already damaging the car industry.

I have made it clear to my Federal colleagues that I support these business taxation and industrial relations reforms as a means of encouraging industry across the board to become more competitive. I have also made it clear that I do not believe there should be any further reductions in tariffs until these reforms are in place and seen to be working. Then, and only then, should the level and speed of tariff reduction be decided. As soon as I became Leader, I initiated discussions with Dr John Hewson to express my views, so there is no need for the letter you propose to him. I am also having continuing discussions with representatives of the car makers.

It would be futile to write to Mr Paul Keating because he has demonstrated complete indifference to South Australia for 10 years. I will continue my efforts to ensure the restructuring of our economy so that we can reverse the disastrous policies which have applied under Federal and State Labor Governments for the past 10 years.

Only a change of Government here and in Canberra will achieve this. You can write all the letters you like. They will not repair the damage and the loss of 38 000 full-time jobs the economic and financial policies of your Party have inflicted upon South Australia. Yours sincerely, (signed) Dean Brown.

On 30 August 1990 the new Premier, then Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology—

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

**Mr McKEE (Gilles)**: Just for the record, I would like to read the letter that the Leader of the Opposition refuses to sign. This letter is from the Premier to the Prime Minister, Mr Keating, as follows:

Dear Prime Minister, We are writing to you to stress the importance of the automotive industry to South Australia and to express the concern of people in this State for its future. All sectors of the Australian community acknowledge the significance of the industry to this country. As well as directly employing 60 000 people, it generates three times this number of jobs in supporting industries. In South Australia, this is critical. Our State supplies more than a third of Australian motor vehicle production, and the share is growing. Direct employment in the industry is about 14 000, representing 15 per cent of South Australia's manufacturing base.

South Australians have long had a vital interest and involvement in debate about the industry and reform to it. As you would be aware, the State Government argued strongly to the Industry Commission in 1990 that a minimum tariff level of 25 per cent was required for the industry. We reluctantly accepted the decision to reduce the tariff to 15 per cent. However, we cannot stress too strongly that this figure must be an absolute minimum protection level for the automotive industry.

Automotive exports have increased substantially in recent times and further improvements and greater investment in the industry are expected. However, these moves are predicted upon a 15 per cent tariff regime in the year 2000. Recent comments

by automotive industry leaders have clearly shown the disastrous consequences that would flow from a further reduction in tariffs. This would be particularly acute in South Australia, where the managing director of Mitsubishi Motors, Mr Mike Quinn, has said his company would abandon plans to invest \$600 million in the State if a Coalition Government imposed its proposed zero tariff policy on the industry. The comments echoed concerns expressed by other automotive industry representatives.

A reduction in the automotive tariff to zero by 2000 would cause a significant fall in the GDP, a 5 per cent increase in imports, an increase in the current account deficit and a dramatic fall in employment. South Australia cannot afford a further reduction in the automotive tariff. On behalf of the people of this State, we join together to urge you to ensure a minimum tariff level of 15 per cent is maintained to guarantee the survival of the automotive industry.

Yours sincerely,

It is signed by Lynn Arnold and, of course, the missing signature is that of Dean Brown, Leader of the Opposition.

*The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:*

The **DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Order! The member for Napier is out of order. The member for Gilles.

**Mr McKEE**: I wanted to raise a couple of items in this grievance debate; that was the first and most important. I also wanted to congratulate another successful South Australian industry on its twentieth anniversary, and that is the South Australian Film Corporation. That organisation is also a product of the visionary Labor policies of this State started in the early 1970s by the Dunstan Labor Government. I may say that at that time I was the founding Secretary of Actors' Equity in this State. I was involved in many discussions early in the piece about award matters involving the film industry in this State. I also had some involvement before the cameras in a minor role in the Film Corporation's very successful production *Picnic at Hanging Rock*.

*The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:*

**Mr McKEE**: The member for Mount Gambier is a treacher of the boards and should be supportive of a very great South Australian industry. When one travels overseas, one hears many people, particularly in Europe and the United States, commenting on the quality of Australian film production—

The **ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hutchison)**: Order! There is too much comment across the House.

**Mr McKEE**: —and, in particular, the quality of films produced by the South Australian Film Corporation.

*The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:*

The **ACTING SPEAKER**: Order! The member for Mount Gambier is out of order.

**Mr McKEE**: I am surprised at the member for Mount Gambier because, being a thespian and a treacher of the boards, he should be supporting our industry. Film production will continue—

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

**Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee)**: We must protect the role of Parliament and the right of members to question the actions of Government Ministers on any matter associated with their portfolio in a budget debate. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Estimates Committees into which the House is now about to adjourn itself. The then President in another place, in giving a ruling on the Scientology (Prohibition) Bill on

26 September 1968 when the *sub judice* question was raised, quoted Erskine May:

A matter awaiting or under adjudication by a court of law should not be brought before the House—

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** I rise on a point of order, Madam Acting Speaker. The member for Murray-Mallee is making a complete mockery and garbling his speech so that no-one, especially you, can hear him.

**Mr FERGUSON:** Madam Acting Speaker, on a further point of order—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I will deal with one point of order at a time. As long as the honourable member speaks audibly there is no point of order. What is the point of order of the member for Henley Beach?

**Mr FERGUSON:** The honourable member is referring to debate in another place. Direct reference to debate in another place—

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I have the point of order. I advise the member for Murray-Mallee that he cannot refer to debate in another place. I did not quite hear what he said, but I advise him not to do so.

**Mr LEWIS:** Madam Acting Speaker, I am simply quoting from the statements that have been made by other learned Presiding Officers in other Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Parliaments. It is not necessarily the debate in another place, but the learned opinions of Presiding Officers of other Parliaments who are members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. I continue the quote:

This rule does not apply to Bills.

The subsequent debate on the Scientology (Prohibition) Bill proceeded without restriction. Madam Acting Speaker, I am not reflecting on debate in another place. The newly established Estimates Committees are an extension of the Committee stages of a Bill before the House. They have been in operation for only 13 years and, therefore, the *sub judice* rule should not apply to the scope of the debate of that Bill.

In dealing with the *sub judice* rule, the Speaker of the New South Wales House of Assembly said in 1965 and restated the position again in 1973:

The Chair ought to endeavour to apply a more flexible ruling, so as to allow maximum debate stopping only at the point where there appears to be a real possibility of prejudicing the interests of the parties involved before the court or in any way embarrassing or influencing the court itself.

In September 1969 the Speaker of the House of Representatives (Sir William Aston) presented a paper on the *sub judice* rule to the First Conference of Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers, held at Ottawa. Answering the question as to what principles the Speaker should be guided in his interpretation of the *sub judice* rule, he made the following significant points:

(1) It is a fundamental right of the House to legislate on any matter.

(2) It is the fundamental right and duty of the House to consider and discuss any matter, if it is thought to be in the public interest.

(3) If it is not inconsistent with fundamental rights and duties, the House should avoid setting itself up as an alternative forum or body of inquiry or permit its proceedings to interfere in the course of justice.

(4) Apart from particular matters such as criminal cases, courts martial, civil cases and matters referred by a legislature to a judicial body, the rule has application to other hearings, in queries or investigations in which the rights of individuals or a

community group or the achievement of justice may be prejudiced.

(5) It is the obligation of the Chair to hold the balance between the rights and duties of the House, on the one hand, and the rights and interests of the citizen, on the other.

In the House of Commons the *sub judice* rule applies (subject to the discretion of the Chair, and the right of the House to legislate) to matters before criminal courts, courts martial and judicial bodies such as tribunals of inquiry. In June 1972 the House of Commons resolved that, subject to the discretion of the Chair, reference may be made in questions, motions or debate to matters awaiting or under adjudication in all civil courts, including the national industrial relations court, in so far as such matters relate to a ministerial decision which cannot be challenged in court except on grounds of misdirection or bad faith, or concern issues of national importance such as the national economy, public order or the essentials of life. It was further resolved that, in exercising its discretion, the Chair should not allow reference to such matters if it appears that there is a real and substantial danger of prejudice to the proceedings.

On 20 May 1969, President Sir Alister McMullin informed the Senate that he had received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition proposing a debate on a matter of urgency relating to the penal provisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. A point of order was taken by a Minister that the motion was not in order as it referred to matters which should be regarded as *sub judice* there being before the Commonwealth Industrial Court a particular contempt proceeding involving the imprisonment of a union secretary. The President ruled:

I do not think the motion necessarily brings into consideration the current matter before the Commonwealth Industrial Court. As a general rule—

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

**Mr ATKINSON (Spence):** Today I shall complete my trilogy on the unlawful closure of Barton Road, North Adelaide. I have been summarising the arguments of that group of North Adelaide residents who seek to have the road closed permanently. This group of 13 appeared before a meeting of Adelaide City Council on Monday night. One of this group, Mr Geoffrey Goode referred to people who wanted to use Hill Street but who themselves did not live in North Adelaide as 'near suburban interlopers'. He then asked why motorists with no local interest in that part of North Adelaide should be allowed to rush through it. That is an interesting question. In this instance Mr Goode and I agree.

Hindmarsh residents have argued that Hill Street ought to be used not as a route to the central business district but as an access to local services. We support measures to deter through traffic, but we also support access to local facilities for the people of Bowden, Ovingham and Brompton. However, Mr Goode's rhetorical question, to which the suggested answer is 'No', is intended to be of more general application. Mr Goode is asserting that North Adelaide is a Mira Monte, a secluded housing estate that ought not to be violated by commuters. Mr Goode does not mention that the value of his property is so high because of North Adelaide's proximity to the city. He is asserting a principle that would close Jeffcott Street in addition to Barton Road.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

Mr ATKINSON: I am not kidding. Adelaide City Council has discussed the closure of Jeffcott Road. I am sure that the group of residents from whom we heard on Monday night would be opposed to North Adelaide's connection with Main North Road if it were not for the fact that it connected North Adelaide to the rest of the world.

I would like to ask members of this group whether they would refrain from using Torrens Road and Port Road unless they can establish a local interest in the town of Hindmarsh. The funny thing about all these North Adelaide residents who made submissions in support of the permanent closure of Barton Road is that, unlike me, they all drive motor vehicles. Most of them have more than one car and they are all part of the traffic problem but they want to stop Bowden pensioners catching a taxi to Calvary Hospital via Barton Road.

The Geoffrey Goodes of this world want to drive on the roads of the town of Hindmarsh but they will not have the people of the town of Hindmarsh on their roads. One of our valued allies in this struggle has been Sister Christina Lloyd, Nurse Administrator of the Calvary Hospital. On behalf of the majority of Calvary Hospital staff and patients, she expressed the view that Barton Road ought to be reopened. She said that some obstetricians who worked at Calvary or had consulting rooms in North Adelaide also worked at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. She also pointed out that Barton Road's reopening would save them time if they had to dash either way in an emergency or if gravely ill newborn infants had to be transferred from Calvary to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Sister Christina's letter of support for us upset eye specialist and new Hill Street resident Dr Michael Hammerton. He rang Sister Christina to remonstrate with her. Here is the account of their private conversation that Dr Hammerton gave to the Adelaide City Council during his very public oral submission on Monday night:

Sister Christina's comments were, in fact, a personal opinion and not those of the hospital. She told me on the phone that she preferred the road to remain open because she had quicker access to the airport. She said she did not know how many emergency evacuations had been required to the QEH. She said there might be three in one week and none for the rest of the year. She did not know what conditions required emergency evacuation.

Members opposite wonder why I referred to Dr Hammerton yesterday as 'the odious Dr Hammerton'. After listening to that parade of underhandedness and prejudice would any member of the House take a phone call from Dr Hammerton?

Next in order of appearance was Mr W.J. McLurg of Barton Terrace West. Like so many of his group, Mr McLurg first attacked the Labor Party and then the State Government. The member for Adelaide should be proud of his team. After Mr McLurg we heard from Mrs Angela Hoban who told us why, amongst other things, permanent closure of Barton Road was not really a problem for parishioners of Saint Laurence's Church who live at the bottom of the hill. Mrs Hoban established her credentials by relating that her husband was on the finance committee of the church. Mrs Hoban then gave us only one sentence on the matter, and it was this: 'The church has been deemed—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hutchison): Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Custance.

Mr VENNING (Custance): I rise this afternoon on a very serious matter, one that I will take up with the Parliament over the next few months, and that is the departure of young people from rural South Australia. This will cause a long-term problem for this State. Our key rural industries are losing a complete generation of practitioners. Young people are not staying in agriculture, and they are not staying in rural South Australia, and therefore will not join the industry. They are leaving in droves to live in Adelaide.

The indications are that agricultural industries will eventually be left with a huge generation gap. I hope members understand what I am talking about and realise—and, if they have not already done so, they had better realise it very quickly—the seriousness of this problem. The best training process over the years has been through the father-son relationship or, to a lesser extent, the father-daughter, mother-son or mother-daughter relationship. The best training ground for our farmers has been the family farm, but this is in serious jeopardy because young people are simply not staying. I have had personal experience with my own three children: only one will remain on the land out of an original family unit of five people. So, five will be reduced to one. Extrapolate that across rural South Australia and members will see what happens.

Members would know that I am a fourth generation farmer, but I will leave only one farmer behind me when there were five farmers in front of me—work that one out. The reasons for this loss are very obvious and point to a bleak future for farming. Why is it so? One reason is the demise of the South Australian Rural Youth Movement. Several of my colleagues, including the member for Flinders and the member for Fisher, and I were members of that organisation. The record of this group has been tremendous over the past 30 years in South Australia and stands on its own in the 25 years that I have been associated with it.

During my own time with this organisation colleagues who were in my club included Andrew Inglis, who is now President of the Grains Council of Australia; and Malcolm Sargent, a past President of the South Australian Grains Council and President of the South Australian Grain Section. A member of an adjoining club was Don Blesing, who is now the National President of the Grain Research and Development Corporation. They were all trainees in the South Australian Rural Youth organisation, and now they are national rural leaders. When you see where the organisation is now, it is an absolute disgrace, because in the past 20 years Governments have ignored this organisation and the work it did, its capacity and potential, and now it is a fragment of what it was. The Government has chosen to do this deliberately. It must reverse that decision immediately or there will not be anything left. Now there is only one full-time person in the administration of South Australian Rural Youth, whereas 20 years ago there were up to 12—that speaks for itself.

Another issue really annoys me the Federal Government has seen fit in recent days to appoint three

part-time Rural Youth counsellors. They have nothing at all to do with South Australian Rural Youth, but the Federal Government obviously realises that there is a problem and has allotted those funds. Why did not this money come via the State Government to help the organisation that we already had in place? That has not happened. It is rubbing salt into the wound. The Government must put meat back onto the bones and restore the purpose and objective of the old organisation that we once knew.

There are many other things that I want to discuss, but the five minute time limit precludes me. The incentive to farm is diminishing rapidly because young people cannot own land today because of the cost of stamp duty. That is another issue that I will take up later. Prospects of trade are slipping away. The State Government should be helping to pursue links with Asian and other regions for sales. The future of our farms is in great jeopardy. The standard of living in country areas is declining; the State Government is gradually dismantling infrastructure and services in the country. That has a compounding effect. The whole place is winding down, and one can understand why young people in rural South Australia will not stay. They go away to be educated and they do not return. In general, the high cost of living, the low prospects and an even lower standard of living are killing off our rural communities, and young people are moving away. The Government should hang its head in shame.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Henley Beach.

**Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach):** I wish to draw to the attention of the House the problems that occurred recently because of flooding rains in Adelaide. I received a telephone call from the Henley and Grange council concerning the problems in its particular area. The problem that I allude to is the huge amount of debris that has finished up on the beachfront at Henley Beach following the floods in recent weeks. Most of that debris has come down the Torrens River and been spread along the beach. It is most unfair that the residents of my electorate should have to foot the bill for the cleaning up of that rubbish. I understand that next Monday a beach cleaner, hired by the City of Glenelg, will operate at considerable expense to clean up this rubbish. It is an interesting reflection of our times that the Town Clerk informed me this morning that while on a casual walk along the beach he counted at least 40 syringes amongst the rubbish.

**Mr Lewis:** Why didn't he pick them up?

**Mr FERGUSON:** The reason ought to be obvious. Because of the problem with AIDS, special attention has to be paid to the clearing up of syringes. If people do not have a special pair of gloves and other necessary equipment, they will be putting themselves in danger. I am sure that the honourable member would not like to see a member of the Henley and Grange council being put in that sort of danger. I have already approached the Minister for Environment and Planning to see whether some financial assistance can be directed towards the council for the additional amount of money that will have to be spent on cleaning up what is virtually other people's rubbish.

I am sure that she would be prepared to give favourable consideration to the request that I am putting. However, this question needs to be answered in the long term. I think six councils are involved along the Torrens River, and each has responsibility for the rubbish that finishes up in the river. Unfortunately, some councils are not prepared to accept responsibility for the mess that finishes up on the Henley and Grange foreshore, so it is left to the Henley and Grange council and, therefore, the ratepayers of that area. I believe this is a matter for the Local Government Association, and I believe it should be referred to that association. The association should look very carefully at this situation with a view to finding some way to clean up this rubbish. I am not the only person who has made this observation—from time to time this has been put by various councils along the river when they have had difficulty cleaning up huge amounts of debris that is not their responsibility—it is the responsibility of other councils.

I will contact the Henley and Grange council and ask whether it will refer this matter to the Local Government Association. I hope the Minister will be able to assist, because the situation at the moment is most unfair. I hasten to add that there is a similar problem in relation to the Patawalonga. The residents of Glenelg have a very similar problem.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr FERGUSON:** Yes, it is washing down to the electorate of Henley Beach, but it is also washing onto the foreshore at Glenelg, and the residents of Glenelg have the same sort of problems that we have at Henley Beach.

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

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## ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

The Legislative Council intimated that it had given leave to the Attorney-General (Hon. C.J. Sumner), the Minister of Tourism (Hon. Barbara Wiese) and the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Heritage (Hon. Anne Levy) to attend and give evidence before the Estimates Committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill, if they think fit.

## APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate on motion to note grievances (resumed on motion).

(Continued from page 610.)

**Mr SUCH:** Prior to the lunch break I was talking about the serious situation which confronts the Flinders Medical Centre as a result of financial cutbacks imposed by this Government. As part of that concern I would like to highlight the great need that that hospital has for a new accident and emergency facility. I understand that that proposal is currently before the Health Commission. I implore the Minister and the commission to respond speedily to that request so that the Flinders Medical

Centre can get the building under way. It is desperately needed to serve the population of southern Adelaide.

Members may not be aware, but when the hospital was originally proposed it was to be a much larger facility than the one that currently exists. Those plans have never materialised and we have now reached the stage where the hospital is under considerable pressure in relation to accommodation and servicing the medical and health needs of and the southern area of Adelaide. Psychiatric facilities are also desperately needed on that site. At the moment the hospital has very limited facilities for psychiatric treatment and, once again, I implore the Minister and the Mental Health Service to look urgently at the provision of a substantial on-site facility to provide and cater for the needs of psychiatric patients in that area.

This matter has dragged on for a long time. As I understand it, it is not close to resolution. Whilst it is not the sort of issue that gets headlines—nor do I wish to do that—it is nevertheless a real need and once again I urge the Minister to take prompt action in terms of addressing that matter so that the Flinders Medical Centre can have a proper and substantial psychiatric facility to cater for the growing population in the south.

I believe that the Flinders Medical Centre has reached the stage where it cannot sustain any more significant cutbacks in funding. At the moment we have a situation in which the staff—medical, nursing, support, and so on—are being put in a position of great stress because of changed rosters and the general pressure they are put under in order to save money when there is very little opportunity to undertake further cost savings. It is an unsatisfactory situation when the staff are put in that position, and we run the real risk that the hospital may suffer a decline in the high quality of service that it has offered since its establishment. It would be a tragedy and an unacceptable situation if the hospital were unable to continue to provide the fine medical service for which it is well known.

I believe that Flinders Medical Centre has suffered because of its efficiency. That has not occurred because of any ill will on the part of the current Minister, but I suspect that in order to avoid any allegations of favouritism, to some extent, he has been less than generous with that hospital. I would trust that, in his concluding time as Minister of Health, he would take a serious and close look at the situation that confronts Flinders Medical Centre. I believe that the hospital has been penalised financially for being efficient. I challenge anyone to look at its operating performance and its contribution in terms of the use of the health dollar. They would find that that hospital would measure up extremely well on any criteria adopted.

Sadly, it has been targeted for cuts; it has been penalised. What is most important, of course, is that the population it serves will be penalised in terms of a reduction in available medical services. We have reached the stage where that hospital, as I indicated earlier, is very close to the bone. There is not much room left for any significant cuts. The hospital staff and administration have done their best and I am convinced that they are operating a very efficient organisation. I am happy to go on the record and pay tribute to the work of the staff since the hospital opened and also in relation to its research component and that of the medical school. They

have done fine work, which is noted overseas as well as in Australia for its outstanding quality. They have also made a main contribution as a teaching hospital in training medical staff as well as nurses. So, I make a plea that that hospital gets a fair go, that the people in the southern area get a fair go and that the hospital is not strangled by further unnecessary and unjustified cuts to its budget.

**Mr INGERSON (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Tourism South Australia is in turmoil. Today the Minister of Tourism was quoted as saying that she would like to see the position of Managing Director resolved as soon as possible. She stated:

I have already had some discussions on that matter in the hope that something can be achieved very quickly. Once that has been achieved and now that there is a permanent arrangement as far as the Minister is concerned, I believe that some of the uncertainty that has existed within the organisation can be overcome and people in the organisation can get on with the job of promoting South Australia.

Today in this place the Premier announced:

Mr Robert Nichols who has been Acting Executive Director of the Department of Premier and Cabinet will be returning to his substantive position as Managing Director of Tourism South Australia. I wish to thank Mr Nichols for his service to the department.

We have a Minister of Tourism who today did not even know that her Managing Director of Tourism South Australia had been replaced. She did not even know that the Premier of South Australia was to announce in this House at 2 o'clock today that her Managing Director was replaced. That is the principal reason why tourism in this State is in a mess. We have had an acting Minister for five months, we have had an acting Managing Director for 12 months, and today the new Premier of South Australia has not even consulted his Minister of Tourism; he has not told the Minister of Tourism there was to be a new Managing Director. That is a disgrace. The Minister should resign on the spot.

Let us look at the disaster of Tourism South Australia in this State. First, salaries are up by 6.3 per cent, yet the budget indicates that inflation in South Australia will be only 2.4 per cent. We shall have more people put into Tourism South Australia—and to do what? To tell South Australia that tourism is going down the gurgler? The administration expenses are up by \$456 000—a 28 per cent increase. Accommodation and service costs are up \$720 000—a 54 per cent increase. Is that because Tourism SA now has to go to the Remm building? Is it because the State Bank has been such a disaster that Tourism SA now has to be relocated and pay \$720 000 in relocation expenses to the Remm building? Tourism SA will be on the tenth floor of that building. Who will go to the tenth floor of the Remm building to Tourism SA?

We have \$10 000 for joint industry projects. That is an interesting increase. There is only \$10 000 for joint industry projects in tourism, yet \$1.2 million is spent on relocation and administration expenses. I thought that Tourism SA was about promoting tourism, not building up a huge bureaucratic administration.

Let us look further down the Tourism SA budget. We find that regional tourism has suffered a cut of \$44 000—a reduction of nearly 9 per cent. All the regional areas in South Australia have to take a cut in

terms of tourism, yet the Minister, who did not even know today that she had a new Managing Director, has authorised \$1.2 million to be spent on relocation to the Remm building and administration expenses.

Further we find that the allocation for purchase of office equipment for the department overall is down by \$71 000. How can that be down when Tourism SA is locating to the Remm building and spending \$720 000? We have to look at this budget and ask, 'What is happening?'

Further on we find it is expected that Travel Centre sales, which are included in the budget for the first time, are expected to reduce by \$2 million, or 17 per cent. We have an increase in the number of people in the department, yet it is budgeting for a \$2 million reduction in sales. Commission from those sales is expected to go up by \$450 000. As any person in business would know—and you have been in business, Madam Acting Speaker—if you reduce your sales by nearly 17 per cent, you cannot expect the commission from those sales to increase by 47 per cent. Something must be wrong with the logic. It is impossible in this environment to have a \$2 million reduction in sales and to get a \$467 000 increase in commission.

As I said earlier, the Minister of Tourism today did not even know, when the Premier announced it in this House, that she had a new Managing Director. It is no wonder that Tourism SA is in a mess. The Minister has been away for five months and, when she comes back into this position, she still has no idea of what is going on in her department. As I said, she should resign.

A sum of \$5 million has been allocated for infrastructure spending. There is no mention of what it is or where it is. We know, from a report today by the Minister for Environment and Planning, that there will be no Wilpena development. Where will that \$5 million go? What has happened in tourism development? There is to be no Wilpena, no Jubilee Point, no Barossa, no Tandanya, no Cape Jervis, no Mount Lofty. We have \$600 million worth of proposed tourism development projects in this State and not one has got off the ground under this Minister of Tourism.

A couple of weeks ago in South Australia there was an AFTA/*Advertiser* promotion. Every State, except South Australia through Tourism SA, was represented. Why was not Tourism SA there when 10 000 tourists went through that travel promotion? Tourism SA is in absolute turmoil, because the Minister does not know what she is doing. She should be sacked by the Premier, because she did not even know that a new Managing Director had been appointed.

The Arthur D. Little report states that tourism in South Australia is the biggest single potential development for employment, particularly of young people and mature adults. What do we have? We have a budget that indicates that we are to have fewer sales out of Tourism SA than in the previous year. We know that the promotion of tourism in this State has gone awry, except for one thing: the Minister of Tourism launches something all the time, but nothing ever happens after those launches. The Minister of Tourism has no comprehension. Instead of looking beautiful in front of the television cameras and on the front page all the time, she should realise that she has to produce the goods and

the facts. She must produce the answer at the bottom of the line; she must have a budget that is based on common sense. The Minister of Tourism should know that she has a new Managing Director when the Premier announces it. It is an absolute disgrace. The Minister ought to resign. The sooner it happens, the better it will be for tourism in South Australia.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I wish to bring to the attention of the House two poems written by a constituent of mine, Mr Jeff Cook, who resides at Minlaton. Jeff has had two books printed over the past year or so and he is becoming quite well known through various radio appearances in this State and increasingly interstate. The first poem is entitled, 'The Man Who Broke the Bank in South Australia.' It reads:

There's a man who lives among us, with a record to his name  
A record that nobody else would ever want to claim  
The Jacob's royal commission (when it's over), will confirm  
The biggest loss in history (in a purely dollar term).

Just one man will bear the brunt of this, or that is what they say

And all the other guilty ones will all get clean away  
And all the rank and file of South Australia, every member  
Will repay all the losses, and I'm sure that they'll remember.

For they'll recognise that though a man has taken all the blame

The people are the ones to bear the cost and wear the shame  
Though Bannon has stepped down as if admitting wrong and failure

It was Labor, not a man, who broke the bank in South Australia.

That poem summarises the situation concisely and succinctly, probably better than have the members who have endeavoured to do so in this place in the past week, since the member for Ross Smith stood down as Premier of South Australia. We now have a new Premier and a new Deputy, and the new Premier is already seeking to use what has become known as 'Arnold-speak' to try to find his way through and to get out of this mess. In fact, Arnold-speak was identified by the *Advertiser* in an article by political editor Rex Jory on Thursday 3 September. The article states:

It is already being called Arnold-speak—the ability of Premier-elect [at that stage] Mr Lynn Arnold to talk with authority and conviction but, in the end, say very little.

Those words did not surprise me, because I had the opportunity to shadow the now Premier in his capacity as Minister of Agriculture and of Fisheries for the better part of two years; I recognise that many people thought that the Minister of Agriculture was doing his job quite well, and many people in the Department of Fisheries thought the same. However, I had the opportunity to examine and analyse, virtually on a week by week basis, just what the Minister was doing.

**Mr Gunn:** Nothing!

**Mr MEIER:** Over that two year period, as the member for Eyre says—and I agree entirely—he was doing nothing because, time after time, when action was needed, nothing came forward except Arnold-speak. We always had Arnold-speak. I recognise that, if it came to a debate, Arnold-speak was very effective, and often the uninitiated and ill-informed thought that Arnold knew what he was doing. With Arnold-speak, he was always able to gloss over the messes. I well remember when interest rates were at record levels—up to 29 per cent. What did the Minister of Agriculture have to say about it?

He supported the then Premier who said, 'High interest rates have nothing to do with the problems we are currently experiencing.' There was Arnold nodding on the front bench. When it was finally self-evident that interest rates were breaking farmers and rural people left, right and centre, it was Arnold-speak that the then Minister employed to say, 'It is not our fault; it is the banks who should be doing something about interest rates.' Of course, we well know that it is the Federal Government that has had interest rates in its hands and has kept them at a ridiculous level for far too long.

It was interesting to read in Mr Jory's article one other classic example of Arnold-speak outside the area of agriculture or fisheries. Referring to the interview that was given shortly after Mr Arnold's nomination as Premier, the article states:

Asked, when he became Premier, if he would take the Treasury portfolio, Mr Arnold said: 'I think those points have to be taken into account when I am doing, if I am elected by Caucus tomorrow, the major revamp of the portfolios after the Estimates Committees. There are pluses to the Premier being the Treasurer but there are also some minuses to that. I will have to weigh up what I think is the best deployment of the talent in the Cabinet with the various responsibilities.'

That is classic Arnold-speak. We heard another good example today in Question Time. The Premier went on and on—I think it was about tariffs this time—obviously unconvinced in his own mind but endeavouring to do a good job so far as his colleagues could perceive, nevertheless.

The second poem I wish to bring to the attention of the House is also by Jeff Cook. Entitled 'Where is our National Pride?' it is as follows:

I think we've lost our heritage, we've lost our national pride  
Our pioneers have passed in vain, they had no easy ride  
They struggled in their daily life to conquer and survive  
But do we give their trials a thought, or have we lost our drive.  
We sit back in our easy-chairs and grumble at conditions  
But seldom do we really strive to better our positions  
Thinking 'someone else' should do it so we blame it all on  
'they'  
The hardest thing we'll prob'ly do is stand to have our say.  
If we could pull together, really get out there and work  
Instead of just resenting another's job or perk  
We'd once more build a nation of which we could be proud  
The answer is to work at it, and not just hope out loud.  
Australia is not short of work, the work is everywhere  
We all have work we can't get done, it's not that we don't care  
But we can't pay the wages that the unions have forced on us  
And pulled Australia way down here, they'd admit it if they're honest  
And it's no good paying men the dole when work is not yet done  
They say it's not enough to live, and they can't afford their fun  
But we should pay men what they earn instead of what's demanded  
Get back the right to fire and hire, not kowtow when commanded  
The union power has damaged us as much as anything  
It brought Australia to a halt as fast as it could bring  
It pulls the strings of Government, and treads us in the dirt  
They've brought Australia to its knees and disregard its hurt  
Our country wasn't made by men sitting waiting for their pay  
It was built up by backbreaking work by everyone each day  
If we're to once more gain a place of which we can be proud  
Then everyone must earn their pay, it must once more be allowed  
'cause if everybody earned their pay we'd turn this country round  
And companies would not go broke, and more jobs could be found  
And if more people worked you'd see more marriages survive  
So let us get to work again, regain our national pride.

As I said about the first poem, I say about this poem: a magnificent summation of what is needed in this country. It is disgraceful to see an article in the *Advertiser* of 29 August headed, 'Union warning over WorkCover spying'. A certain gentleman by the name of Paul Noack features in this article by David Bevan, which states:

A union has warned that the next time its members are put under surveillance by WorkCover fraud investigators a carload of workers will follow the private investigator home. '(And) we will be very undiplomatic about the way we will be handling ourselves,' secretary of the Vehicle Builders Employees' Federation Mr Paul Noack said yesterday.

What an indictment on our system, our country and our State that these thugs threaten those who are trying to see that the system remains honest and say, 'How dare they spy on us to see whether or not our back is fixed. We will follow them home, and look out.' No wonder this State is going down the drain. No wonder this country is going down the drain when the Government does not seek to outlaw this sort of behaviour immediately. It is allowed to occur, apparently with the consent of the Government. I compliment Jeff Cook on the two poems which he has brought to my attention and which I have cited to the House.

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

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): It is indeed a sad task to rise in this debate as a member of Parliament at a time when our State faces such dire financial consequences. As you would be aware, Madam Acting Speaker, at present we face a current real debt of more than \$8 billion. We saw in this place the disgraceful budget document that revealed a debt of \$7.3 billion, but that document did not include the raising of funds needed to cover the \$450 million State Bank losses this year, as well as this year's \$317 million budget deficit.

So, that takes the total to more than \$8 billion. This debt translates to more than \$5 000 per individual, or one could look at it in more alarming terms and say that it means that this State has created a debt of \$20 000 for a family of four. That is what is needed as input to pay off that debt. To go further, the Government has borrowed the equivalent of almost all this year's interest bill of \$978 million and simply added it to the debt again. It is a credit card mentality and is tantamount to a citizen having run out of money and having no work being forced to use credit cards to buy his weekly shopping. We are now facing the situation where the State's total liabilities are more than \$14 billion and the tax level on small business is so high that small businesses are continuing to close by necessity or to move out of the State. It is interesting to reflect further on what this actually means to local small businesses in the electorates of members of this Parliament and the effect on the South Australian community.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

Mr MATTHEW: The member for Spence is asking me to tell him, and I am quite happy to do so. I can understand it if the small business community has been reluctant to approach the member for Spence with its problems for, after all, that member is a member of this Government, which has been responsible for inflicting those problems upon it. By way of example, I turn first to a delicatessen owner from my electorate, who

approached me two weeks ago. I can assure members that it is no pleasant task to have in my office a gentleman in his late forties in tears because the business he has built up for 17 years is about to close up and is on the ropes.

This business owner had bought that business and taken out a loan for 20 years. Here he is, three years away from that business becoming freehold, and he has to close his doors. The reasons for that are quite simple. One of his greatest sources of income was through the sale of snack bar lines—lunches and so forth—and, as unemployment in the area has increased, the snack bar luncheons have reduced in number. As people are tightening their belts further and taking their own lunch to work they are not buying it from his business. So, he started off by eliminating some of his employees. He did not like doing that; they were people who had been working with him for over 10 years, but now it has reached the stage where he has had to dismiss all his employees and no longer has anywhere else to go but to close his doors.

Whether or not the member for Spence likes it, these are the facts; this is what is occurring through small business after small business. Yet another delicatessen owner from my electorate, almost in the same week, was also forced to close his business and at the same time to put his house on the market to pay out the loan for his business, because he found that the price he would receive for his business was nil. There was no goodwill remaining from that business, because it had been decimated to such an extent through this Government's policies that there was no longer a buyer, so he has had to walk away from that business and sell his home to cover his debt. Those are the realities facing the South Australian community at present.

I could go on with many more examples, but I will conclude my examples with just one more. That is one of a shoe shop owner, a fellow who had set up a shoe shop on a main road and who had been operating quite well for about 12 months until he started to feel the effects of the recession, brought about by Federal and State Labor Governments. He, too, has been forced to close his doors; he, too, has lost his home. His family has lost its home because the goodwill of that business has diminished to such an extent that money is no longer there to pay out the loan from the sale of the business or the goods the business had for sale. The tale of malaise goes even further, because it affects not only small businesses and people who are losing their jobs as a consequence, but also the delivery of Government services.

I turn briefly to three examples within my electorate. The first of those examples is one with which my colleague the member for Hayward, soon to be the member for Unley, is also very familiar, and that is the present debacle facing both Brighton and Mawson High Schools. The Brighton and Mawson High School populations have been told that their schools are to be amalgamated and that as a consequence the identities of their schools will be lost and their two school campuses will be turned into sub-schools under a single administration. No doubt, the Government's intention behind these closures is the sale of at least part, if not all, of the campus of Mawson High School, a school located at Hove in a valuable real estate area. There is no doubt that this Government is looking for the money from that

real estate sale to prop up its ailing coffers, just as it has had to do previously with the Glengowrie and Seacombe High Schools.

I also turn to the Brighton preschool, a kindergarten in my electorate which has operated successfully for a number of years and which, in fact, was established by the community. I say, 'by the community' very carefully, because many years ago the Brighton community actually went to the extent of arranging for the purchase of the land on which that kindergarten now stands. Through the leadership of Mr and Mrs Sidney Crawford, many years ago they arranged for the purchase and transport of an old army hut measuring 60 feet by 20 feet from the Sandy Creek prisoner of war military camp. That hut was re-erected on that site to form the basis of that kindergarten, a kindergarten that has in more recent years managed also to include a child-care facility and, I hasten to add, without the support from the Children's Services Office.

Imagine the frustration and disgust of parents at that kindergarten when they were told by a staff member of the Children's Services Office that it did not matter one dot that their kindergarten had independently established a child-care facility. They were told by the Children's Services Office staff member that the Brighton preschool child-care facility was too elitist and that, therefore, the Children's Services Office would make sure it goes. Now we find it is indeed about to go under this Government, because that kindergarten is disposed of; once again, another money grab for a property. But, regrettably, the list does not end there. Two more kindergartens in my electorate have been placed on notice that they too will shortly have their marching orders. I refer to the Marino and Seacliff kindergartens, which have been told that they will have to be merged on a site yet to be determined.

I know that these are not isolated examples simply within my electorate and not being experienced by other members, because my colleagues tell me that their kindergartens and schools in their electorates are also being closed. It would seem that now this Government is making preschoolers and school children pay for its economic blunders. That is probably one of the most disgraceful aspects of this money grab that has been brought about as a result of this Government management induced recession that we are facing in this State—a recession that has placed us in a situation worse than that experienced by any State in Australia. I was horrified to see the so-called Minister of Employment stand in this place today and almost turn his back on the latest unemployment figures.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member will refer to Ministers and other members by their official titles, not 'so-called'.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Acting Speaker. The Minister concerned almost turned his back on the unemployed by trying to allege that under a Liberal Government in future the figures may somehow be worse. The fact is that 11.7 per cent unemployed people in this State is unacceptable, and that is a burden that is being felt by all South Australians as a result of the mismanagement of this Government, and perhaps it is because people such as this Minister sleep through debates that we are in this problem.

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

**Mr BRINDAL (Hayward):** In joining this grievance debate today I want to highlight many of the problems faced by the electors of South Australia generally but, before I do so, I want to allude to a couple of matters which I believe are of some importance and which were referred to in the Auditor-General's Report. I refer specifically to page xvii, concerning the management of statutory authorities and the heading under which the Auditor-General addresses conflict of interest.

I draw the attention of members to the interesting case law that the Auditor-General cites and to the comments he makes about how important it is that conflict of interest should not take place in respect of people who are on boards of authorities. Under the same heading he also comments about remuneration arrangements and says this:

In general terms in my opinion it is incumbent upon a board to exercise its powers regarding levels of remuneration in such a way that has regard to those levels that apply to the public sector generally and it must always be borne in mind that it is the taxpayer who ultimately supports the liabilities of the agency or authority concerned.

In my limited experience on the Economic and Finance Committee, it has distressed me that a number of matters examined recently have all resulted in comments about conflict of interest and remuneration of people on—

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! If the member for Spence wishes to speak, he must rise at the appropriate time. Interjections are out of order.

**Mr BRINDAL:** —on boards and statutory authorities. If the member for Spence were to spend less time being pedantic and reading frivolous publications and more time reading the work done by responsible committees of this House, he may progress as a parliamentarian rather than regress, as he is apparently doing daily. In both its reports the Economic and Finance Committee felt it fitting to comment on conflicts of interest and matters such as remuneration received by those boards.

It is about time that the House looked at a statutory authorities Act overriding and setting guidelines for all statutory authorities that now exist, because there is obviously concern from the House generally and from committees of the House, and such concern has been expressed by Ministers that there needs to be some tighter control on some of its own boards and statutory authorities.

It is about time that this House looked at that. I was reminded in discussing this matter with one of my colleagues that some time ago the Government promised or indicated that it may act in this area. I raised this matter again in the context of this grievance today to alert the Government to this matter because I could find no mention of it in the Governor's Address in Reply. Whether it has fallen off the agenda, I do not know, but I hope that it has not. I am sure that all members on this side will support me; I am sure that the Economic and Finance Committee will support me and I hope that Government Ministers will take this matter seriously. In highlighting the inadequacies of this budget I would like to give an illustrative example, seeing that the relevant

member is present, of certain of the deficiencies that this budget demonstrates for the District of Unley.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Spence is out of order. The member for Hayward.

**Mr BRINDAL:** If one analyses the budget papers over a period of years—not just for this year but over a period of years—it is obvious that there are many city electorates like Unley that can best be described as suffering from benevolent neglect. If we look at the moneys that have been applied in consecutive budgets, those areas have often not received anything like the money they need to support continuing infrastructure requirements.

**The Hon. M.K. Mayes:** You name them.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I will. The Minister will be aware of the situation, because he has long been a supporter of the Goodwood Community Centre—

**The Hon. M.K. Mayes:** That is not infrastructure.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! This is not a continuing debate. The member for Hayward is making a speech. I invite him to address the Chair.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** In order to structure the speech in a way in which members opposite can understand it, I will deal first with infrastructure. First, I deal with the amalgamation of two bus services and the creation of a new bus service during offpeak hours that goes down Fisher Street. The Minister knows that the people of Fisher Street are not happy about that arrangement at all. The people at one end of one service have been deprived by this action of a bus service out of hours, and the people at the other end of a second bus service are similarly deprived.

That is infrastructure, and it is infrastructure that has been cobbled together to the detriment of people who live in Fisher Street. As recently as yesterday the Minister presented a petition on behalf of residents of that street to this House asking that the Minister of Transport reconsider. This is a good example of infrastructure, and I know the Minister is aware of it because he has written to people in the area telling them that this was not his fault—it was everyone else's fault—that the bus services were being amalgamated. It was not to do with him but to do with everyone else. I think he apportioned some blame to the council.

**The Hon. M.K. Mayes:** You know that is not true—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr BRINDAL:** The bus service in Fisher Street is one example. Another example is that at the last election the Opposition proposed to put an O-Bahn down the right of way of the tramway and the Minister, as is his right, said that it was a dreadful idea that would not be conducive to the people who lived in the area, and he informed them of that. Our proposition entailed a great deal of work and beautification in the area of the tramway, and the people who lived in the area would have had a substantial increase in their amenity and certainly in the visual outlook of their properties.

If we go down there today, they have not got the O-Bahn, because we have not got a Liberal Government, and there is certainly no increase in amenity or outlook. True, the tramway is in desperate need of visual work being undertaken for the sake of the people

who live in that area. The Minister claimed that our idea was not a good idea, and he should have seen that the tramway was at least improved in a way that would be better for the people who live in the area. Those people now have the worst of both possible worlds. They have a deteriorating eyesore opposite them when they could have had something that was much more beautiful, and a much better service for all the people of South Australia.

Turning briefly to the Goodwood Community Centre, which the Minister has long supported, it is now writing to me and asking what I will do to help when I am the member for Unley, because it is worried about the cut-back in funds that this Government is giving it in this budget.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister is out of order.

**Mr BRINDAL:** It is worried about the cut-back in funds that the Government is giving under this budget. If the Minister supports the Goodwood Community Centre, let him explain why its funds are cut back and why it is not getting more money. If it is a worthwhile centre—and I am sure it is—why has it been cut back? Why does it have to exist on less? How can the Minister say that the centre will be worse off under us? It cannot do much worse than it is currently doing.

**The Hon. M.K. Mayes:** Yes, it can.

**Mr BRINDAL:** The Minister says that it can, but that is typical of Government members.

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

**Mr BLACKER (Flinders):** I wish to depart from the tenor of the debate that has taken place so far and give support to some outstanding sporting achievements that have been achieved by constituents in my electorate in the past few days. I refer specifically to the Port Lincoln High School sailing team.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mitcham and the Minister are both out of order. The member for Flinders.

**Mr BLACKER:** I refer specifically to achievements—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr BLACKER:** —of the Port Lincoln High School sailing team when on Monday it won the Interdominion Epiglass Championships for School Sailing Teams. By way of preamble, I would like to say that these championships are sponsored by Epiglass and comprise a series of races between two teams with three yachts in each team. The vessels are identical in every way except for the colour of the jib, and in each alternate race the yachts are changed between the teams so that there can be absolutely no advantage to one team or the other. The competition consists of a series of 21 races; in other words, the first team to win 11 races is the winner.

The Port Lincoln High School team competed successfully to win the State honours, and six weeks ago it contested the national championships that were held in Port Lincoln and successfully warded off all other challenges from around the nation. Last weekend the interdominion competition was held between New Zealand and Australia, and the Port Lincoln High School

team represented Australia. New Zealand had never been beaten in this championship series, and on the last occasion when New Zealand competed against Australia it won 11 to nil. So, quite clearly the New Zealanders were considered to be the premier team when it came to school boy sailing.

The team from Port Lincoln trained for 17 weeks and was coached by Mr Steve Kemp. Some members will know that Steve represented Australia in some of the America's Cup challenges. The Port Lincoln High School team was captained by Wade Henson and the crew comprised Steven Kammerman, Alan Hopping, Stuart Roe, Adam Leech, Sam Abbott, Tim Frears and Nick Bice. I would like to mention the New Zealand team which was coached by Alan Hooper and which comprised Nick Taylor, Derek Hooper, Matthew Brown, Edward Smyth, Mark Peters, captain Peter Waring, Rowan Adolph, the team manager, Grahame Brown and Craig Brown.

I want to further mention this event because of the sportsmanship and the spirit in which the competition was held. I was there on Monday night at the conclusion of the final race in the 21 race series when the Port Lincoln team—which, during the day, was losing 10 races to nine—won the last two races. In the teams events, every yacht counts. This meant that Port Lincoln had to be placed first, fourth and fifth at the very minimum to win, and the fifth boat got over the line by a metre ahead of the last of the New Zealand yachts. So, a closer competition could not have been held.

Congratulations must go to all, but the point I wish to make concerns the sportsmanship and the manner in which the contest was held and conducted. It was a truly great effort for Australian sailing. It could well be that some Olympic champions will emerge from that competition, and I think it is fitting that mention should be made of the very fine sponsorship of Epiglass in keeping it going. Whilst that might sound like a commercial, I think it is important to mention that the contribution of Epiglass to yachting both in Australia and New Zealand is world class and needs to be recognised as such. I give my heartiest congratulations to everyone who was involved.

Another outstanding effort that needs to be recognised is that of Kieran Modra, the son of a constituent of mine. Yesterday Kieran won a bronze medal in the Paralympic Games in Barcelona. He is blind, and he won a bronze medal in the 200 metre backstroke event. It is a great achievement for any handicapped person to, first, compete and, secondly, to excel in such a world class event. Needless to say, these two sporting events have dominated the local headlines. I am perhaps a little disappointed that these great achievements have not hit State and national headlines, but it is more than fair to say that it was very fitting that, in last night's presentation in respect of the sailing championships, letters of congratulations and telegrams were received from the Prime Minister and from the Ministers of Recreation and Sport and Education and, of course, the local member.

I would like to note these sporting achievements on this occasion, and I trust that we will see greater things to come. If there is one sad note at all, it is that, if the sporting achievements of these young people are to be

continued, almost certainly all these lads will have to leave the area in search of job opportunities. That is the only sad part that can be said about the whole event. However, that aside, the achievement is there.

**The Hon. B.C. Eastick:** Another community destroyed.

**Mr BLACKER:** As the member for Light says, another community destroyed, and unfortunately it seems to be a fact of life. We hope that with some of the improved opportunities that are developing within the fishing industry—in particular, in the aquaculture and fish farming areas where some 200 jobs have been created recently—some of these lads may be able to get jobs locally. However, in the pursuit of higher education and job opportunities, the problem is becoming more and more difficult.

**Mr OLSEN (Kavel):** During the budget debate on Tuesday I talked about the circumstances in which South Australia now finds itself and said that they were brought about by what I consider to be the significant downgrading of the Westminster system of Parliament and the accountability of the Executive to the Parliament. I also raised my concern that the debacle in which we find ourselves in a budgetary sense in South Australia at the moment has been compounded by the fact that at the time there was no accurate and detailed media reporting of the questions and actions of the Opposition—and subsequent events have proved me right.

I also mentioned my disappointment with the business community which encouraged—and I use that word lightly—the Opposition to desist from questioning the Government about the State Bank. My other disappointment was that a Chairman of the State Bank, when I sought clarification of the syndication of the loan relating to Remm, assured me that the loan had been syndicated and the exposure was but \$50 million. Assurances like that that are given at face value cause great disappointment, as events have turned out, because either I was deliberately misled or the Chairman did not know or he was misled by the Chief Executive Officer of the State Bank of South Australia.

I well remember attending a strategic planning seminar of the State Bank at Worrina in 1989 after the Opposition had raised a number of questions about the policy direction of the State Bank. I was asked to explain what the Liberal Party was on about when it posed a series of questions about the policy direction of the State Bank and its financial subsidiaries. How dare I question the bank. How dare the Liberal Party use the Parliamentary forum to do so. I was asked to give an explanation, so I did. The strategic planning seminar at Worrina was in the process of planning the next five years of the State Bank.

*The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:*

**Mr OLSEN:** I will read the letter from Tim Marcus Clark to clarify the point for the honourable member. I well remember that the *Advertiser* rightfully reported the next day that in my remarks to that planning seminar I said:

It is all very well having your heart in South Australia [referring to the State Bank] but if you are losing an arm and a leg interstate and overseas it is doing little good for a financial institution such as the State Bank.

**An honourable member:** Who said that?

**Mr OLSEN:** I said that. Following those remarks to the strategic planning seminar, I would now like to put on record—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is not being cross-examined here. The member for Napier will cease interjecting. The member for Kavel.

**Mr OLSEN:** I want to read into the record a reply I received from Tim Marcus Clark dated 6 March 1989. The letter states:

I would like to thank you for speaking to the top management of State Bank Group at our Strategic Planning Conference at Worrina. You obviously put a lot of time into preparing your address and we certainly heard your clear message on better informing the people of South Australia about our activities and the need to expand by acquisition and out of South Australia. You were well received and there were many positive comments on Friday evening about your address. However, all the good was totally destroyed on Saturday when we found you had authorised a media release of your address; obviously continuing your program of attacking the Government, again using State Bank without, in our opinion, any thought about the potential for damage to the bank.

When we invited you to address our seminar, we did not specify the discussions should be confidential, and we are at fault for that. However, I would have thought that in view of what has gone on over the past weeks [that is, questions in Parliament] you would have considered this an excellent opportunity for bridge building. This was very effectively done on Friday—destroyed on Saturday!

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr OLSEN:** This is a letter signed by Tim Marcus Clark, the then Chief Executive Officer of the State Bank. The letter goes on:

At State Bank we work very hard at being apolitical and eventually the time will come when the current Government loses an election and the Liberal Party becomes the elected Government. May I suggest to you that continuing your present campaign and attitude to State Bank, as is being expressed in the media and Parliament, is hardly a recipe with which to produce the sort of trusting, committed and enthusiastic State Bank management which any State Government, as the elected representatives of the real owners of the bank (the people of South Australia), should reasonably expect.

This is of particular concern to me because I know that, personally, you are a great supporter of our activities and what we do for South Australia. However, I suspect you are regularly induced to have a go at State Bank by the other trading banks in town who we have certainly affected via our competitive edge, and by political pressures on you to take an opportunistic approach in seizing upon anything which might prove useful in attacking the Government.

**The Hon. B.C. Eastick:** Can you see his tongue in his cheek?

**Mr OLSEN:** It ought to be. The letter goes on:

I acknowledge your democratic right, indeed, your duty as Leader of the Opposition, to question the Government but I do ask that in any attack on the current Labor Government in your vigorous pursuit of the Treasury benches, you do insist on a more responsible approach to those matters likely to affect the extremely high regard that South Australians have for their bank, and the complete confidence they have in its security—a reputation the bank richly deserves. Your own focus as Leader should be long term and one important strategic consideration should be Liberal Party/State Bank relations and its effects—hopefully a positive contribution to the South Australian community we both seek to serve.

I replied to that letter in rather aggressive terms, I might add. Subsequent to that, I understand that the State Bank board issued an instruction to the Chief Executive Officer that he was no longer to communicate with me without first gaining the support of the board in writing. The reason I raise this issue is that clearly the board, the CEO

and the Premier (at the time, John Bannon) well knew of the circumstances at the time—that is, my comments to the Wirrina conference and the correspondence that ensued between Tim Marcus Clark and me. There is no doubt at all that at the time that that letter was written and at the time of the Wirrina conference the problems besetting the State Bank were well and truly known by the individuals concerned.

I also have a letter from one of the senior managers of the State Bank. I will not read that into the record at this time. However, the opportunity will arise on future occasions. It is quite breathtaking to realise that those words were written at a time when the authors—and certainly Tim Marcus Clark—were aware of the bank's true position and the direction in which the bank was going. Of course, all of this takes us back to why I am making this particular reference related to the 1992 State budget. This budget is the result of the Bannon Government's Labor rule in that it makes no effort to lay the foundations for the recommendations of the Arthur D. Little report—none at all.

The Government spent \$1.2 million on a report to look at where we are, and it was told that for 10 years we had it wrong. Despite the public embracing of the Arthur D. Little report we see none of it in the structure of the budget, save for \$40 million that is under the Premier's line. I notice that that sum was put under the Premier's line and not under the line of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. That was fortuitous planning, I would have thought, when the budget papers were prepared. Some people obviously knew more than we did at the time of drafting the budget.

Now the excuse we hear is that the budget planning was too locked in by the time the Arthur D. Little report was released. If that is the case, it means that the Premier and none of his Ministers had any idea of the true economic position of this State before the Arthur D. Little report made it public knowledge. That is hardly likely. If it is, it indicates absolute gross inefficiency on the part of the Ministers. This budget is a sad indictment of a refusal to accept the Westminster system and tradition of accountability and responsibility of the Executive to the Parliament.

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

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition):** One of the most humorous factors revealed this afternoon is that the new Premier made a statement to the House pointing out that Mr Nichols, the former head of the Premier's Department, has just been reappointed as the Managing Director of Tourism SA. That announcement was made at 2 p.m. and some time after 2.15 p.m. in another place the Minister of Tourism made it clear that she did not know that she had a new Managing Director of Tourism SA. It is the story of the afternoon that apparently the new Premier does not speak to the Minister of Tourism. He has swapped all the deck chairs around but did not even bother to tell his Minister, with whom he shares the Cabinet room, that he had given her a new Managing Director for Tourism SA. Yet, the Government says that it understands where it is heading, what it is doing and everything else and that it is there for the good of South Australia.

This afternoon I would like to talk in more detail about the Auditor-General's Report. The report contains unprecedented warnings about the current Government's financial position and policies. In effect, the Auditor-General states that it is not sustainable to go on borrowing to fund the Government's day-to-day operational expenses.

He puts the principle very clearly in his report when he refers to the funding of recurrent and capital operations. He states:

... the distinction between these two accounts is of long standing in matters of public finance and recognises the principle that borrowings should be applied towards the provision of economic infrastructure and community facilities and that recurrent expenditures (that is, the day-to-day costs of running Government) should be met from recurrent receipts.

In essence, this principle determines that future generations make a contribution to the costs of facilities from which they will benefit. However, because this Government has borrowed almost \$400 million over the past two years to fund its day-to-day expenses, future generations as well as today's taxpayers will also be paying these bills. This is a situation this Government has no answer to. It has no strategy to stabilise debt and reduce it in the longer term. As it has so many times in the past, it will go on ignoring the Auditor-General.

I come now to the State Bank and what the Auditor-General has said in that regard. His report deals at some length with the impact of State finances on the State Bank debacle. The report refers not only to the cost of paying for the losses but to additional costs which arise because of the failure of the bank to make an appropriate return on capital and the reduced credit rating of the State, which has increased our borrowing costs. Seen in this context, the total cost to the State on an annual basis approaches \$300 million because of the financial losses incurred by the State Bank.

The State Bank is not the only factor in the financial crisis. At the same time, the Auditor-General's Report makes very clear that the State Bank is not the only factor contributing to the financial crisis which faces South Australia. The report exposes many examples where Government mismanagement and inaction are costing taxpayers millions of dollars.

I will deal in some detail with this matter and, in particular, with information technology. This is an area for which the new Premier has had ministerial responsibility for the past seven years. As the former Premier told this House on 6 May, when questioned about the proposed information utility, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology 'has responsibility in Government for the information technology area, as he has for the broader technology issues'. Let us examine that record.

In 1988 the Auditor-General's Report first raised concerns about the management of a number of projects, particularly the Justice Information System and a new computer for the Motor Registration Division to streamline registration procedures. We heard a little about that during Question Time today. There have been indications that the cost of these projects was blowing out to a significant extent. In 1988, the Auditor-General said:

There now appears to be an urgent need for a management review of these systems to establish the extent to which they might be streamlined without jeopardising achievement of their essential objectives . . . Audit is of the view that it may again be

appropriate to 'take stock'—to examine options which might now be available as a result of that technological change, including the benefits (if any) in providing autonomy to large public sector agencies to meet their own data processing needs. Such a review could also consider the role and function of the Information Technology Unit of the office of the Government Management Board as well as the role and function of the Government Computing Centre. It would need to be an independent management review rather than a technical review.

In 1989 the Auditor-General repeated his proposal for a public sector-wide review. He warned:

There appears to be no overall coordination plan for agencies.

He also called for a clear and concise policy statement. However, the Government continued to reject these proposals. It ignored the Auditor-General. Further detailed comment from the Auditor-General was made in 1990 and 1991. In the latest report, tabled this week, it is revealed that an information technology plan for the public sector was finalised in 1992, but this is something that the Auditor-General had been calling for since 1988.

Four years have passed. As a result of this four year delay, the Auditor-General is again reporting on serious deficiencies in costs and other controls, including the lack of formal management approved policies, procedures and practices; inappropriate security measures regarding access to production system programs, master files and data files; inadequate testing and review of changes to systems programs; ineffective physical security of the computing facilities; and inadequate systems documentation.

This Government has no excuse. Year after year it has ignored warnings from the Auditor-General. This year's report also highlights the cost. For example, the Department of Road Transport's computer was originally to cost \$4.5 million: it has now cost more than \$11 million. Despite this blowout, serious problems still exist. One fault has resulted in an estimated \$1.3 million over-payment on third party premiums to the SGIC. The final cost of the Justice Information System is put at \$47.2 million; it was originally costed at only \$20 million, and that was for a much larger system. The courts computer is now estimated to cost \$25.4 million compared with \$10.3 million in 1989. TAFE and the police have large projects in the planning stage, and there is the proposed information utility. Taxpayers can have no confidence that there will not be further losses in these projects.

I will deal in some further detail with the information utility which, according to the Government, could involve spending between \$60 million and \$170 million. This concept goes back to 1988. It is to establish an integrated communications network for use by Government agencies and to sell data processing services. The whole idea was exciting and fitted in very well with South Australia's developing image of a State with a technological capacity and a skilled work force. Large overseas companies, such as Digital Equipment Corporation, IBM and Japanese companies, had detailed discussions. However, what was not taken into account in this initial enthusiasm was Government inertia and the inability of senior Government officials to grasp commercial and business opportunities and run with them.

The difference in this regard between other States, particularly New South Wales and Queensland, and South Australia is, I am told, unbelievable. The worst thing to happen to the information utility concept was that it was put under the MFP umbrella. The original intention was

all right. It suited the MFP ideals of advanced communications and high technology, but it became submerged in a quagmire of territorial fights and lack of direction, which have become synonymous with the MFP. IBM and Fujitsu have dropped out. BHP, the only large Australian company so far to put its hands up in support of the MFP, is still waiting in the wings for something to happen.

The saga of the information utility is the story of the MFP—lack of drive, lack of commercial knowledge, lack of leadership from the top, misunderstanding of overseas company business philosophies and monumental mistakes in setting priorities. As a result, South Australia is lagging behind the other States in the attraction of investment in high technology industries. Four years ago, one of the four major areas that Cabinet defined for the information utility was the finalisation of 'an internal business case'. In May this year, my colleague the member for Coles asked the then Premier about the estimated cost savings that the information utility would provide to the Government.

Last year, the savings in the public sector were estimated to be \$75 million over five years. The information we received earlier this year put the savings at no more than \$5 million over the five years. That is a reduction from \$75 million to a mere \$5 million. The Premier could not explain this massive reduction in proposed benefits. The only thing of any real significance that he said in a long, rambling answer was that the Government was still waiting for the 'business case to be fully developed' and that he hoped this would be done quickly. We are still waiting for this to be completed more than two years after it was established as a top Cabinet priority.

Ultimately, according to the former Premier, his successor, the present Premier, has been responsible for this saga of wasted opportunities. What a reflection on this State's ability to attract high profile overseas investment. I am told that, only a couple of weeks ago, the present Premier got some departmental heads together to find out what was going on. He probably found out—absolutely nothing. I do not wonder that interstate and overseas investors ignore this State. It is not even on the map as far as they are concerned.

This Government has not the beginning of an understanding about how business operates, what it needs and how to move quickly to form commercial partnerships to encourage enterprise in this State. The information utility and the MFP are testimony to that. They are prime examples of what the Arthur D. Little study found to be the lack of any strategic management in the public sector. There are other areas that the Auditor-General has identified where the Government has failed to control costs. They include the escalating cost of workers compensation in the public sector. These costs have been the subject of warnings in successive reports of the Auditor-General.

In 1990, the Auditor-General expressed concern about a rise in yearly claim payments to \$36.5 million. However, these claims cost \$45.9 million in 1991-92, with stress claims costing almost \$10.2 million. Another area where the Auditor-General has expressed concern is STA patronage, which is now at an all time low. Figures in the Auditor-General's Report show STA patronage has

lost approximately 4 million journeys in the past year. As a result, it cost taxpayers \$138 million to cover the losses on our public transport system—or more than \$21 000 for every hour of the day that buses, trains and trams are in service. The Auditor-General has also drawn attention to public servants without work. The 1988 Auditor-General's Report first raised the need to reduce the number of public servants who are unattached or redeployed.

**Mr Brindal:** Or playing computer games!

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Or playing computer games. At that time, there were 196 public servants effectively without a position. At June 1992 the figure is slightly higher, being 202; it had actually increased over the 12 months, even though the Government has introduced voluntary separation schemes, which in 1991-92 cost more than \$80 million across the whole public sector. The cost to taxpayers in salaries for 202 public servants without an effective position is about \$7 million. That is a total of \$7 million worth sitting in offices for more than a year.

The Auditor-General also drew attention to the number of lecture hours in TAFE colleges. His report has identified lax procedures in ensuring that lecturers fulfil their full teaching time and significant variations between colleges and lecturer contact hours 'at the lower end of the 18 to 24 hours per week range'. He also mentioned the failure to detect and crack down on fraud. In 1990, the Auditor-General warned that it was the responsibility of management and not an auditor's role, to ensure that controls are in place to prevent fraud.

In his latest report, the Auditor-General has found that 'in the majority of cases, there was a breakdown in internal control, that is, a failure by a responsible officer/s to perform a checking or review function'. I draw those examples from the Auditor-General's Report to the attention of the House, because it is really time that the Government, after being in office for 10 years, started to take some note of what people in this State have been saying for so long, including its own Auditor-General, who is there to set the standards and highlight weaknesses within the system.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Napier is out of order. The member for Henley Beach is out of his place.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** It is interesting that members opposite have so little regard to financial control that they are prepared to thumb their noses at the Auditor-General year after year, although the Auditor-General has highlighted the enormous problems with computers, with the philosophical direction that this Government has taken and with Government control over labour costs.

**Mr Atkinson:** He said no such thing!

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** The honourable member opposite says the Auditor-General said no such thing. I would suggest that the honourable member opposite has not even bothered to read the letter of transmission that the Auditor-General included with his report that was sent to this Parliament, because there in black and white—not only in the Auditor-General's Report but now widely reported by all the news media for the past 24 hours—are those comments by the Auditor-General. The

honourable member opposite, who continues to support this derelict, rundown, tired Government, which has no standards of accountability and no financial management skills whatsoever, is now trying to make out that no such comment has been made. It would appear that the honourable member is just as guilty as is his entire front bench.

*Mr Atkinson interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Spence is out of order.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Even the parliamentary committees in the past two days have highlighted the weaknesses, inefficiencies and inadequacies of this Government. The Economic and Finance Committee has brought out two reports, one yesterday and one the previous day, highlighting the lack of information and the conflict of interest in regard to various statutory authorities.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I said the lack of information and the conflict of interest.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Spence for his repeated interjections.

**Mr Brindal:** About time!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hayward will find himself in the same category shortly.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** It concerns me that the member for Spence apparently thinks that the conflict of interest which has been going on under this Government for year after year and which has now cost us about \$3 200 million in relation to the State Bank and about \$360 million in relation to the SGIC is nothing but one huge joke. That is exactly the reason why the public of South Australia are absolutely fed up with this Labor Government, its lack of standards, its lack of accountability and the fact that it has used taxpayers' money as though it did not exist.

I appreciate the fact that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, as member for Elizabeth fully understand, appreciate and uphold the standards laid down by the Auditor-General. You have done that consistently on the parliamentary committee, and I know that your Independent colleague has also done it consistently. It is a pity that the other members who sit on the other side of the House do not apply the same standards as do you. Can I commend you and your colleague on the standards that you have adopted and can I urge you to continue to fight for those standards to be adopted here in South Australia. The public of South Australia are eternally grateful for the standards and what has been revealed by those parliamentary committees. I for one would want you, Sir, to uphold that, along with your colleague.

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** I wish in this brief debate to draw to the attention of the House the dilemma experienced within the health system, caused directly by the reduction in the budgets. The Minister announced—I am a little unclear why, but nevertheless he did—on 5 August that there was to be a cut in real terms in the health budget of 1.4 per cent, almost as if this was a fantastic announcement and an occasion for great glee and joy in South Australia.

**Mr Brindal:** It probably was for everybody, except the sick.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Yes, to everyone except those who needed health care; for those healthy, young, fit people who do not need hospitals, it was excellent. But it was a cut in real terms of 1.4 per cent. However, for the majority of South Australians who either are suffering themselves or know someone who is suffering it is a much greater tragedy. It is a tragedy that the budget has caused such privations in the health system because of the effect that it has directly on health care in South Australia.

The Minister of Health earlier today alluded to a newsletter from the Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Adelaide Hospital and, despite suggesting incorrectly that I had quoted selectively from that newsletter, he did indicate that, as the Chief Executive Officer had said to people, there was to be an extended closure over Christmas. I have been in hospitals providing health care and I acknowledge that over the immediate Christmas to New Year period, there is a demand decrease, let us call it, primarily because people do not choose to have elective procedures at that time of the year. However, that demand, come early January, immediately escalates.

It is a distressing feature that the closure at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, for one, this year is an extended closure, and it will go from 20 December 1992 to 16 January 1993. All areas of the hospital other than emergency services will be closed and 320 beds will not be servicing the people of South Australia. Given that there are already record long waiting lists of about 9 500 South Australians waiting for operations, sane, sensible, rational people such as we all are in this Parliament—

**Mr Groom:** Not all.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I was being generous—know what effect 320 beds being closed will have on those 9 500 people. What will happen, unfortunately, is that the numbers of people waiting for operations will escalate. The length of time that people will be forced to wait for something like a lens implant, which literally gives people the gift of sight, will be extended; the length of time that people are expected to wait for a hip operation will be extended; and the length of time that people are expected to wait for ear, nose and throat procedures will be extended. This is not a fault of the hospital; it is not a fault of the administrators and it is definitely not a fault of the doctors, despite the Minister's attempts fairly frequently to shoot the messenger.

The only people to whom this blame can be attributed are the members of the Labor Government, because when all is said and done it is the Labor Government that gives out the money. There is no other way of sourcing the problems, and if there are budgetary restrictions where is the money coming from? It is coming from the Minister of Health and his colleagues, and I mention the members for Henley Beach, Playford and Stuart—people who clearly by their accession to his policies are happy that their constituents are waiting for years for operations. Only one conclusion can be drawn from the absolute silence from the backbenchers of the Labor Party about these matters, and that conclusion is that they are happy with these matters.

*Mr Ferguson interjecting:*

**Dr ARMITAGE:** The member for Henley Beach says that he is bored to death—perhaps that applies to Party meetings where these matters are discussed, and potentially in future Cabinet meetings. Surely, if the member for Henley Beach cared for his constituents he would make some noise and perhaps even be brave enough to make some moves publicly in defending the right of his constituents to be given some dignity in the public hospital system, rather than once again lying down and waiting for the bulldozer of budget cuts to roll over him and his constituents.

The extent to which the Royal Adelaide Hospital has been forced to look for methods of increasing revenue raising includes the fact that it will be expected to charge every patient who has private health insurance as a private patient. I have absolutely no dilemma with that. Despite what the Minister attempted to mention earlier on, I have no dilemma with that; in fact, I am very much in favour of it and I congratulate the Royal Adelaide Hospital on this policy and on having negotiated a system whereby private patients admitted in public hospitals receive no 'gap' bill. The dilemma, of course, is that the administrators of the system clearly understand the value to the system of having private patients paying for their health care.

Given that, I would have thought that the Minister of Health would actually be encouraging private health insurance, but, no, the Minister of Health in South Australia is on record as supporting the Federal Minister of Health in his statements that private health insurance has no part to play in the provision of health care in Australia because the public health system will pick up the tab. That statement was made at the most recent Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council meeting. It is quite clear that the State system, the public system, cannot pick up the tab, and that is why we have newsletters such as this.

Also, the Royal Adelaide Hospital board has approved a strategy of increasing the usage of its residential wing by offering accommodation to University of South Australia students. I happen to think that that is marvellous. It is an excellent idea, because the students will get cheap, good accommodation close to their centre of learning. However, it indicates the level to which hospital administrators are being forced to go by this budget and by this Government. Instead of worrying about the provision of health care, they are worrying about how many students they can get from the university to live in their residential accommodation. Not once in this letter to staff does it talk about the excellence of health care that can be provided because of the wonderful things that have happened in the budget. It is a litany of doom.

I wish to close by mentioning that unfortunately the innocent victims suffer as well. Because of budget cuts at the women's and children's hospital the administration has been forced to propose that surgeries and theatres at the hospital close for a month over Christmas. Surely, no backbench member of the Labor Party would be happy about that; surely they would make some public protest about innocent children—who have no right to vote for either side of politics—having their right to operations denied. I wait for that, but I doubt whether I will hear it. It is a fact: that is what this budget is causing to happen.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hutchison): Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The member for Playford.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Many members in this House, especially those with young children, have probably gone to the royal show and have gone through the showbag hall and all the rest of it and picked up a series of goodies. I must say that I had that experience last weekend, and my kids enjoyed getting their showbags—and I got a showbag as well. For the first time in my life I got a showbag—and it was from the Liberal Party. I went to the National Party booth but no-one was home. My kids and friends were in front of me, and they were approached by two rather pushy but quite pleasant people who were trying to say that in reality the future of my kids depended on voting for the Liberal Party. I was standing behind these two individuals and listened to the case that was made out. They certainly did not do much more than what I would describe as a pedestrian job.

In fact, one of the ladies who was with me was quite annoyed at the whole exercise. In essence, I do not mind people selling that sort of stuff: that is fine. I think that most of it was fairly flimsy, and unfortunately so were the contents of the showbag. However, when the two people concerned realised that those in front of me were relatives of mine—in fact, my kids, my wife—and some close friends, we had a short discussion and some jocularity prevailed.

I was somewhat upset to find out, 24 hours later, that someone else had had an approach from one of these people—in fact it was the member for Hawker—but under different circumstances. I have been given information which I think is rather disturbing and which strikes at the very heart of the democracy that we have here in South Australia. I refer now to a statutory declaration that was given to me on Monday of this week, and it is as follows:

I, Gerard Robert McEwen of 6 Narkunda Street, Glandore, S.A. 5037 do solemnly and sincerely declare that on the evening of 26 August 1992, I was standing outside St Anthony's Church Hall at Edwardstown distributing copies of an article in the July 1992 edition of *Choice* magazine. With the article was a copy of a press release from the Australian Consumers' Association, publishers of *Choice* magazine, pertaining to the article. After several people had arrived the member for Hawker arrived and asked me what I was handing out. I gave her a copy and said, 'You've probably read this already.' She looked at what I had handed her and said, 'Oh, really, you guys,' and went into the hall to address a public meeting she had advertised.

A short time later she emerged from the hall in the company of one of her supporters, who wore a badge proclaiming her to be an office bearer of the Hanson branch of the Liberal Party. Mrs Gallus accused me of breaching the Electoral Act by handing out 'unauthorised material' and demanded my name and address. I told her that the origin of the material was clear both with regard to *Choice* magazine and the Australian Consumers' Association. She insisted on my name and address, waving her pencil (or pen) and paper. Rather than get into an undignified slanging match I gave her my card.

I have since received a letter dated 2 September 1992 from a Nick Minchin, State Director of the Liberal Party of Australia S.A. Division, accusing me of breaching section 328 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act and saying that I am liable for a fine not exceeding \$1 000. He also informs me that he has sent a copy of his letter and the 'material in question' to the Adelaide office of the Australian Electoral Commission.

I regard the actions of Mrs Gallus and Mr Minchin as both intimidatory and defamatory.

I believe the 'material in question' to be beyond question.

(1) No Federal election has been called.

(2) The material is not 'electoral material' in view of the fact that it does not advocate voting one way or another and, as stated above, it is not being distributed in an 'election environment'.

If the material was in breach of the Electoral Act why hasn't the Australian Consumers' Association been prosecuted for publishing the July 1992 edition of *Choice* and circulating the 'material in question'?

I find it peculiar that the party which made such a song and dance over 'free speech' for those people who can afford to buy advertising time on television can justify threatening ordinary citizens with \$1 000 fines merely for handing out material which disagrees with their point of view.

I believe in community debate and will not be bullied.

I regard the actions of Mrs Gallus and Mr Minchin as merely an attempt to frighten me off with a bogus threat of prosecution. If they were dinkum they would be threatening the Australian Consumers' Association not a humble constituent. Further I take offence at their accusation that I have broken the law.

*The Hon. M.K. Mayes interjecting:*

Mr QUIRKE: I agree with the member for Unley: it is in fact bullying at its worst. It continues:

I have a great respect for the Commonwealth Electoral Act and the right to vote. In fact, in 1972 I fought in the High Court of Australia for the right to vote. I have also been active in public affairs, including elections since that time. To suggest that I would subvert the electoral laws of this country, wittingly or unwittingly, is to impugn my honour, my integrity and my capability.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1936.

(Signed) Gerry McEwen

I have another document here which, on the letterhead of the Liberal Party of Australia, is a letter from Mr Minchin to Mr McEwen, as follows:

Dear Mr McEwen,

I have been advised that you were recently observed handing out printed electoral material attacking the Liberal Party's tax policy. I have been given a copy of the material you were alleged to be distributing, and I note that it does not comply with section 328 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act. I would point out that that section requires electoral material to be properly authorised, and to indicate the name and place of business of the printer. The penalty for breaching this section is a fine not exceeding \$1 000. I am sending a copy of this letter and the material in question to the Adelaide office of the Australian Electoral Commission.

This is a very curious document. It is very personalised, in the sense that Mr Minchin has signed it at the bottom as, no doubt, he would do with most of the other publications he sends out but, at the very top, written in a very thick pen or pencil is 'Dear Mr McEwen'. It is not typed in, as one would expect of a normal business letter or a letter coming from a political Party. This begs the question as to why this was done this way. It is my view that the Liberal Party has large numbers of these. It knows that there will be many people who, when it comes to election time, both State and Federal, will be reminding constituents of the GST.

It looks as though this letter has been mass produced in anticipation of that campaign. I believe that when the election campaign begins people will be standing outside every butcher shop and every supermarket reminding people what the GST is really all about. I must say that the two people who approached my wife, my children and my friends did not have anything to say about the GST, and there was nothing in my showbag about the GST. There were all sorts of other things in there: silly

offers of this, that and the other, and how people would be better off, but nothing as to how any of it would be financed. There was not a thing about the GST, because Mr Minchin knows that the leaders at Federal level and some of those at State level, for that matter, are on a real loser, and he is getting ready for the deluge that is to come.

**Mr OSWALD (Morphett):** This evening I should like to refer to the Estimates of Payments and Receipts, page 138, under capital expenditure in the environment and planning lines, coastal management, to read that actual expenditure in 1991-92 was \$433 939 and that this has been reduced this year to \$267 000. It is of enormous concern to us in the coastal zone of metropolitan Adelaide to see these expenditures. I estimate that that is about a 50 per cent cut in coastal management capital costs and, as we have already read in the paper on many occasions, the department is planning quite substantial cost savings to it but cost cuts to expenditure along the coast. This is something that we just cannot accept.

Historically, the sea wall has been extended out and, in fact, intrudes past the high tide mark so that, when we have a sea running and the tide is up, the waves crash onto the retaining wall. This retaining wall (or rip-rap wall, as it is called) now extends from Brighton past Glenelg, Glenelg North and West Beach and, without it, the roadway behind the rip-rap wall would collapse. With the success of the sand management program over the past several years, we have seen sand build up in front of the rip-rap wall, the purpose of which is to create an incline plane so that, when the wave action comes up, it dissipates on the sand and the force of the wave is broken down so that when the water hits the rip-rap wall at high tide it does not churn the sand and carry it back out to sea.

As long as we can maintain a reasonable level of sand against the wall, we will ensure that the wall will not be undermined. When we have storms such as we have had here in the past couple of weeks, we have seen a massive tonnage of sand carried away from the wall and back out to sea. If that happens when the Coastal Management Branch is about to cut back on expenditure, we will see a situation where the retaining wall is at risk of being undermined. One morning about a year ago at Glenelg North I found that the retaining wall was beginning to be undermined. Fortunately, there was some money available, and some sand carting took place and the department was able to replace the sand and provide a buffer. If that had not happened, the boulders, which in some cases are four to eight feet across, would have been undermined and would have come down, and the roadway above would have come down and, of course, the bitumen tarmac would have started to break up.

We know that historically we have a problem. In years gone by houses should never have been allowed to be constructed along the sand dunes, particularly at Somerton Park and Glenelg North. Those areas should have been left as is the case behind Minda where the waves come up and dissipate onto the sand dunes and there is no churning effect to carry the sand out to sea. However, we are stuck with the situation. Our forebears made a mistake in allowing people to build on the sand dunes. Once houses had been built on the sand dunes, we

allowed the building of roadways along the esplanade. In order to protect the bitumen roadways, we had to put in a rip-rap wall.

As I mentioned earlier in my speech, on many occasions when the tide comes up it is further down at water level and it hits the rip-rap wall and carves it out. I am afraid we are stuck with permanent sand carting if we want to have beaches in Adelaide: we have to accept one or the other. I think a conventional decision has been taken to have beaches in Adelaide. If we have decided to do that, we will have to bring in sand from offshore and pump it onshore. I suppose the next step in the argument is: who pays? That is what we are getting down to. As I see it, the move is on to ensure that the coastal councils pick up the financial responsibility for the maintenance of beaches and the carting of sand. I totally reject this idea. To my way of thinking, the beaches are a resource available to the whole of South Australia, so all South Australians through the Treasury should pay for sand management.

It is totally unacceptable for the ratepayers of Glenelg, Marion, Brighton, West Beach or Henley Beach to be asked to pay for the cost of carting sand or at least a percentage of it. I would make the same argument in respect of country areas. If there were sand erosion of beaches in such areas I would be quite happy to see the State contribute and, in fact, accept responsibility for it. The State steps in and accepts responsibility for our national parks. Beaches are no different. I will resist as long as I can the notion that local councils and their ratepayers should accept responsibility for sand management of our beaches. That is not on and, as a representative of a seaside council, I object to it.

*Mr Groom interjecting:*

**Mr OSWALD:** I am happy with the offshore collection of sand, but once again there is a cost, and I do not think that cost should be borne by the ratepayers of the seaside councils. There is a very finite source of sand available to us along the metropolitan coastline: there is very little sand offshore. A few years ago, we conducted a very expensive exercise of carting sand by truck from Mount Compass. All that sand has now been lost: some onshore and some offshore. It was brought up from the back of the quarantine station.

Huge tonnages of sand were stacked up around Glenelg North. In fact, the aim was to go some 80 metres out to sea and create new sand-dunes, but that lasted until the first storm when that sand was spread back up the coast. I conclude by repeating the principle of what I am on about—that is, that the beaches are part of the metropolitan area and are a resource that is available to everybody. It is unacceptable to the ratepayers in the beach-side councils to have to consider paying for sand management and sand carting: that should be paid for by the State, as it currently is. It is noted that in the budget there is to be a cutback and that negotiations are commencing with councils. That is unacceptable as far as the beach-side councils are concerned, and on their behalf I place on the record that we object to what is planned and we will resist it for as long as we can.

**Mrs KOTZ (Newland):** On 20 August in this session of Parliament I called upon the Minister of Education and the Minister of Emergency Services to take immediate

action over serious incidents which had occurred in my electorate, specifically at the Fairview Park Primary School. That call for help and assistance for the students, staff and parents of that school was made 22 days ago, and to this date to my knowledge no action has been taken nor have I been given the courtesy of acknowledgment of that call.

My call for assistance from those Ministers was in respect of a matter that was and still is considered to be a most serious situation. The call to those Ministers was for intervention in relation to criminal activities that have been conducted most savagely against this school community and for security measures to be installed. On 20 August I reported to this House and for the attention of those Ministers that the Fairview Park Primary School had, in recent months, become the focus of a concentrated series of vandalism attacks. In the past year the school had been hit on no less than 24 separate occasions, and the damage that has been inflicted upon that school now amounts to over \$9 000.

The school canteen, which is run by the school council, has been struggling to survive to support the students at that school with a very needed service. That school canteen suffered its fourth break-in in a period of just over seven weeks. On 8 August the school community was again thoroughly demoralised when it was attacked by vandals with even greater savagery than before. In my plea for assistance from the Ministers I read into the record of this House the type of damage that was inflicted upon the school—it was not minor by any stretch of anyone's imagination. The canteen and all administration offices were affected. Computers, copier, telephone, typewriter and cash register were damaged, some of them beyond repair. Photographs were defaced, sports trophies broken, sports pennants ripped, and paintings and works of art were destroyed along with carpets and furniture. Walls were defaced and stained and, in some cases, broken.

The canteen door was smashed. Vandals had sprayed sauce all over the canteen and had removed food from the freezer and cupboards and dumped it around the school. They had destroyed kettles, glasses and even spoons. The committee and I believe that 24 attacks of this nature should not be tolerated. On behalf of that committee I brought this serious matter to the attention of two Ministers of this Government, and I do not believe that this is a situation that can be so arrogantly ignored by these Ministers.

At that time I called upon the Minister of Emergency Services to organise a special task force to deal with these criminal acts of vandalism and to ensure that the perpetrators were caught and brought to account for their actions. I also called on the Minister of Education to arrange immediately, through his department, suitable security measures, including the installation of security lighting and detectors. I do not believe that this was an unreasonable request. The Minister should be aware that recommendations calling for these measures were sitting on his desk prior to the time that I brought this matter to the attention of the House.

The recommendations had already been presented to the Education Department by the Police Department, Wormald Security and, indeed, the SchoolWatch Committee. This community of staff, parents and children

has not only suffered the tragedy of destruction of property but it has also been treated by this Government and its Ministers with complete disdain. Even worse, it has endured the arrogance of this Government which, through its Ministers, has chosen to ignore a whole community of people for whom it has responsibility.

The situation is even more serious, the atrocities I have just related to the House are combined with the vandalism of a Government that has removed basic educational support from the system. This Government faces the volatility of already irate South Australians who are searching for some realism in some of the answers to those problems. We have a community in our schools of councils, parents and teachers who have already suffered in the past many restrictions on their budgets which have caused severe shortages to the way in which the education system is being run at the moment.

Some of the personnel problems that have been brought to me by school councils include a series of areas that I will relate. When one looks at the child:teacher ratio at the moment, which has been changed, resulting in larger class sizes between year 3 and year 7, we now see a ratio of 34 children to one teacher. This Government's policy when it first came into effect was a ratio of 14 children to one teacher.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

Mrs KOTZ: No, I am not kidding. A ratio of 34 children to one teacher is the average in most primary schools today. I advise the Minister at the bench that if he cares to check with his own schools he will find that that is a correct figure and that, in fact, it is liable to increase with the further cutbacks that this budget will bring. The area of non-instructional time for teachers has been reduced at a time when additional expertise has to be gained. That is another policy that this Government has introduced but has not backed up. The attainment levels policy is an example of that. When we look at the fact that fewer teachers are in the schools, we are also looking at the fact that fewer support staff have been appointed, because ancillary hours are dependent upon the number of teachers. At this time more ancillary staff are needed because of other Government policies, such as the current programs for automating libraries and office procedures.

Fewer advisory and consultative staff are available at district level and this has diminished many in-service activities that are vital for teachers needing input into curriculum and management strategies. I think that those people will find that the area of curriculum management will suffer even more, because there is a \$3 million cutback in that particular area in this budget. The reduction in the availability of TRT days is hampering training and development activities. A reduction in the number of guidance officers and speech pathologists has resulted in longer waiting periods for assessment and, therefore, less practical support for children, teachers and parents.

In the area of facilities, this Government has now made school councils far more responsible for different areas that take more financial support from school communities. This includes areas such as the installation of internal lights, the supply and installation of light fittings in activity halls in the schools, the maintenance of above ground watering system equipment and the

removal of graffiti. SACON will remove only that graffiti that is deemed to be obscene. Of course, that brings up the question of the definition of 'obscene'. If the graffiti is not deemed to be obscene, a fee of \$40 an hour is charged for its removal. Until recently, school communities have painted over graffiti with SACON-supplied paint, but that paint is no longer available to those schools. Part of the administration block is used as a school canteen in some schools and SACON no longer repairs lights or air-conditioning in the canteen area. The operating cost of facsimile machines is deducted from the school grant.

The foregoing is only a sample of the services that are being diminished. It is irresponsible for the Government to emotionally blackmail the community into a position where it must suffer the indignity of having to tolerate reduced services and conditions. This community at Fairview Park have also been denied support for out of school hours care for the past three years since this Government loudly and widely acclaimed policies of support for more and more financial assistance for this much needed service.

When all the rhetoric has been cleared away, the promises of this Government are clearly seen, and none more clearly than support for children's services and after school hours care. This Government has completely abandoned the children of this State in this year's budget by removing all State funds from out of school hours care. Not one cent of taxpayers' dollars will be expended by this Government in this area. This was the program that was hailed by this Government as a major support to the women of this State when women were forced into the work force to supplement the family income due to the financial mismanagement which is the cornerstone of all Labor Governments.

This is a disgrace, which the alternative Premier will have to wear, and I assure him that the women and men in this State will not forget the broken promises. Mothers and fathers will wear many things that are done to them but, when you look at making the children suffer, I can assure members that the alternative Premier and his recycled Ministers are marching in time to the tune of the quick march.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs Hutchison):** Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES (Minister of Housing and Construction):** I move:

That the sittings of the House be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light):** I want to share with members tonight a situation which I find quite obnoxious—in fact, one could almost say quite obscene. This was related to me by a constituent earlier this week. When he called, he had with him an expiation notice, which was for a transgression of the Road Traffic Act. The point which he wanted to make to me and which I find quite improper is that he received that notice after he had been called to go to the local police station to answer questions as to where he was on a certain time, at approximately a certain time on a certain date. Without any warning whatsoever this man said, 'Yes, I did happen to be there on that road; I was on my way to

work. I don't deny that I was there.' The police officer said, 'I will have to give you an expiation notice, because on that day at that time you were being followed by a CIB officer who was off-duty and who observed that you went across a double line.'

The CIB officer did not stop the person; he just took the car number. He was close enough, he indicated, to say that the person whom he saw driving the vehicle was in blue overalls and the question was asked, 'Were you wearing blue overalls?' The answer was, 'Yes, I was.' He said that the off-duty CIB officer had used the office of the police to check the owner of the car. He presumed that it was probably the owner who was driving. He then moved in to a local police station and prevailed upon a junior officer to undertake an interrogation of the person who he believed was driving the motor car. Again, no warning was given to this person who attended at the police station on request without knowing why he was going along. He was then handed this expiation notice.

**An honourable member:** No legal rights.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Where were his legal rights? What right did that off-duty policeman have to prevail upon a junior officer to undertake that interrogation and the signing and granting of that expiation notice one week after the event? I have prepared, but not yet sent, a document for the Commissioner of Police, because I believe that this matter needs urgent attention. My constituent says, 'I was guilty and, therefore, morally I should pay; notwithstanding that I was guilty, I was not apprehended in what can be regarded as a reasonable manner.'

I hope that every member would feel abhorrence at this over-exercise of power, albeit that it might have had a benefit in the longer term for better road safety and it might have been a worthy lesson to pass on to that person. However, I should have thought in all the circumstances that, if the off-duty policeman had pulled him over and explained what he had observed and asked him not to do it again, that would have been a more reasonable approach to this whole matter. I notice nods from around the House indicating that the point of view I am putting is enjoyed by members of both political persuasions.

The next matter on which I want to touch briefly relates to a letter to the editor in the local Gawler *Bunyip* newspaper this week about a lady who witnessed an unfortunate incident on an STA train. The train left Adelaide Railway Station 10 minutes later than its scheduled time, but that is incidental. This lady writes:

The incident began when a woman commuter politely requested an intoxicated woman to keep her language down as she was yelling obscenities at her husband situated at the other end of the carriage. The sober woman ended up getting severely beaten about the head by the other woman and the obscene language continued.

This horror train ride lasted for 15 minutes when, finally, the aggressor and her family departed the train and left scot-free with no police present to detain them for questioning. Their leaving did not occur, however, before another woman was assaulted and a man who tried to help was beaten in the face by a man who appeared to be the culprit's brother. The man ended up with a laceration to the face which forced blood to freely flow.

The writer, whom I know, even though she is in the newspaper as 'Concerned Commuter', has been into my office to report further on this matter. A blue-uniformed officer got on the train once the beating had commenced

and put the woman who was doing the beating off the train, but the woman then got back on the train and continued the beating that she was meting out to this defenceless woman. When the lad who went to her assistance was also beaten, the blue-uniformed officer went and sat alongside him to give him comfort and said, 'I am sorry, but I cannot do anything about it.' When asked why he could not do anything about it, he said, 'Because they happen to be Aboriginal.'

I am not racist, I never have been and I trust that I never will be, but, if it has been suggested to officers of the STA or of the Transit Squad that they may not take positive action against somebody, intoxicated or otherwise, badly bashing another person (to wit, a woman) and subsequently allowing another person to bash a young gentleman who went to the help of that defenceless woman, it is high time that the STA, the Minister and, indeed, the whole Cabinet took some positive action to make sure that we do not have to tolerate such obscenities.

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** There are two very serious matters to which I want to refer in the brief time that I have, and the second I intend taking up again in more detail during the Estimates Committee. The first matter relates to a subject that I raised in Question Time this afternoon when I asked the Premier if he would intervene in the serious situation that is facing the Stirling council. I do not intend to go into a lot of detail, because much of it was provided in the question that I put to the Premier. However, I can say that I was pleased with the response that I received from the Premier. Previously when questions have been put to the responsible Minister and to the former Premier, we have not received a positive response. The fact that the Premier is prepared to seek more detail and to look into this matter is, I believe, encouraging.

Very briefly, and further to the detail that I provided when I asked a question this afternoon, I should say that, on 20 July 1990, Mr Des Ross, who had been appointed manager of the council by the Government (this was at the time the Stirling District Council had been removed from office), signed up the council—and I refer to the community who live in the Stirling district—for a \$4 million loan over a 15-year period at a fixed interest rate of 14.9 per cent. When that proposition was put to the community at a public meeting, it was opposed, and the Government was condemned for wanting to move down that track. Particular concern was expressed about the rate of 14.9 per cent. On the basis of predictions, including growth in rateable properties at 1 per cent and inflation at 7 per cent, the Government had calculated that the servicing of the loan would cost no more than 12 per cent of rate revenue. We now realise that that is quite incorrect.

In determining the 'affordability' of the loan repayments, the Government used an inflation rate of 7 or 8 per cent per annum and predicted annual increases in rate revenue that the council would be required to undertake as a minimum on this basis. However, the reduction in the rate of inflation and the Federal Government's commitment to maintaining a low inflation rate have had a disastrous impact on the affordability calculations. Instead of loan repayments on the bushfire

debenture absorbing a consistent balance of 12 to 13 per cent of calculated annual rate revenue on the above basis, the use of a 3 per cent annual inflation rate as a more realistic long-term prospect sees the amount of rate revenue absorbed by the bushfire loan repayments escalate to an overwhelming 20.36 per cent at their peak. Plainly, the council's capacity to provide capital facilities for its community financed by loan funds will be crippled.

As I pointed out to the House this afternoon, it is only a matter of time, if something is not done to restructure that loan, before the council and the district will be bankrupt. In 1992-93, loan repayments will be \$457 089. The rates declared will be \$4 209 698, and the percentage of rate revenue committed to the bushfire debt was 10.86 per cent. Rates have increased above inflation and, by the conclusion of the 1992-93 financial year, the District Council of Stirling will have paid \$2 million towards the bushfire loan, yet the principal outstanding will still remain at the existing loan of \$4 million.

If we look at the loan repayments, if average CPI movements are plus 3 per cent per year and rate increases are worked out on this basis, we see the crippling commitment of the council's rate revenue. If we look at what is anticipated in the year 2004-5, we find that the loan repayments for that year will be \$1.215 million. If we look at the 3 per cent annual increase in rates, we see that the amount will be \$6 002 023, and a committed percentage of 20.24 per cent. It should be borne in mind that this commitment is superimposed above the council's traditional borrowings for service provisions. As I said earlier, there is much more detail than I could provide just now. Time does not permit, but it is a matter that I will be taking up on a continuing basis.

I want the Premier and all the Ministers to know that, without doubt, there is strong and telling evidence to clearly indicate that the burden of the bushfire loan on the Stirling council was excessive upon both the council and the district, and it is resulting in serious inequities in the level of services enjoyed within the district compared with those in other council districts in the metropolitan area. I am encouraged by the response I received from the Premier. I hope that the Premier will give the matter due regard at the appropriate time and that it will be treated as a matter of urgency.

The other matter to which I will refer briefly now but will take up in more detail at a later stage relates to my portfolio area of family and community services. Since taking up this portfolio some two or three months ago, I have been staggered at the amount of representation I have received from parents who have expressed a grave concern about the ease with which young people can leave home. In many cases I have had the opportunity to learn that those homes are very worthy homes indeed. I have received a lot of representation, some of which involves situations where 15 and 16 year old youths are leaving their families, going out and being assisted by Austudy; some of them are receiving bond assistance, living away from home allowances and many other benefits.

I know, and I am sure all other members know, that this is a very sensitive subject and there are varying circumstances that one would need to consider in each one of those cases. In a number of the cases to which I

have referred the homes that these young people are leaving are worthy homes where parents have shown a commitment to care or to help to care for those young people but, for one reason or another, mostly in situations where the young people have refused to accept the discipline parents have required of them, these young people have opted out and sought assistance from State or Federal Governments. Whichever the case may be, taxpayers' money is providing for those young people. It is an issue at which we need to look carefully.

I have spoken to my Federal colleague the Opposition shadow Minister, who is looking at the matter at Federal level. I will continue to look at the matter on a State level, as I do not believe that young teenagers should be allowed to leave home and have it all paid for with bond assistance, Austudy or whatever the case may be if the parents are able and willing to care for those young people while it is their responsibility to do so. It is often pointed out to me that young people are allowed to leave home at 15 or 16 years of age but, if anything goes wrong up until the age of 18 years, the parents must accept the responsibility. This is an issue that I will be following up at a later stage, because it is one about which I am particularly concerned, but I wanted to bring it to the notice of the House this evening.

**Mr GUNN (Eyre):** In the brief time available to me, I will raise two matters, the first concerning the difficult situation in which, unfortunately, a constituent of mine from Murray Town finds himself. He telephoned me a few weeks ago in relation to the matter, and I asked him to put his grievances in writing so that I could refer them to the House. He states:

Dear Sir,

In reference to my phone call of 31 August 1992 . . . I enclose two rate demands from the Port Pirie council for 90-91 and 91-92, which will give you some idea as to how much the minimum rate has been abused over the period of years. Each year, as the value of the land has depreciated, the minimum rate has been increased until now it has reached a point of being over 2/3 of the land value of \$700. This, along with E&WS rates of \$200 per year, take the rate cost to over the value of the ground.

This is not an isolated case. The minimum rate applies to all properties and land lots below the value of \$9 000 and affects 66 per cent of the rateable populous, namely the poorer class who appear to be subsidising the remainder of the city.

The only recourse we, the minimum raters, have is to offer the land back to the Lands Department. On doing this in April of this year I received the enclosed letter and was informed verbally that there was six other applications prior to mine. On inquiring again on 28 August 1992, I was told that the applications had now reached 15, and that the situation of the ground contamination is still the same leaving us in a catch 22 situation.

I am asking you if you would bring this to the attention of the Minister of Lands in the hope that he can alter this ridiculous situation.

My constituent, who has a property at 32 Seventh Street, Port Pirie and another property at 28 Seventh Street, received the following letter from the Department of Lands:

I refer to your letter of 5 May 1992 concerning the transfer of Certificates of Title Volume 3243, Folio 161 and Volume 641, Folio 157 to the Crown. I advise the Minister of Lands on behalf of the Crown is unable to accept this transfer due to the possibility of the land being contaminated.

A policy dealing with land contamination is currently being prepared by officers of this department and until all aspects have been addressed I am unable to process your request to transfer. Following completion I will notify you of the new policy. If you

require any further information or wish to discuss this matter please contact . . .

That is well and good, but my poor constituent is facing the situation of having to pay extensive amounts of money to the Port Pirie council for land which he cannot utilise. I therefore call upon the Minister of Lands and her officers to give this matter their urgent attention to assist my constituent out of what is a most unfortunate predicament, which the constituent did not really get himself into, which is beyond his control and which must be resolved as a matter of urgency so that justice can prevail. I understand the difficulty the council has but, at the end of the day, my constituent is the meat in the sandwich and should be assisted.

The second matter is that I understand that we will have put before us at some future time a proposition to adopt eastern standard time. In my judgment, this is not only unnecessary, unwise, unrealistic and certainly detrimental to a large number of my constituents, but it is also really perception politics, that is, putting to the people this proposition and making out it will do something when it will have no effect whatsoever. A person wrote to me from Port Lincoln and advised me of a submission that was put together by Mr Duncan, the General Manager of Western Mining, concerning this matter, and I thought it was pertinent to quote from this document, because it outlines how ridiculous the proposal to adopt eastern standard time is. The document states:

The time in South Australia is odd; odd for two reasons. First, it shares the oddity of being 30 minutes different to its neighbouring time zone, a peculiarity it shares with just a handful of countries, viz. India, Iran, Afghanistan and Myanmar (previously Burma). Let us refer to these as the '½ hour' countries. Predominantly all other countries (some 200) in the world are on a '1 hour' time difference, not '½ hour'.

Secondly, South Australia (and NT) takes its time from a meridian that does not pass through its own territory. The meridian used (142.5° east) passes through Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland; roughly from Warnambool in the South, east of Mildura, east of Broken Hill, Winton in Queensland and Cape York in the North. In each of the '½ hour' countries mentioned above, the ½ hour meridian chosen does at least pass through its own territory. On this basis alone, South Australia takes its time from a foreign meridian and in my view the wrong meridian.

Local time, worldwide, is taken from when the sun passes over the celestial meridian (the line of longitude) that runs north and south through that place. The 00° longitude which runs through Greenwich is of course the best known of these and has become the datum for UK time and all international time (Greenwich Mean Time, GMT).

To someone who flies aeroplanes, it is known as Universal Time. It continues:

As it would be impractical to have a different time for each town in the world, time zones were established. Quoting from *The World Book Encyclopaedia*:

The local time at the meridian (Line of longitude) which runs through the centre of the zone is used by all places within the zone. Thus time throughout the zone is the same.

This statement from *The World Book* confirms the oddity of South Australia's time, for here we currently take our time from a meridian that does not pass through the zone. The normal world practice leads us to the conclusion that South Australia should change its time to be consistent with a meridian that runs through its own territory. This would put South Australia on the international standard of being a '1 hour' (not '½ hour') zone and put us 1 hour different from the Eastern States.

The Northern Territory needs to be invited into the discussion because they may wish to stay aligned with South Australia, although it is clearly their decision. The astronomical facts supporting a realignment of Northern Territory time to go to the 1 hour standard are however the same as for South Australia.

The correct meridian for South Australia and the Northern Territory is 135° east which runs through the centre of South Australia from approximately Coffin Bay in the south, through Kingoonya, Oodnadatta. For the Northern Territory, 135° east runs about 100 km east of Alice Springs and Tennant Creek and up through Arnhem Land.

It can be seen clearly that the currently used meridian of 145.5° east which runs from Warnambool in the south to Cape York in the north is illogical for both South Australia and the Northern Territory. Now to the proposition that South Australia adopts Eastern Standard Time (EST). The current time for South Australia and the Northern Territory is astronomically wrong by 30 minutes and to contemplate changing this to be 60 minutes wrong is not logical in my view.

Such a move would mean that South Australians would take their midday when the sun was over the meridian 150° east, a line which runs north and south between Canberra and Sydney (From Cape Howe in the south to near Rockhampton in the north). A line in fact approximately 1 000 kms east of Adelaide. If this is not convincing, consider what will happen when the Eastern States go onto daylight saving. If South Australia was to follow suit and also adopt daylight saving based upon EST, Adelaide will declare it to be midday when the sun passes over the meridian 165° east, a line that passes through the Pacific Ocean some 300 km east of Lord Howe Island, or just 100 km short of the West Cape of New Zealand's South Island—it has to be crazy.

The scientific facts of the argument to go to a 1 hour time difference from the Eastern States cannot be denied. This latest proposal to re-evaluate the setting of time in South Australia stems from the desire to stimulate South Australia's manufacturing industry and we should all work toward that objective. If we could be convinced that moving onto EST is an important part of the State's recovery then we should ignore the science and do it. However, many people believe that for most South Australian's, changing to EST alone will not measurably improve the financial health of the State or reduce unemployment.

And the document continues. Clearly, that explanation indicates how illogical and how foolish this proposition is. It is not necessary or desirable and I, for one, will be opposing it as vigorously as I can whenever the Government brings the matter before the House because I do not think it is appropriate, desirable or necessary. That time should be put into addressing other more important things, that is, fixing up the finances of South Australia.

**Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport):** About 10 years ago or slightly longer than that I raised the need for councils and the E&WS Department to make sure that Hills streams were free of debris so that we would not have as much flooding as we had in the past. At that time there had been flooding in Waterfall Gully and homes were flooded. Some councils, in particular Burnside and Mitcham, took the matter seriously and set out to make sure that their streams were clear of debris.

It was the responsibility of the landholder, the same as with any other aspect of managing properties. But, what has happened in recent times? It saddens me to know that two people lost their lives in the terrible flooding of one of the major streams in this State. I am sure that if people did research they would find that trees were lying across the stream, because we have never set out to make sure that their path was clear for the floods that occur. Even if we did that, I admit that heavy rains will still cause flash flooding, but only on odd occasions.

In relation to the Sturt Creek, for example, from Upper Sturt down through Coromandel Valley, where people have in recent years built near the stream, I was amazed to find that they have kept the path of the stream clear of rubbish, debris and fallen trees and that there was no real

flooding. The member for Fisher would recall times when the Sturt Creek flooded properties quite considerably in that area, but it did not occur on this occasion.

It is logical for two reasons that we should keep the streams clear: first, to stop flooding and, secondly, to cut out erosion. If we are concerned about erosion and its environmental effects on farmland, we should also be concerned about erosion of streams. What happens when a stream blocks? Nature planned it this way and, although we are countering nature if we change, I am suggesting that we should counter nature to stop the erosion of soil in large quantities. When a stream is blocked, it takes another path and carves out of the silt that has been deposited off the hills over centuries, long before white man came here, another path and takes all that soil out to sea. And, when that blocks it changes again. It does not usually involve any great distance in this country because the hillsides on each side are too steep. However, I lay the challenge again with the Minister and the local councils to ensure that property owners keep their streams clean. If we did that we would save millions of dollars in the long term. We would save lives and we would save a lot of heartbreak, where people have lost furniture, and all their belongings, as we saw recently on television with one elderly man who was quite distressed about this aspect.

It is so much common sense. Our forefathers did not allow the streams to be blocked. On the big rivers they may not have had much control over this; that was the jurisdiction of the Engineering and Water Supply Department or other authorities. However, it is just as important to keep those streams clean as it is to keep properties free of noxious weeds, or to keep down the amount of flammable material, whether it be in the suburbs or in the rural areas. The power is there: councils have the power now to ask property owners to clean up. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has the power, but so do they each have the responsibility to keep their own streams clean of rubbish. I will not take much of the time of the House tonight.

I hope members and the Government pick up the point I am making, namely, that it is not an expensive operation. In my own case and that of my neighbours, we had no really bad flooding this year because all of us, except one, have over the past few years cleaned out the streams, and that person had some overflow onto their land. It angers me when I see all the damage that is done because authorities do not use the power that they possess. I know in my own heart that the cost to the individual landholder is not a lot, so why not do it? Quite often the material they salvage, such as dry timber, can be used or sold to others to keep themselves warm in the winter months.

**Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee):** During the grievance debate earlier today, following Question Time, I drew attention to a matter that I consider to be of the utmost gravity, that is, the *sub judice* rule. If the *sub judice* rule were to apply in budget debates, it would cut across the right of members of Parliament and, indeed, of Parliament itself to deal with most important matters, in my judgment, those relating to the Appropriation Bill. I have quoted some learned opinion from different Presiding Officers over the past 25 years or so, and I

now proceed with the opinion of Sir Alister McMullin of 20 May. He stated:

I do not think the motion necessarily brings into consideration the current matter before the Commonwealth Industrial Court.

He was talking about whether or not the Leader of the Opposition should participate in a debate on a matter of urgency relating to the penal provisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and concluded by saying:

That would be too restrictive of the rights of Parliament. Within those limits, the debate may proceed.

The matter related to a couple of senior union officials and whether or not they should be dealt with. The general rule is that matters still under adjudication in a court of law cannot be brought forward in debate, but the public interest may be held to prevail over the *sub judice* doctrine. In this respect, an oft quoted decision is that of Sir Frederick Jordan, the then Chief Justice of New South Wales, in *Ex parte Bread Manufacturers Ltd re Truth and Sportsman Ltd and another*, 37 SRNSW (1937) 249-250, in which he said:

It is of extreme public interest that no conduct should be permitted which is likely to prevent a litigant in a court of justice from having his case tried free from all matter of prejudice. But the administration of justice, important though it undoubtedly is, is not the only matter in which the public is vitally interested; and if in the course of the ventilation of a question of public concern matter is published which might prejudice a party in the conduct of a law suit, it does not follow that a contempt has been committed.

The case may be one in which as between competing matters of public interest the possibility of prejudice to a litigant may be required to yield to other and superior considerations. The discussion of public affairs and the denunciation of public abuses, actual or supposed, cannot be required to be suspended merely because the discussion or the denunciation may, as an incidental but not intended by-product, cause some likelihood of prejudice to a person who happens at the time to be a litigant.

It is well settled that a person cannot be prevented by process of contempt from continuing to discuss publicly a matter which may fairly be regarded as one of public interest, by reason merely of the fact that the matter in question has become the subject of litigation, or that a person whose conduct is being publicly criticised has become a party to litigation either as plaintiff or defendant, and whether in relation to the matter which is under discussion or with respect to some other matter.

President Sir Magnus Cormack, in his rulings, recognised the *sub judice* doctrine, but he considered that some claims that a matter was *sub judice* might be too restrictive of the debate in Parliament. He ruled as follows:

The prime question I must ask myself is, I think: is parliamentary debate likely to give rise to any real and substantial danger of prejudice to proceedings before the court? If so, then Parliament must not pursue that path.

Further, if the *sub judice* rule is to be made to apply to Bills before the House, then it will be possible that there could be no debate on any budget before the Parliament. For example, a Government could appoint a royal commission to inquire into and report upon all matters related to Government revenue and expenditure. Such a royal commission could sit for four or five years or more. Does this mean that no debate or questioning or any matter can be raised in a budget debate while that royal commission is undertaking its inquiries?

If there is a serious risk of poisoning the intention of justice, there is a clear case for placing restrictions even upon the Parliament. If the risk is uncertain or the toxicity slight, then the *sub judice* rule should be applied

with the utmost caution and preferably not at all. In my judgment, it is appropriate for us to proceed with this budget debate on all matters that might otherwise normally be canvassed. In the final analysis, it is a matter of balancing the two opposing aspects of the public interest: free discussion in the democratic process and justice being done and being seen to be done. The Speaker of the Parliament in Victoria on one occasion already ruled that the *sub judice* rule definitely does not apply to proceedings before a judicial or quasi-judicial inquiry.

The actions of the Government and the ruling given are contrary to the best practices of parliamentary democracy. I express once again my disapproval of the Government's action, and if it chooses to use that rule in the forthcoming budgetary Estimates Committees, I believe that, if the ruling were to be taken up or that if a ruling given in Estimates Committee B is allowed to stand, it will have a serious affect upon parliamentary democracy in South Australia in the future forever and it will seriously damage the image of ourselves as legislators and protectors of the public interest.

I felt it important to put that on the record before we go into the Estimates Committees, because there are matters of considerable gravity that ought to be scrutinised if any member so chooses during the course of examining the appropriations in the Estimates Committees. I would not want anyone to think that I am in any way motivated by anything other than public interest. It is certainly not out of malice for anyone. I have the greatest respect for the people I have quoted and, in particular, for the Chairman of Estimates Committee B of some 10 years ago who I think made that ruling at the time more hastily than he would do so again, given the opportunity to do so.

I now wish to turn to another matter that was debated hotly earlier in the day on both sides of the Chamber. I refer to the automotive industry in this State and its likely survival or otherwise. It ought to be borne in mind that the numbers of employees in the automobile industry in this State have fallen significantly in the past year or so, and that has been as a consequence of Labor Government policies and not anything the Opposition has done either in this State or in the Federal Parliament. For instance, let us take any month at random and take a historical look at the numbers of employees in the automobile industry in this State. Take, for instance, the month of May. It is no different in trend from any other month, but one that I took purely at random because it is seasonally neutral but shows an annual or cyclical implication.

In May 1992, from the Australian Bureau of Statistics we see a category of employees referred to in the table of employed persons by industry showing transport, equipment, motor vehicles and parts manufacturers. In South Australia, there were 11 451 and in Australia 66 023 employed in that capacity. Just 12 months before, in May 1991, that figure was 16 434 in South Australia and 74 600 in the whole of Australia. Whilst the figure for the whole of Australia fell by 10 000, it was only 8 000 in 1974 and, of that 8 000, 5 000 lost their jobs in South Australia. To my mind, if this Government claims that it has looked after the automobile industry in South Australia as a good political husband, the very facts show that it has made a botch of that job. Clearly, by losing

5 000 of those jobs of the 8 000 that were lost in Australia and by losing at least a third of all the jobs that were in manufacturing, it fails by any test.

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

Motion carried.

### ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

The **Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Deputy Premier)**: I move:

That the proposed expenditures for the departments and services contained in the Appropriation Bill be referred to Estimates Committees A and B for examination and report by Wednesday 7 October, in accordance with the timetables as follow:

#### ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

*Tuesday 15 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Employment and Further Education, Minister of Youth Affairs, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Assisting the Minister of Ethnic Affairs**

Employment and Technical and Further Education  
Minister of Employment and Further Education, Minister of Youth Affairs, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Minister Assisting the Minister of Ethnic Affairs, Miscellaneous

*Wednesday 16 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Treasurer  
Premier, Minister of State Development, Legislature**

Treasury  
Treasurer, Miscellaneous  
Legislative Council  
House of Assembly  
Joint Parliamentary Service  
State Governor's Establishment  
Premier and Cabinet  
Premier and Minister of State Development, Miscellaneous

*Thursday 17 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Emergency Services, Minister of Mines and Energy, Minister of Forests**

Police  
Minister of Emergency Services, Miscellaneous  
children's Services Office

*Tuesday 22 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of health, Minister of Family and Community Services, Minister for the Aged**  
South Australian Health Commission  
Family and Community Services

*Thursday 24 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Housing and Construction, Minister of Public Works, Minister of Recreation and Sport**

Housing and Construction  
South Australian Housing Trust  
Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works, Miscellaneous  
Recreation and Sport

#### ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

*Tuesday 15 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Fisheries, Minister of Ethnic Affairs**

Industry, Trade and Technology  
Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, Miscellaneous  
Agriculture  
Minister of Agriculture, Miscellaneous  
Fisheries  
Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs

*Wednesday 16 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister for Environment and Planning, Minister of Water Resources, Minister of Lands**

Environment and Planning  
Minister for Environment and Planning, Miscellaneous  
Engineering and Water Supply  
Minister of Water Resources, Miscellaneous  
Lands  
Auditor-General's  
Minister of Lands, Miscellaneous

*Thursday 17 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister for the Arts & Cultural Heritage, Minister for**

**Local Government Relations, Minister of State Services**  
Arts and Cultural Heritage  
State Services  
Minister of State Services, Miscellaneous

*Tuesday 22 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Attorney-General, Minister of Corporate Affairs, Minister of Crime Prevention**

Attorney-General's  
Court Services  
Electoral  
Attorney-General and Minister for Crime Prevention, Miscellaneous

*Wednesday 23 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Labour, Minister of Occupational Health and Safety, Minister of Marine**

Labour  
Minister of Labour and Minister of Occupational Health and Safety, Miscellaneous  
Marine and Harbors

*Thursday 24 September at 11.00 a.m.*

**Minister of Tourism, Minister of Consumer Affairs, Minister of Small Business**

Tourism South Australia  
Minister of Tourism, Miscellaneous  
Public and Consumer Affairs  
Minister of Consumer Affairs and Minister of Small Business, Miscellaneous

I will not read the text of the motion to the House because of its length and because it has been distributed to all members.

Motion carried.

The **Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Deputy Premier)**: I move:

That Estimates Committee A be appointed, consisting of the Hon. Jennifer Cashmore and Messrs De Laine, Ferguson, Gunn, Hamilton, Heron and Such.

Motion carried.

The **Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Deputy Premier)**: I move:

That Estimates Committee B be appointed, consisting of Mr Atkinson, Hon. D.C. Brown, Hon. T.H. Hemmings, Messrs McKee, Meier, Olsen and Quirke.

Motion carried.

**Mr GROOM (Hartley)**: I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable—

- (a) the committees to have power to send for papers and records;
- (b) the committees to have power to inquire into the administration of any statutory authorities for which a Minister has any responsibility; and
- (c) the committees to ask for explanations on matters relating to Estimates of Receipts.

This motion strengthens the Estimates Committees system. Some of the contributors to this morning's motion, as brilliant as they were, failed to notice this motion which I placed on the Notice Paper some two days ago. It does strengthen the Estimates Committees system: it is the other side of the ledger.

This morning's motion was a request for consideration for utilising the standing committees of this Parliament; this motion strengthens the Estimates Committees because the Estimates Committees are here. The current system is that Estimates Committees must deal with payments, so if you get an organisation such as the West Beach Trust or WorkCover you cannot technically deal with such a body unless there is a payment made to it. We all know that the practical way in which the Estimates Committees function is that we ask questions on these matters, but if someone took a technical point you could be ruled out of order.

It is quite clear that for the Estimates Committees to function properly you have to consider these statutory bodies and organisations. Although there may not be a payment line there may nevertheless be a receipt line and that ought to be the proper subject of scrutiny and examination by Estimates Committees. That is the purpose behind paragraph (b) which gives power to inquire into the administration of any statutory authorities for which a Minister has any responsibility; and paragraph (c) provides that the committees can ask for explanations on matters relating to Estimates of Receipts whereas current Standing Orders deal with Estimates of Payments. Paragraph (a) gives the standing committees power to send for papers and records to assist in the answering of material that may be required by statutory authorities or by any other authority for which there is not a payment line.

In this morning's contribution the member for Henley Beach came to grips, as did other contributors, with the real need for a strengthening of parliamentary control and scrutiny over the Executive. This morning's motion asked for consideration to be given to utilising the standing committees in a proper way. I have moved this motion because you, Mr Deputy Speaker, are unable to move it from the floor, but you have been a prime driving force behind strengthening the parliamentary system, whether that be through the standing committees or through the Estimates Committees, and if they are to function effectively the Estimates Committees need these powers to ensure that there is proper scrutiny over the Executive.

Motion carried.

#### **SUMMARY PROCEDURE (SUMMARY PROTECTION ORDERS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **EXPIATION OF OFFENCES (DIVISIONAL FEES) AMENDMENT BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **STATUTES AMENDMENT (EXPIATION OF OFFENCES) BILL**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### **LIQUOR LICENSING (FEES) AMENDMENT BILL**

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 6.48 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 7 October at 2 p.m.