

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 21 October 1992

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. N.T. Peterson) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION

CHILD CARE

A petition signed by 118 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to maintain the occasional/respite child care service at Ingle Farm was presented by Mr Quirke.

Petition received.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE

The **SPEAKER**: Last evening on the Channel 10 News the Deputy Leader of the Opposition stated in relation to proposed WorkCover amendments:

What we want to know is what sort of arrangement, if any, happened between the Speaker and the Premier, and that was what the question was all about today, and it was ruled out of order by the Speaker. And I just find that unacceptable and quite amazing.

While I, as Speaker, am perfectly happy for objection to be taken to any ruling I make in this Chamber, it is clear from our practice and that of Westminster that reflections on the actions of the Speaker which are made outside the Chamber are treated seriously as breaches of privilege. I have considered taking the matter further but, while there was clear inference in the remarks made, they appeared to be off the cuff and probably without the honourable member's thinking of the consequences of making them. However, I give due warning to the honourable member and, indeed, all members that any repetition will be dealt with in a way which reflects the seriousness of such breaches.

STAMP DUTIES

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. **FRANK BLEVINS**: Last week in this place the Leader of the Opposition asked whether I would investigate why only \$25 in stamp duty on the mortgage on the Henry Waymouth building had been paid. I said I would investigate, and I have to report that the claims made by the member opposite were incorrect. It was claimed by the Leader of the Opposition that only \$25 had been paid in stamp duty on a \$30 million mortgage, and it was further asserted that this meant the Government had missed out on receiving an amount of \$104 990. The stamp duty—the full amount of stamp duty—on this transaction has been paid. It was paid well before the question was raised in this place—in fact, some three years before.

As at 28 August 1989 the mortgage was stamped to secure \$33 251 300—a figure close to the \$30 million

referred to by the Opposition Leader but, again, incorrect. The document was originally stamped in 1988 to secure \$10 000, and \$25 was paid. In 1989 the document was upstamped to secure the total \$33 251 300 and a further stamp duty of \$116 334.55 was paid. The main points are as follows:

- I said I would investigate the matter and I have done so.
- I was asked why only \$25 in stamp duty was paid—only to find this was an incorrect assertion by the Opposition Leader.
- I was asked to provide a report on the sale of the building, but I do not believe this is appropriate in light of the facts before me.

Finally, while the full stamp duty required has been paid on this occasion, some concern has been raised about the possible evasion of stamp duty in the past. The Government's action in this area has been swift—administrative steps have been taken by the Commissioner of Stamps and legislation is currently before the House to ensure that all stamp duty due is paid.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr **McKEE** (Gilles): I bring up the twentieth report 1992 of the Legislative Review Committee and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

WA INC.

The Hon. **DEAN BROWN** (Leader of the Opposition): In view of the finding of the WA Inc. royal commission that former Premier Burke acted 'reprehensibly and possibly illegally' in soliciting political donations, will the Premier explain the source of a donation of \$95 000 sent by Mr Burke to the South Australian branch of the Labor Party, and whether this money was provided as a result of or to influence any decisions of the South Australian Government? On 4 December 1985 Mr Burke authorised the allocation of \$95 000 to the South Australian Labor Party from a fund that he controlled.

The Hon. **LYNN ARNOLD**: I have not had a chance to read the report of the Western Australian royal commission. I have not even seen the volumes of it. However, I understand that, in the six volumes, there is a schedule that makes reference to payments made from former Premier Burke's fund in Western Australia to South Australia, New South Wales (I think), Tasmania and maybe Victoria—I have not seen it, so I am just going on what I have been told about this matter. My advice is that, in that respect, Premier Burke's account was being used as something of a postbox account on behalf of a donation from a company that was giving money to both sides of politics throughout the country, and that this particular company—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Leader is out of order.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader is out of order.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I will not respond to interjections, interesting though I find them. The funds were paid in the case of Premier Burke's account to various Labor Party branches in other parts of Australia, and a payment was made to the Labor Party branch in South Australia. Provided it was across the board, I would support full public disclosure of amounts paid to political Parties.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Yes, and make it retrospective. If that were to be the case, I would certainly support the Party which I represent in this place making full public disclosure, and I would call on the Opposition to make full public disclosure of its own funds.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Mitcham is out of order.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Mitcham casts a very grave aspersion by saying, 'What favours did they buy?' The answer is that they bought no favours, because the giving of donations by corporations in Australia to political Parties is something which has gone on for a long time in the political process, and it is quite out of order to suggest that Governments or Parties respond to that—

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Mitcham is out of order.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: —by having favours bought. I can certainly assure you, Sir, that this State Government has not had favours bought by corporations. If the honourable member starts making his snide accusations, I wish he would look at the quite disgraceful things that have happened in Western Australia, and the quite serious findings that have been made there against Premiers on both sides of politics.

I was interested to note that the other side chose not to make reference to the fact that a former Liberal Premier in that State has also been very firmly assailed by the royal commission report. I do not condone what Brian Burke has done in Western Australia; there is no way that can be condoned.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Well, it doesn't sound as though I am, because I am saying quite clearly that I do not, nor do I condone what the Liberal Premier in Western Australia did. I would like to hear the Leader of the Opposition say likewise—that he does not condone the behaviour of his Party colleagues in Western Australia. So, I can give the categorical assurance that favours have not been bought of this Government in South Australia by donations made by corporations. This Party believes in full public disclosure; I believe it is up to the Opposition to support such moves.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): Has the Minister of Labour Relations and Occupational Health and Safety had an opportunity to assess the impact of the Federal Opposition's industrial relations policy on South Australian workplaces and, if so, will he inform the House what that impact will be?

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I thank the member for Playford—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: —for his question. If one examined the policy that was announced and applied it to South Australia, one would find that 304 000 South Australian workers would become award free. Despite the assertions of the shadow Minister in the Federal Liberal Party, most of those people would find themselves paying their wages back into their bosses' pockets, and that is what it is designed to do. It is designed precisely to do that, because there is no protection for those people—no protection whatsoever. They talk about the minimum award rate, and we find that a number of awards in this State apply \$188 as a minimum rate. It has not changed for some time, the reason being that those unions have been reaching arrangements with their employers that are far better than that.

Under the Liberal's proposal, all those arrangements would be scrapped, the minimum award would stay exactly as it is with no change whatsoever, and we would then see these negotiated agreements. Tens of thousands of young workers would be exploited at \$3 and \$3.50 an hour.

I could imagine the loud-mouthed members opposite employing those people at those salaries and exploiting them. I can understand why they want to do this: they want to transfer money from workers' wages back into their profits, and that is precisely what will happen. We have seen it happen in New Zealand and we have seen it attempted in New South Wales. One of those awards was brought into our office—into the Department of Labour—for vetting. It was a proposed agreement in—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: —which the hourly rate was determined by what the boss could pay that week. So, I suppose what the worker gets paid on Thursday or Friday depends upon whether the boss has a good night at the Casino. This sort of agreement is what they are talking about. Mr Speaker, you ought to see some of the agreements that have come out of New Zealand: people are not being paid properly and are slowly going broke. You just would not know.

The jobs they are talking about are like those in Queensland in that clothing factory, where the boss said, 'If I can pay you, I will: if I can't, I am willing to provide you with work, but I want you to come under these new arrangements.' There is no guarantee whatsoever of work. What we have seen in New Zealand is a complete reversal of its economy; its economy has not grown at all, wages have dropped and standards and conditions are going. What New Zealand is now seeing is a brain drain.

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

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

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: What we could also say is that the member for Victoria, who is so fond of interjecting, does not want unions in this country, so that he can pay people what he wants and so that he can exploit them as much as he damn well can. That is what they are on about. They do not want people around who can protect people.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D.S. BAKER: On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Victoria has a point of order.

Mr D.S. BAKER: The Minister accused me of paying below award wages and exploiting workers, and I think that is a pretty serious accusation. If he has the time, we can go down and talk to my workers.

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Victoria saying that he finds the Minister's remark offensive?

Mr D.S. BAKER: I ask him to withdraw that accusation.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot rule unless I know what the point of order is. If the honourable member finds the Minister's remark offensive, I can ask the Minister to withdraw it.

Mr D.S. BAKER: It is a reflection on me under Standing Order 127, and I ask the Minister to withdraw it.

The SPEAKER: I have a request from the member for Victoria that the Minister withdraw his remark.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I do not know what I am supposed to withdraw but, whatever it is, I will withdraw it to make the honourable member happy. The Opposition wants to provide a public advocate to assist workers. It wants to do away with unions—

The SPEAKER: Order! I draw the Minister's attention to his capacity to make a ministerial statement if he wishes and the requirement not to debate an answer, that it must be factual. I point out that he is taking a long time with his response, and I ask him to draw it to a close.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I will wind up my answer very quickly.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I do not need the assistance of the idiot member for Mitcham. The final thing I want to say is simply this: the Opposition proposes to bring in a public advocate to assist workers who have a grievance with their boss. Members opposite want to replace the whole of the trade union movement with a Government run advocacy unit that will act on behalf of workers. The last time we saw that sort of thing was in totalitarian regimes, which we now see members opposite trying to emulate.

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

CASINO

Mr INGERSON (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr INGERSON: In view of the findings of the Western Australian Inc. royal commission, will the Premier ensure that the Government fully examines the original appointment of Genting as technical adviser to the Adelaide Casino? The Liberal Party has already put information before the House showing the links between Genting's involvement in the Adelaide and Perth Casinos, including the fact that two directors of Genting South Australia were actively involved in the operation of the Perth Casino.

The Western Australian Inc. royal commission report shows that a Genting owned company, Tileska, formed a consortium with Perth businessman, Dallas Dempster, which was awarded the licence for the Perth Casino in November 1984. In March 1985, with the support of the Lotteries Commission and SASFIT, Genting obtained a contract with the Adelaide Casino worth more than \$50 million. The Western Australian report further reveals that in June 1985 Tileska paid \$300 000 to Dempster Nominees, a company controlled by Dempster, for so-called 'consulting services'.

Within a period of nine days, Dempster Nominees paid \$300 000 in three separate amounts to the account controlled by Mr Brian Burke which, in December 1985, was used to pay \$95 000 to the Labor Party in South Australia. The royal commission has found that the evidence 'strongly suggests that Dempster Nominees was used as a conduit for Tileska for a donation by that company to the ALP'. It has also been reported that the largest donations made to the ALP, including those through Dempster, were 'quite extraordinary' and 'in many instances, there is an obvious connection in time between donations and events in which donors were concerned with Government'.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I thought this question was asked last week or the week before, and I can assure the House—

Mr S.J. Baker: The Premier is responsible, is he not?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Premier is not responsible for the Casino legislation: I am.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will direct his response through the Chair, and interjections are out of order.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: This question is identical to one that was asked, and a report is being prepared. I will again have this question examined to see whether there is anything in it regarding any ministerial responsibility of mine or any other Minister. As regards Mr Dempster, I understand that he is a member of the Liberal Party. He is certainly not a member of the Labor Party.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: He is a member of the Liberal Party. However, it is a free country and, if people choose to do that, that is something that they have to live with. As regards the question of political donations, the question is easily cleared up. All it requires is the support of the Opposition to pass legislation in this place for full disclosure, total disclosure.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: And back-date it.

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I am still waiting for you to apologise. If the Deputy Leader feels that that is not sufficient, we can have a select committee inquiry. The Opposition could move for a select committee and we could examine the accounts of the Labor Party. We could call business leaders to the committee and we could call for papers. We could call Mr Minchin and have a look at the donations there.

If the Opposition is really concerned, we can do this. The Opposition suggests that there is some coincidence of time: there were lots of events on at that time. If we look back at some of the legislation that was going through the Parliament and some of the proposals that were being floated, I could see some companies wanting to influence members on both sides. Members on this side would not have a clue who donated, so they would be doing their dough in that regard, but I do not know about members opposite.

However, I have always been interested in how much the tobacco companies, for example, paid the political Parties during the period when Foundation SA was being established. I would love to know that, and I would also like to know what the insurance companies paid into the Liberal Party when the WorkCover legislation was going through. If we have a genuine interest in finding out the answers to these questions, it is in the hands of the Liberal Party to bring that about.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Walsh.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. Dean Brown: Five days.

Members interjecting:

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Leader has been warned three times already. The member for Walsh.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Government legislate to implement the industrial relations policy objectives announced yesterday by the Federal Opposition? In announcing its industrial relations policy yesterday the Federal Opposition asserted that it would seek complementary legislative action from State and Territory Governments to achieve its policies, and the Federal Opposition threatened to use whatever constitutional power it had available to it to ensure that the policy was implemented.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I certainly noticed those comments made by the Federal Opposition, that it would seek complementary legislative action, and I also noted—

Mr D.S. Baker: Hear, hear!

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Victoria says, 'Hear, hear!' that we would apparently be obliged just willingly to accept the frightful programs that they propose to put in place under their Jobsack program which they announced yesterday and which really takes away all the established rules of industrial relations in this country.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I will come to the track record of the Opposition, when it was in Government in this State, with respect to industrial relations when at that stage it just chose to go against any accepted principles. The facts are that the Federal Opposition, while this Government is in power, will have to use its external affairs powers if it wishes to rip up the rule books with respect to industrial relations and rip up the achievements of this State in terms of having the best industrial relations record in the country. We do not want a situation where workers in this State are so significantly disadvantaged by the kind of proposals that John Hewson and John Howard are putting forward. I noticed earlier that the member for Victoria, by way of interjection, said that the union movement will be finished under the proposals of John Hewson.

An honourable member: That's the idea.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: That is the idea; that is the very core of what they are after. Why is it the very core of what they are after? Because, as the Minister of Labour Relations said before, they want to introduce the kind of concept that was discredited in fascist dictatorships in other parts of the world.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: Members may laugh about that being a dramatic statement. John Hewson is quite fond of his own dramatic statements. When he was addressing the National Press Club in March 1991, talking about how he would put into effect his own policies, John Hewson said, 'Look, if it came to confrontation and there was no other alternative, the answer is "Yes" we would put the Army in on the wharves.' That is the kind of policy that we see being revealed by Jobsack and other kinds of proposals that they are putting forward. Those are the kinds of propositions that will undermine good industrial relations in this State.

In the 12 months to June 1992, South Australia had 44 days lost in industrial dispute per 1 000 employees. That is the lowest figure since October 1984 and compares with a national average of 195 days lost per 1 000 employees; in other words, about four times the figure for South Australia.

When the Opposition was in Government, what was the situation; how did its grand plan for industrial relations translate? The Leader himself was the Minister responsible for industrial relations under the Tonkin Government. In those days there were 294 days lost per 1 000 employees in South Australia in the 12 months to June 1982. It is quite clear what the difference is. At the end of the day, if a company wants to do productive business, to make money, to employ people and to export products, what it wants is good industrial relations; it wants a good cooperative atmosphere in its enterprise. In 1981, under what were essentially Liberal Governments in much of Australia (Federal and in a number of States), 4.2 million working days were lost. Yet, in the 12 months to June 1992, when there was significant Labor representation at both Federal and State levels, the figure was 1.17 million working days lost—about a quarter of what it was when the Liberals last had a chance at Federal and State levels to enact their complementary view as to what they wanted to do about industrial

relations and attack the very core of industrial relations in this country.

The proposals that they are talking about in Jobsack, which were essentially to get rid of or sack the umpire and leave people to the mercy of those who would take advantage of them, will not benefit workers, companies or the economy of this State.

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The member for Victoria says 'Rubbish.' I think and I hope it is true that he has never paid below award wages, because, if he did, he would be in breach of agreements. His theory is that you change the rules, you rip up the documents, you no longer make them applicable and then you pay below them. He wants to pay below the award wages. He says, 'I will get my Party to change all the rules and then I can pay lower wages.' That is at the core of the policy of the Opposition.

Members interjecting:

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

CASINO

Mr INGERSON (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Were SASFIT and the Lotteries Commission aware, at the time they pushed for the involvement of Genting in the Adelaide Casino, that Genting had not been granted a police clearance from casino activities in Perth? The report of the WA Inc. Royal Commission shows that, at the time Genting's involvement in the Perth Casino was approved in November 1984, the company had not received a full police clearance. Initial police investigations had disclosed several matters which, if established by further investigation to be true, would have rendered Genting unsuitable to hold a casino licence. The report also finds that the Casino control committee issued a report which was deliberately misleading in failing to reveal that a recommendation to grant the licence to Genting had been made without police clearance.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I know that there is a Standing Order against tedious repetition, but unfortunately I will have to go through it again—I am compelled to by the question. As I stated last week, I will get a report on the question of Genting's involvement in the Casino and how it came to be involved. To the best of my knowledge, as I said last week, it was a completely open and public inquiry, which I think was under Judge Marshall—I am not quite sure; it was a long time ago. It was a completely open, public inquiry.

Before the licence was granted and before the Casino Supervisory Authority entered into an agreement, there was a full inquiry into all the people who applied for the licence and all the people who assisted those who applied for the licence. I assume that involved the Commissioner of Police, who has some responsibility, and to the best of my knowledge none of these people raised any objection whatsoever to Genting as a company being involved. Again, to the best of my knowledge, albeit very limited knowledge, Genting has always acted impeccably. However, I am having a report prepared—a chronology of events—and I will bring it to the Parliament.

An honourable member: When?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: As soon as it is prepared.

Mr Ingerson: When?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I am not personally preparing it; I am not personally researching the hearings or the transcript; I admit that. I have asked the Casino Supervisory Authority to put the material together. I have asked AITCO for its comments on the question. I have asked the Deputy Under Treasurer to coordinate the responses and prepare a report for me to bring to the Parliament. That is what is happening now. As soon as all those people have the material together—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Certainly, by all means, I will forward the questions. Funnily enough, when I referred the question for comment one response was that it was very difficult to find precisely what the question was in all the propaganda and innuendo about political donations. Nevertheless, I tell them that they have to do it; Parliament requests it.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Well, it will all come together in due course.

The Hon. Dean Brown: Will I get an answer?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: You always get an answer and you do not like them generally, do you? They make you look what you are. I always bring the answers back to Parliament and I get a great deal of pleasure in doing so.

The SPEAKER: I think the Minister has fully answered the question.

TOURISM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): Will the Minister of Tourism advise the House of details of the relocation of Tourism South Australia's Travel Centre following its sudden move from 18 King William Street to alternative interim premises late last year?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I am pleased to see that the Opposition is delighted at some good news. While some people want to paint South Australia as boring or slip our tourism industry into the GST noose, it is very important that today we celebrated the opening at 1 King William Street of the new Travel Centre, which is very important in terms of client service and excellence in this State. I invite all members of Parliament to visit the new Travel Centre. Of course, people will realise that the Travel Centre has to date attracted around 300 000 visitors and up to 200 000 telephone inquiries each year. Obviously, a prime location is important and its new location could not be better on the major city corner in the CBD right on the North Terrace heritage precinct. It seems this centre is without question the most modern and technologically sophisticated Government travel centre in Australia.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Members opposite are interjecting about WA Inc. for some bizarre reason. This seems rather odd, although I would like to know about the Party leadership's backing for Ms Robyn Greenburg,

who was recently a central figure in WA Inc. and who was gaoled for 17 years for her role in—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: She was a Liberal candidate—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: —for Port Adelaide, backed by members opposite.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Minister for talking over the instruction of the Chair.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is an increasing habit, and it will not be tolerated. The member for Coles.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: On a point of order, Sir, the Minister is debating the question and is dealing with matters of no relevance to the question.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order and ask the Minister to either answer the substance of the question or resume his seat.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Certainly for us to be truly successful in our tourism marketing the State as a whole must project a positive image. Tourism South Australia's Travel Centre provides an information and booking service for consumers and for travel agents responding to that marketing effort. I think it will be a great credit and great boost to our tourism marketing in this State, and there are more announcements to come.

WA INC.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Premier. Will his Government examine the report of the WA Inc. royal commission to assess what lessons it contains on Government accountability to Parliament? The royal commissioners have reported:

The Parliament, no less than the public, was kept ignorant of many of the matters which led to the establishment of this royal commission and which have had such adverse consequences for every person in this State . . . Effective accountability of the Government was a casualty of its entrepreneurial zeal.

The losses to taxpayers from WA Inc. are about \$1 500 million, about half those currently estimated for the State Bank of South Australia. The parliamentary records of South Australia show that, with the State Bank, SGIC, WorkCover, the timber corporation, Marineland and in other cases, there have been significant losses to the taxpayers due to lack of accountability by the Government.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: There are many illogicalities in the honourable Leader's question, but that will come out with any close examination of what actually has happened in terms of the operations of this Government and the extent to which we have marshalled the resources of the community to the best effect. Clearly we have our own royal commission into some of the matters dealt with in the honourable Leader's question, and that commission will come down with its own reports in due course, and we will pay very close attention to those, as the Parliament will have to pay very close attention to any recommendations that come from the commission. The public interest would require that, where a royal commission anywhere in this country deals with issues of importance that can have cross-State

relevance, any State or Federal Government should look at what the implications might be for them.

In that context, clearly we will be looking at the recommendations of the Western Australian royal commission to see what implications there might be for the process of Government in this State. But that is not in any way to say that we accept that what the Western Australian Parliament and the Parties in that Parliament, in Government at various stages, have been accused of by the royal commission over there are activities that have taken place in this State, because quite clearly they are not activities that have taken place in this State. The performance of this State Government has been exemplary, and there is no possibility—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: If the Leader is wanting to suggest—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: —that the findings of corruption against past Premiers—

Mr Holloway interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Mitchell is out of order.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: —in Western Australia, on both sides of politics, can be reflected in this State, I suggest that, rather than that kind of innuendo or that kind of charge throwing, he actually stands up and lists the types of corruption of which he believes this Government has been guilty. That is what is necessary. Members opposite should not try to smear a finding from one State across to another without any substantiation at all. That is a shameful way to behave. All it does is bring discredit upon the Opposition, not upon the Government, in this State. If members opposite believe they are sitting on facts with which they could sustain such allegations, the public deserves to have those matters brought out into the public arena.

We are still going through the extensive process of our own royal commission, and I would have thought that, if they did want to make these sorts of allegations of corruption, they would do so in that forum. I do not think that should be the finish of it. If they believe they have allegations of corruption against this Government, let them put up or shut up in that regard. As to the recommendations of the Western Australian royal commission—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

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

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: —that deal with the ordinary process of good government and how accountability can be taken to its most effective and maximum limits, how the very process of the right nature of involvement of government in economic development and in economic activities can have relevance to other States, certainly those recommendations will be looked at, as will any other such findings in other parts of Australia.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

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

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: I suggest once again that the Leader, the Deputy Leader and other members opposite go back and check the way this Government has

operated compared with the findings of the royal commission about past Premiers of Western Australia—a Liberal past Premier in Western Australia, about whom they have been very silent in this Question Time. They have not made any reference to a past Liberal Premier in Western Australia or to a past Labor Premier in that State.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

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

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr HERON (Peake): My question is directed to the Minister of Education, Employment and Training. Will the goods and services tax proposed by the Federal Liberal Party apply to textbooks for schools, colleges and universities?

Members interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order.

Mr HAMILTON: I understand that yesterday, Mr Speaker, you gave a ruling about interjections from Opposition members and their calling out, 'Boring! Boring!' Does that ruling still apply today, particularly to the member for Morphett.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Albert Park wishes to run the Chamber, by all means he can nominate to do so. I will make those rulings. I had not heard such interjections today. I do have a slight problem with hearing, but I will listen. A warning was given yesterday and it still stands. All members be warned.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: In my research, I have discovered that the Fightback supplementary papers in respect of the GST do not apply the zero rating on educational services to educational books to be purchased by both students and teachers. In answering the honourable member's questions, it is important that I clearly spell out what this will mean for students, teachers and families in South Australia. The Federal Treasury has estimated that the price effect of Fightback on books will be an increase of 10.45 per cent. However, a couple of very notable people in the publishing industry believe it will be closer to 15 per cent. I should like to quote Mr Peter Donohue, the General Manager of the education group of Jacaranda Wylie Limited, Brisbane. He said that, because of the absence of wholesale sales tax and customs duty on books, the full 15 per cent increase would apply. Further, he said:

It seems odd that, in an age when education and training is so high on the national agenda, the Coalition wants to slap a 15 per cent tax on educational endeavour.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: In relation to the interjection, there is no wholesale sales tax—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

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

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: —and there are no customs duties on educational books. Ms Sue Blackwell, the Executive Director of the Australian Book Publishers Association Limited, Sydney, said:

Books which are traditionally regarded as educational tools should be zero rated the same as education services.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

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

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: Further, she said:

The Coalition's current proposals will unfairly discriminate against students and parents of primary and secondary school students.

TAFE students in this State spend between \$200 and \$300 a year on books, and university students spend \$500 a year. Therefore, the GST will mean a big increase in cost to these students. This is nothing more than a tax on learning, a tax on education and a tax on culture, and I again challenge the Opposition to say whether it supports this tax on educational books, learning and culture.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I think that, from now on, every time I have to caution a member about their behaviour, I will make them stand and I will stop the proceedings. If members want to ask questions and get answers, I suggest that might be a very slow way of doing it. The member for Mitcham.

STATE BANK

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): Does the Treasurer agree with the State Bank's latest forecasts for the State's inflation and unemployment by June 1993 and, if not, what are the Treasury's latest forecasts? The State Bank's quarterly economic report released last week forecasts inflation of 3.4 per cent this year compared with the 2.4 per cent forecast in the budget. It also forecasts that unemployment in South Australia will still be 11.9 per cent on a seasonally adjusted basis at the end of June 1993.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: It is not for me to agree or disagree with the State Bank's forecasts. From reading the financial press and the popular press, I see forecasts almost on a daily basis from various organisations that think they can foretell the future. One thing I have learnt over the years is that all these forecasters leave a lot to be desired. I think there is nothing more embarrassing for these forecasters than for someone such as me, who has a reasonable memory of some of the things they say, to quote them back at them a few years later. I find them very ordinary indeed.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Does the honourable member want me to do his research for him? Members opposite need someone to do their research for them, because they are not going too well so far.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. I have already warned the member for Mitcham.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Members opposite need, at the very least, some new researchers. I am sure that the State Bank puts these forecasts forward as its best and considered view and that everyone else has forecasts that are quite different from those of the State Bank. One of the better quality forecasts I have seen is that most of the analysts have yet to 'factor in', as the jargon goes, the considerable amount of money that has been injected into the economy in the One Nation

statement and in the last Federal budget deficit—it was a very considerable amount of money indeed.

Authoritative analysts and I believe that later this year—and certainly increasingly into 1993—that will give a very significant stimulus to our economy. I hope that is the case, particularly in a period where, for various and good reasons, inflation is still likely to stay low, and the dangers of that fiscal stimulus would not be as high as they would be in a climate of high interest rates and high inflation. The State Bank's predictions and forecasts are merely that—forecasts.

RURAL INCOME

Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart): Will the Minister of Primary Industries advise whether any consideration has been given to alternative directions for farmers and growers with a view to increasing income levels? In recent years there has been a drastic reduction in farm incomes to historically low levels. This has been a matter of increasing concern to all those involved in the farm and growing sectors.

The Hon. T.R. GROOM: One area of immediate concern, as members know, is the citrus industry. In recent meetings with citrus industry leaders I have discussed falls in the international price of citrus juice and the effect it is having on our own citrus industry. Over the course of the next week I will be examining ways in which I can facilitate the best market outcome possible in this matter.

One strong direction that agricultural industries must take is that of value adding. I agree with the national agricultural leaders, particularly the Federal Minister for Primary Industries, Simon Crean, that Australia, while retaining its natural advantages in the production of bulk primary products, must seek to add value to them by local processing.

I point to the revitalisation of the Australian food processing industry and the strong performance of the export wine industry, which is a prime example of value adding, as just two pointers in this direction to which I will be giving strong encouragement and support. Apart from value adding, another direction I want to encourage is the development of niche markets for non-traditional products. This morning I welcomed delegates to the Gourmet—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T.R. GROOM: You should have been there. This morning I welcomed delegates to the Gourmet and Fashion 2002 Seminar at the Stonyfell Winery complex. This seminar was organised by officers from the Department of Primary Industries with sponsorship from ETSA and industry groups and it is one example of the new directions of the department. The seminar, which had about 200 delegates not only from South Australia but from elsewhere in Australia, received presentations on deer, ostriches, aquaculture and alpacas.

Diversification into these industries, understanding new opportunities such as oyster and yabby production and the manufacture of emu leather products will open up new and profitable avenues for growers and small businesses and will have flow-on benefits for the restaurant and fashion industries. Consumers are

becoming more adventurous in their eating habits and the market for new products such as sheep and goat cheeses, venison, kangaroo and yabbies has been stronger. The deer industry is probably one of the fastest growing in the livestock—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T.R. GROOM: If the honourable member is not interested in the primary sector, she ought to say so. I can assure you—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will direct his remarks through the Chair.

The Hon. T.R. GROOM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to assure the honourable member that the situation in rural South Australia is in a serious predicament and this Government will most certainly give whatever assistance is necessary to see it return to its rightful place in the Australian and world markets. In conclusion, the deer industry is particularly important. It is one of the fastest growing in the livestock production area and it has great export potential.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T.R. GROOM: The honourable member should not make fun of the deer industry. Deer velvet from antlers and leather products from hides are sought after internationally and there is a considerable market in this area. Although I do not see income from the industries that I have outlined replacing income from more traditional agricultural products, I do see them offering new and profitable business opportunities for our primary sector.

PRISONER PROTECTION

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): My question is directed to the Minister of Correctional Services. What were the results of investigations into events in which four women at Northfield Women's Prison slashed themselves with razorblades last week? Was the cause related to their being accommodated in unit 2 cell block with hardened criminals sent there for punishment, and what action is he taking to prevent a repetition? Women prisoners who misbehave at Northfield Prison are sent to unit 2 cell block where they are accommodated unsegregated with women who are on remand or who are fine defaulters. The prison's six isolation cells are usually occupied by prisoners needing protection.

I am informed that women on remand and fine defaulters are often intimidated through threats against themselves or their families into smuggling in drugs from specially arranged visitors. My informants are concerned that this intimidatory environment could have caused at least two of the four women to injure themselves so badly that they had to be removed from the prison for treatment.

The Hon. R.J. GREGORY: I thank the honourable member for his question. I am not aware of all the details. I am still waiting for the report and when I get it I will advise the House.

SPEED CAMERAS

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): Will the Minister of Emergency Services tell the House whether he now has an answer to the question asked yesterday by the member for Hayward about a malfunctioning speed camera?

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I am sure that the honourable member is interested in getting an answer to his question, and I am more than happy to provide it through the House. Having had the question raised by the member for Hayward in the House, it was appropriate that I should direct it to the Commissioner. I now have a response from the Commissioner and I am sure that it is appropriate for me to report it to the House. Indeed, I gave that undertaking to the House. From the point of view of the Commissioner, I now provide that additional information. The Commissioner has said:

I provide additional comment in relation to the matters raised by Mr Brindal (the member for Hayward) in Parliament and reported in the *Advertiser* of 21 October 1992. Mr Brindal's comments infer that an infringement notice was issued.

This is in regard to the Telecom van, which was part of the member for Hayward's question. The Commissioner continues:

This is incorrect. No infringement notice has been issued to a Telecom van in the circumstances described.

It is important to note that in relation to the operation of speed cameras there are some important background notes.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much background noise.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The operation of police cameras, as I am sure most members will be aware, commenced in June 1990. In the following year the statistics show that there were 42 fewer deaths caused by road accidents in 1991. That is a very significant statistic. In addition, accident injuries were reduced by more than 10 per cent for the same period. Not only was there a dramatic reduction in the number of deaths, but also of accident injuries. This is a statement from the police in relation to the operation of speed cameras, and it is important that the community should know how the system is operating. The cameras are operated in areas of high accident risk, areas of traffic complaints, areas previously unsafe to police and areas of high traffic volume.

Mr S.G. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The member for Davenport comments that that is not true.

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I suggest that the member for Victoria—

The SPEAKER: I suggest that the Minister direct his remarks through the Chair and then interjections will not have any effect.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think it is a very serious accusation against the Commissioner of Police, who is responsible for the allocation of resources. In fact, the officer in charge, Chief Inspector R.J. O'Brien, would, I am sure, take great exception to the member for Victoria's comment. I think that, as Minister responsible for the police, I have the right to respond and call on the member for Victoria to apologise, because I honestly believe that the police do

their best and make judgments based on the information that has been provided to me about the allocation of cameras. I suggest that the member for Victoria should think twice about accusing the police about the allocation, and I suggest that he makes an apology to—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I will not respond to that interjection, Mr Speaker; I will go on briefly to finish my answer in relation to the police and the criteria they follow in the allocation of speed cameras throughout the South Australian community.

One of the points very clearly made in the statement is that the objective of the program is to reduce the level of excessive speed across the community, to establish a long-term change in driver attitude to speeding and to create a perception in the minds of speeding motorists that they will be detected. That is very significant in terms of what is happening with the reduction not only in deaths and injuries on the roads, but in the general slow-down of motorists, as I have noticed (and members of the community and constituents have indicated to me the same impact). I believe that the police are having a direct impact on deaths and injuries on our roads. From my point of view, as Minister, I am very pleased at the way in which they are applying this policy and I hope they will continue to do so.

MULTIFUNCTION POLIS

Mr SUCH (Fisher): Is the Premier concerned that no South Australian-based senior academic has been appointed to the MFP board, and what assurance can he give that the composition of the board will not jeopardise the proposal to establish an International Management Institute as part of the MFP? It has been reported today that there was wide expectation that the Vice-Chancellor of Flinders University, Professor Lovering, a member of the Technology Development Corporation with proven experience in applied technologies, would be appointed to the board. The appointment instead of Professor Mal Logan, Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, is causing concern for a number of reasons. Professor Logan was a member of the so-called 'purple circle'—the inner sanctum of advisers to Minister Dawkins and the Federal Government on its controversial restructuring of higher education.

I have also been advised today that Monash University will be a competitor for the establishment of the International Management Institute that the South Australian Government has proposed as a key component of the education facilities to be developed within the MFP. Another concern expressed to me is that the MFP Board will take over the Technology Development Corporation and that the lack of South Australian representation on the board may result in the interests of Technology Park and Science Park being overlooked.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: A number of things are implicit in the honourable member's questions. First, the MFP is a national project and at all stages we have been very excited about it because this allows South Australia to be at the core of a very exciting national project. In that context, if one wants a national project approach, one would not want to see only South Australians represented

on the board. One would want some people from interstate to be involved to help ensure we have a national focus at all stages. The point is that that is precisely what we have. We have a process of discussion between the Federal Government and the State Government to achieve as good a board as possible to look at the national interests, and in that process a number of names were canvassed.

I do not intend to reveal what names were canvassed, because that would be quite insulting to individuals whose name might have been put forward and who may not have finally been considered for a variety of factors, and it would not be any good for the present board members, either. I am very concerned that this is the kind of process that the honourable member and others might want to go through; that is, to pick off each particular name on the board and say, 'What about some alternative who could have offered different things from, say, Alex Morokoff, Will Bailey or whoever?' That ends up indicating a desire to erode the thrust of the MFP rather than trying to make this project work. I really think that is the hidden agenda of the Opposition in any event; it will try to do anything to nit-pick.

I noticed yesterday that the Leader issued a rather brief press statement about the MFP Board. Even in that brief report he could not stop himself just nit-picking away; he just had to find various things to talk down something in an attempt to lose the vision and the dream that is involved in this. He ended up having to say, 'No, this project is just not a goer; it really will not work.' The education component of the MFP is a very important part of the project. I can assure the honourable member that he need have no fears about how important that component is to the MFP and what we will see here in South Australia—the very core site of the MFP—and its connection with education. There is no doubt that that will be a very successful part of the project and that South Australia will receive the benefits of that part of this very promising project.

If we are going to go through a process of picking off each member appointed to the board and simply say that because somehow they had some connection with some other part of Australia this will work against South Australian interests then the only way to overcome that is simply to have a completely South Australian board with no interstate people. However, that would not make it a national project. That is not what we want because that is not what the MFP is all about.

PENSIONER BENEFITS

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Can the Minister of Health, Family and Community Services advise what is the present position between the Federal and State Governments regarding extending State concessions, that is, fringe benefits, to all part pensioners? I received correspondence from a West Lakes constituent headed 'fringe benefits for all pensioners' in which he points out that he understood that the recent Federal Government budget indicated that a new pensioner concession card will replace the existing pensioner health benefit card and the pharmaceutical benefit concession card. He goes on to say:

This will be introduced on 1 April 1993 which will enable holders to have access to Commonwealth linked concessions.

The concessions are named in the correspondence. He further states:

In effect this constitutes an extension of such benefits to those part pensioners who presently have no such entitlement. It is also understood that discussions are continuing between Federal and State authorities regarding the granting to all pensioners of State-based concessions, such as rebates on council and water rates, as well as discounts on electricity and gas charges, motor car registration, drivers licences, etc, in order to achieve uniformity in all States.

The Hon. M.J. EVANS: Obviously, the State Government is very pleased with the new arrangements for the enhanced Seniors Card which will allow about 230 000 older South Australians to have access to that card which does grant some State concessions, and also carries through many retail concessions, to which many major retailers—some national—have agreed to contribute.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Heysen is out of order.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Heysen is ignoring the Chair's direction.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: I apologise, Sir.

The SPEAKER: It is an increasing habit. I keep warning members: it will not be tolerated. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. M.J. EVANS: Obviously it would be very desirable if we could extend the benefits of all full State concessions to all pensioners who are eligible for the Seniors Card when the new scheme comes into operation next year. Obviously that involves substantial cost, of the order of \$8 million plus, and the State Government negotiating with the Commonwealth Government about the provision of assistance to enable us to extend those concessions. Other States are in a similar position. Regardless of what happens with those negotiations, obviously the enhanced Seniors Card—and I am certainly pleased to acknowledge the support that the member for Heysen has given to that project—will benefit many older South Australians. The number of people over 60 years of age now represents some 17 per cent of the population. They are very important and significant contributors to our community, and I am sure we will look forward to enhancing their role in life in any way we can.

POLITICAL DONATION

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I wish to place on the public record that, despite receiving a \$20 donation from my local deli to my 1989 election campaign fund, I have continued to purchase my bread and milk from that establishment.

SPEED CAMERAS

Mr BRINDAL (Hayward): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr BRINDAL: In an answer which the Minister of Emergency Services gave the member for Spence today in connection with a speed expiation notice, the Minister said that no expiation notice was issued and that certainly one was not issued in the name of Telecom. I contend that that is wrong and therefore I have been misrepresented in this matter. I have given—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: —to the Minister a copy of the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! A personal explanation is obviously very significant to the honourable member making it, and it should be to the Parliament. I ask members to listen in silence. The honourable member is obviously concerned about the effects of comments made about him, and he has a right to make a personal explanation in silence. The member for Hayward.

Mr BRINDAL: The Minister, I believe in his answer—and I hope unknowingly—misrepresented me and implied that I misrepresented a situation to the House by saying that there was no expiation notice and that a notice that did not exist was certainly not issued in the name of Telecom Australia. I have given the Minister a copy of expiation notice No. U167736/9 issued in the name of Telecom Australia. That was the matter which I raised in this House yesterday. That is the matter about which I spoke to this House, and I ask the Minister to withdraw and apologise for the slur which he made upon me.

 GRIEVANCE DEBATE

The SPEAKER: The question before the Chair is that the House note grievances.

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): Yesterday, I was delighted when the Minister of Primary Industries announced that the construction of the Department of Agriculture administration building would be reassessed. I felt that the Parliament had somehow grown in stature, because a Minister had said to this Parliament, 'We will have another look at the administration centre at the Waite.' Last night, I communicated to the residents of Netherby that the Minister was going to re-think whether construction of an administration centre was appropriate given the costs involved and, more importantly as far as the Minister is concerned, the new arrangements under his portfolios.

Two hours ago, I received a telephone call from a person who is about to be one of my constituents and who said, 'Stephen, they have just chainsawed the trees.' I find myself in a very difficult situation: I am angry and I am upset, and I believe that I have been misled. As the Minister would be well aware, we had around-the-clock

surveillance on those trees because we believed there was a fight that had to be won, and we were going to do all in our power to ensure that right prevailed at the end of the day. When I communicated to my residents last night that the Minister had said that he would reassess the project and obtain a report by the end of October, I relaxed; the residents relaxed, and today the trees came down.

In his statement to the House, the Minister said, 'Preparation activities will continue on that site.' He did not say that the 300 year-old-trees had come down and he did not say that the historic cottage would be demolished, but they have all gone. That is what has happened in this place. I do not think that the new Minister has had enough time to understand what his bureaucrats are doing. I do not believe that the Minister ordered the trees to come down, because he would have told us in Parliament yesterday. But what I do believe—and it is typical of this Parliament—is that there are some bureaucrats and people (and I would like to name Dr Andrew Scott as leading the band) who believe that they can take decisions on behalf of Government and destroy gum trees, buildings and areas without fear that any action will be taken against them.

Mr S.G. Evans: It certainly can't be in the Minister's street, can it?

Mr S.J. BAKER: It certainly couldn't happen in the Minister's street, as the member for Davenport said. Yesterday, I felt that justice would actually be done—

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: —that we would see some sense prevail, and today (drawing the parallel highlighted by the member for Coles) I feel totally betrayed. I am sure that, if I had said to my residents, 'I want you to keep that around-the-clock surveillance on those trees and, if they come, chain yourself to them; do not let those trees come down until some sanity prevails,' those trees would be there today. We know that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of this Parliament said that, if the administration centre did not proceed, it was possible to save those trees; it was possible to realign the proposed buildings for the plant sciences laboratories; and it was possible to meet the demands of the development of the Waite at the same time as meeting some of the concerns of the residents. What do we have here? We have a complete betrayal of trust, as far as I am concerned. I believe that the individuals must be brought to account, and I expect the Minister to do that.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES (Minister of Environment and Land Management): I raise an important issue in my electorate, that is, the proposal, which has been supported by the member for Hayward, that an O-Bahn track be constructed on the existing Glenelg tram line. I wish to respond to the letter from the Liberal candidate in which he supports the construction of an O-Bahn track along the Glenelg tram line.

I understand that the Liberal candidate recently circulated a letter in which he claims that, under the Liberals' previous proposal to build an O-Bahn track along the tramline, 'there was never any intention to acquire housing or close roads along the tram route'. However, I would like to bring to the attention of the

House and the community that the following information was provided by transport experts in response to the 1989 proposal by the Liberal Party for the development of an O-Bahn track along the tram route. I will give the House some statistical information so that people can understand what this means; it cannot in any way support what the Liberal candidate has claimed, that is, that there was no intention to acquire housing, property or roads.

The average width of the tramway reserve is 20 metres but, with the minimum width required to add an O-Bahn system, it is 27 metres, and that is made up as follows. The tramway, which is a heritage item and which cannot be removed, requires a minimum width of 7 metres. The O-Bahn tracks on either side of the tramline would each require 4 metres. A minimum of 6 metres would be required on the outer side of each O-Bahn track for signals, drainage, vehicle access in case of accident or emergency and noise control barriers. The total is therefore 27 metres, yet the candidate claims that there would be no need to acquire any property to fit in an O-Bahn along the tramline route. Obviously, at a minimum, 27 metres would be required and, at some spots along the tramline in the electorate of Unley, an additional area would be required.

So, it will be seen that what the Liberal candidate says in his letter is not correct. The figures simply do not add up. At the time of the 1989 election, the Opposition's transport spokesperson admitted that the proposed O-Bahn would involve land acquisition. The Liberal candidate is the member for Hayward (a southern suburbs electorate). Is he promoting the interests of his electorate at the expense of the residents of Unley? Unley residents will not be able to use the O-Bahn, because the Liberals propose an express service through Unley, so it would not stop. It would have its origin at either Victoria Square or some other place in the city and proceed to its destination, which might be the Tonsley interchange or parts further south. That would be fine if people want to do that.

However, there are alternatives to the construction of a southern O-Bahn along the tramline. In fact, one of the Government's options involves a fast rail service to the Tonsley interchange with a connection for southern residents. The residents of Unley and I do not for one moment deny the need for a high-speed transport system for southern residents, but there is a way to do it, and this is not the way.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The member for Hayward interjects; he constantly praises the proposal and says that it will beautify the tramline. I assure him that the reaction I have had from my constituents to his Party's proposal, which he supports, is quite the opposite: they cannot see that any benefit will flow. Of course, the other matter is that it is a heritage listed item.

The Liberal candidate sets out in his letter the positive points of the construction of an O-Bahn track along that tram route. Why in his letter did he not say 'No' to an O-Bahn along the tramline? This issue is of concern to the residents of Unley. It impacts significantly not only on the tram route or the convenience and amenity for those residents who live within 150 to 200 metres of the tramline as it travels through the electorate but also on the rest of the district, because Unley has a particular

history. The Unley heritage group has quite clearly set out that the developments that occur must fit in with the existing character and amenity and the type of city that has grown from the 1860s. We really would not see an O-Bahn fitting into the character and amenity of the City of Unley if it were constructed along the tramline route. So, I say again quite strongly that we cannot accommodate an O-Bahn track along the tramline, and I am totally opposed to it.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I refer to speed cameras and a situation that is occurring with increasing regularity whereby the speed of vehicles is being clocked incorrectly. Last week, I was informed by a 70-year-old constituent of mine, whose 18-year-old car was clocked at 118 km/h during peak hour traffic on Diagonal Road, Somerton Park, that 'we would have been passing everything in sight if we had been travelling at that speed'. The lady in question was being driven by her 39-year-old daughter at that time. They were travelling slowly in the left lane, because they were trying to locate a particular street. The only good news is that the police have admitted their error and have agreed to withdraw the \$210 expiation fee.

Mr Speaker, you will recall that yesterday the member for Hayward identified another occurrence shortly after the one that I highlighted. He said that at 4.41 p.m., 15 minutes after my constituent had been caught, another person, who was employed by Telecom Australia, was supposedly caught for speeding at 118 km/h. That person's expiation notice is number U467736-9 and my constituent's expiation notice is number U467732-4. The member for Hayward backed my call for an immediate testing of speed cameras and asked how many motorists have recently been wrongly reported for speed offences detected by speed cameras.

Today, the Minister refuted what the member for Hayward had said. He tried to tell this House that no such expiation notice was issued—and I have a copy of that notice in front of me. The poor old Minister must be having a slight case of dizzy spells. He needs to get his facts in order. This whole situation should be looked at, and perhaps the whole ministerial position needs to be re-examined as well.

To top things off, I have now been contacted by another of my constituents who was picked up on the Main North Road about four days after these two occurrences on 20 September 1992, this time travelling not at 118 km/h but at 72 km/h, involving an \$84, not a \$210, expiation fee.

However, my constituent categorically refutes the accusation that she was speeding. She claims that as a result of an accident she has a slightly paralysed right leg and, ever since that accident occurred several years ago, she has had to watch the speedo all the time. She said, 'I definitely was not exceeding 60 km/h. In my opinion I was doing 59 km/h.' Whether it is 59 or 60 km/h is somewhat irrelevant, but she had the speed camera clock her at 72 km/h. She said to me, 'It's not fair—I wasn't speeding.'

One can understand that the case involving 118 km/h was a classic error, as bad as a bus travelling at 150 km/h, but, when it gets to 72 km/h, just over the limit in real terms, then it really hurts because people know that

they were not exceeding the speed limit. This example simply reinforces my call for an immediate testing of speed cameras being used on South Australian roads.

I ask the Minister to take up my Virginia constituent's case. I will provide the Minister with her name, address and the expiation notice details. Things have got out of hand in this State. Our citizens should not have to be appealing to the courts all the time to get out of offences that they did not commit.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Peake.

Mr HERON (Peake): About four weeks ago I was invited to the Mount Pleasant Golf Club by the then Minister of Recreation and Sport, the member for Unley, to attend on his behalf the opening of the extended 18-hole course. The member for Bragg was also invited to the opening where he officially conducted the launch. The member for Bragg and I were invited to have a game of golf with members of the Mount Pleasant Golf Club and we had an enjoyable day.

Mr S.G. Evans: A pleasant day!

Mr HERON: A pleasant day. True, it was a bit wet underfoot and members will recall that about four weeks ago we had torrential rain. I congratulate the club on providing the extra nine holes to make a lovely course. After the game, invited by the committee to have a glass of lemonade, I was lucky enough to be asked to return to the course at any stage for a game of golf. I am not a good golfer and have a handicap of about 24.

Mr Holloway interjecting:

Mr HERON: The member for Bragg did defeat me on that occasion. As I am not a good golfer, I did accept the invitation to return one day and have a game. I say that because it is nearly impossible to get a game of golf in Adelaide on a public course, especially on a weekend. We do have some good and well serviced clubs here, with about nine public courses in Adelaide. I believe the major public course is at North Adelaide, which has a north and a south course. A member of the public wanting a game on either the north or south course at North Adelaide on the weekend can wait 2½ or three hours on a waiting list before getting onto the course. There is a lack of public courses in Adelaide. There are good private courses here, but they also have waiting lists and it costs quite a bit to be a member of courses such as Royal Adelaide, Kooyonga, Grange and, say, Glenelg. A person can wait up to 10 years to join a private golf club.

My beef is that if a young man or woman wants to take up golf to which public course can they go to have a hit to see if golf is the sport on which they want to concentrate in future? I believe that we need another two or three golf courses in the metropolitan area or on just the outskirts. Members will appreciate that a vast amount of land is required to establish an 18-hole golf course.

For any worker, youngster or retired person who wants to have a leisurely game of golf, it is hard to ask a friend for a game because the waiting time is so great. I will certainly be speaking to the new Minister of Recreation and Sport to see whether he has any intention to increase the number of public golf courses in Adelaide. I heard the former Minister of Recreation and Sport, the member for Unley, say in the House that there could be a new course and I hope it is a public course out near the new velodrome. That might alleviate part of the problem. I

will speak to the Minister and see whether we can cater for working class people, youngsters and pensioners who seek a leisurely game of golf in Adelaide.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Davenport.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I want to pick up the point raised by the member who has just spoken about golf courses. The honourable member has an excellent argument as there is a need for more public golf courses. There is the Craighburn property in the Adelaide Hills that would cater for at least five golf courses. It is excellent land and a venue within walking distance of the train line. As long as the Government does not further decrease public transport services to that area, golfers would be able to catch a train and the Government could, if it wished, provide a concession for people to play golf. The Government could acquire this beautiful property in the Hills and build at least two or three, if not more, golf courses, and thus preserve the land as open space as the community wants it. Over 5 000 people have signed a petition wanting Craighburn saved from housing development and subdivision. I hope that the honourable member will talk to the Minister about that aspect.

Originally I intended to talk about disabled people. When the Minister of Emergency Services was reading a report that was supposed to have come from the Commissioner of Police he said that interjections the member for Victoria and I made at the time were an insult to the Commissioner of Police. At that time the Minister said that the police were putting the cameras in the most dangerous situations. I said that was not true, and it is not, as far as I am concerned. Later, the Minister said that the Commissioner had stated that excessive speed was the objective of the police in putting the cameras in particular spots.

That, in part, is a good and true argument, but the two areas do not match up. For example, speed cameras cannot be used on a roundabout at Blackwood where many accidents occur. They have not used speed cameras on Shepherds Hill Road where there is a curve in the road adjacent to Viaduct Road and where three people have been killed in the past two years. I am not sure whether a fourth person died because I did not follow that through. However, a fourth person was critically injured. There is a spot where they do not put the cameras.

In the Stirling area, at the junction of Ayers Hill Road and Milan Terrace and Avenue Road, a bad junction, cameras are not used. However, farther up Ayers Hill Road on Waverley Ridge the police are to be found sitting behind a bush on a straight stretch of road where there are seldom any accidents, particularly not serious ones; there is a speed camera and it is catching speeding motorists. The police actually stopped me a couple of years ago, had a yarn to me and gave me a bit of paper. But that is not a dangerous spot; the dangerous spot is farther down the hill. The same applies to the Devil's Elbow. That is a dangerous spot, but they cannot use speed cameras there.

Therefore, do not let anybody in future stand up in this House and say that the police use the cameras at the most dangerous spots. Where have they put the speed camera on Grand Junction Road? It is at the bottom of the dip

after coming over a bridge at a point where a motorist might drift over the limit a bit, but there is no real danger.

As I have said before in this House, there are some roads in the metropolitan area—Anzac Highway, Port Road, parts of South Road, Shepherds Hill Road and parts of Glen Osmond Road—where there could be a speed limit of 70km/h without creating any great danger. We all know that in the main the cameras are being used as revenue raisers, but at the same time causing people to reduce speed to bring them down to safe limits. I am not arguing against that. On another occasion I did use this argument, and I will repeat it, in relation to the cameras. I believe that radar is the best form of detection in fairness to all, because the police stop the motorists in question, tell them that they have offended, and they get their notice. If there is anything wrong with the system, people are able to talk about it there and then and find out whether they have made a mistake. However, the cameras can book a person four times in the same day and that person has no knowledge of it. I believe that one woman was booked four times in one weekend on the Mount Barker Road. As I said, the cameras are being used only for revenue raising.

One of my constituents—the police corrected this—believed that he was not speeding, so he took up the challenge. The member for Mitchell may smile, but this person claimed that he was not speeding. Therefore, he wrote and asked whether there was another vehicle in the photograph at the same time, and the police wrote back and said that they had made an error because two cars were travelling side by side and they had sent the bill to one.

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

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): So often when we read in our newspapers or see on television articles about young people they are negative. Our media love to focus on aspects such as unemployment, criminal behaviour, suicide, drug-taking, and so on, whenever they deal with young people. However, the vast majority of our young people are getting on with their lives and achieving standards and personal goals which put many previous generations to shame.

In the short time available to me, I should like to record some examples. First, I should like to read a letter I received from the vice-captain of the Australian Junior Volleyball Team within my electorate. She writes:

I am writing to you saying thanks for your contribution to help me to go to Kuala Lumpur with the Australian Junior Volleyball Team. I thought I'd write a brief note on how we did at the Asian Junior Volleyball Championships.

We had Malaysia and Hong Kong in our first pool play. We won against both of them to put us through to the top eight teams in the Asian continent.

In our second pool we had India, Korea and Malaysia. Our win over Malaysia carried through so we only had to defeat either India or Korea to get into the top four teams. We defeated India quite convincingly. This made us extremely happy as we knew we had created history as no other Australian junior team had ever come any better than fifth.

The top three teams in the Asian continent were usually Japan, China and Korea. Unfortunately, Japan did not make it and the top four teams were China, Korea, Chinese Taipei and us, Australia.

We tried our hardest but we just couldn't match up to these three teams as they all have full-time programs fully paid for by

their Government and sponsors. We finished fourth which was an extremely good finish as we'd only trained for two weeks in total as a group and four days before the actual tournament in Kuala Lumpur as a team.

China defeated Korea in the final which was amazing to watch. I'm sure that if we had a full-time program we probably could have gone that one position better but we're all very happy with what we achieved. While we were in Malaysia we were informed that our senior women's program is to start in Perth in January. I'm hopeful to get into this program.

Once again thank you for your contribution to my very successful trip to Kuala Lumpur. It was a lot of fun and a worthwhile experience.

I should like publicly to congratulate the Junior Volleyball Team on its success and achievements at those championships.

The second example concerns two schools within my electorate which have recently had visits by students from Japan. I refer to Daws Road High School and Marion High School. The Japanese students who visited stayed with the families of students of those schools. I had the great pleasure during their visit to meet those students and to hear of their experiences in Japan. There is no doubt that these exchange visits with schools lead to a much greater understanding between our countries. They certainly make a great contribution to the many students in our schools who are now studying Asian languages, particularly Japanese.

I am sure that, as a result of these visits and reciprocal visits of Australian students to Japan, the quality of our language studies in our secondary schools will greatly improve, and that in turn should make a great contribution to our trade relations and economy in the future. The visit to Marion High School was assisted by the Marion council, which is establishing sister city relations with the region from which the Japanese students came. It was a great pleasure to see how well the students at those schools interacted with their Japanese visitors.

The third instance I should like to relate took place last Friday when I had the pleasure of representing the Premier at the presentation of the Australian Young Achiever Awards at the Mitsubishi canteen. The 19 secondary students who received awards presented the details of the businesses they had set up under this program during the school year. I was greatly impressed by the students involved in that program. It required a great deal of courage to stand up in front of the thousand or so people who were there and explain what they had achieved during the year. They were articulate and very impressive in what they had achieved during the year. Those three examples that I have given—

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

BRIGHTON BEACH

Mr McKEE (Gilles): I move:

That By-law No. 1 of the Corporation of Brighton relating to regulating bathing and controlling foreshore, made on 4 June and laid on the table of this House on 6 August, be disallowed.

I would like to make some remarks in relation to the committee's findings concerning this matter. The

Legislative Review Committee considered this matter earlier today and decided to reject the City of Brighton's report in relation to these by-laws, particularly in relation to the total banning of horses from a section of Brighton beach. The committee received considerable evidence in the form of correspondence from residents in the immediate area, where the horses are currently allowed. The vast majority of this correspondence came from long-term residents of the area who supported the continued use of the foreshore by the horses. Most of the correspondents acknowledged that there is a need to restrict the times of access for horses on the beach, as is the current practice. However, the majority did support allowing horses to continue to use the foreshore. The committee also received evidence from the South Australian branch of the Australian Trainers' Association, which strongly supported continued access for horses on this small section of Brighton beach.

All members would be aware of the importance of the racing industry in South Australia, in both economic and recreational terms. It was also put to the committee that it is essential for the welfare of racehorses in certain circumstances to be put through seawater therapy. This is an age old practice and evidence was received which explained the therapeutic value of allowing horses to use the foreshore. The trainers' association also stated that to deny trainers and their horses access to Brighton beach would have a deleterious effect on an industry which contributes enormously in terms of economic activity and employment to our State. Given this evidence and the written submissions from residents in the area—the majority of whom asked that horses be allowed to continue to use the beach—the committee decided to disallow this by-law.

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

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Becker:

That the third report of the committee (Australian Formula One Grand Prix Board) be noted.

(Continued from 7 October. Page 680.)

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier): One of the problems with the media's attention to any report from standing committees is that when a report is tabled by any of the four standing committees it is not exactly what the general public expected to see or read about as a result of what one can only describe as 'media beat up and hype'. I think this report is a classic example of that. People could be forgiven for expecting from this report the basis of a best seller, because we had weekly in our evening news each of the four television channels trying to outdo the others in relation to all the skulduggery and corruption that was supposed to be rife within the Grand Prix Board.

Like many reports, what one reads about eventually is not exactly what happened in the committee. I am sure that you, Sir, as a member of the committee at that time, would privately share some of the views that I am expressing now. We have two newcomers on the

Economic and Finance Committee: my very good friend the member for Stuart, and the member for Mitchell. I sincerely hope that under the new regime they will not share the disappointment that I have experienced over the past two or three months.

Having said that, I would like to go through some aspects of the report. So that I do not suffer any reprisals, I want to make it perfectly clear that my criticism is directed at the media in the way that it interprets and not at the invaluable work that the committee does in carrying out its duties on behalf of the Parliament in investigating the financial implications of any statutory authorities or any organisation that is ultimately answerable to this Parliament.

I would like to review some of the history of the Grand Prix. I must publicly confess that I have been to only one Grand Prix event. Unlike some of my colleagues in this place who are affectionately known as 'petrol heads', I detest the idea not so much of the amount of money that one pays but of paying to see motor cars zoom around a track, no matter how skilfully it is done. One needs the mind of a computer and the eyes of a bionic man to be able to identify the vehicles as they go by.

In 1989 I came to the conclusion that, quite possibly, this would be the last Grand Prix event that I could possibly attend as a Minister in a Labor Government. If you recall, Sir, we were what is colloquially known as 'on the nose' for that event. So, I purchased my ticket. I even purchased a new blazer and a very good tie that blended well with the jacket. I brushed up my shoes and made sure I was presentable. I even urged my wife to go out and buy a new outfit, and I must say that she looked very fetching in that outfit. Well, Sir, you know the story. At about 20 minutes prior to the start of the main event, the heavens opened. My blazer was ruined, as was my wife's hat (in fact, we sent it down to the op shop on the following Monday). It was a total disaster, not only for my wife and I but also for the organisers. But that is the way it goes.

As you know, Sir, after the election I resigned—voluntarily, I might say—from the ministry and joined my very good friends here on the back bench. Since then I have been a free spirit, able to criticise the Government—very rarely, because it very rarely needs criticism—and I have continued to be a thorn in the flesh of members opposite, which they deserve 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. However, I digress. I must congratulate the Economic and Finance Committee for one thing, that is, the general thrust of the recommendations that it has put to this Parliament. Its first recommendation sums it up very adequately in that there must be sound management and accountability practices in regard to the Grand Prix Board. The fact is that, technically, on paper, the Grand Prix event does not run at a profit, although the more discerning members of our community, of which I put you well and truly at the top of the list, Sir, realise that an event such as the Grand Prix creates benefits right throughout the State. The flow-on is just incredible.

It is impossible to put down on paper exactly where we would be within the tourism industry, the hospitality industry or whatever if we did not have a Grand Prix, but there are some small-minded people who are also very

quick to raise the white flag on any form of development in this State, or receive the white feather. We have seen them not only in this instance but many times over the past 10 years, since the people of South Australia have been fortunate enough to have a Labor Government, all too willing to carp, whinge and knock. Members have heard me say this before, and I am sure that when you are on your feet, Sir, you will be saying something very similar.

Taxpayers' money is used to stage the event. This money could be loosely classed as some form of subsidy. There have to be sound management practices by the board. With respect to this area of the report, the committee has been spot on. Another area which I think deserves mention, and for which I congratulate the committee in bringing it to our attention, is that when the board is undertaking any form of joint venture, given the risk involved, there should be a certain amount of prudence so that everything is very clear, not only to the committee but also to Parliament, the Government and the people of South Australia. In other words, it should be seen to be doing the right thing. Therefore, I fully support the recommendation that the board reviews its policy in that direction.

The old hoary chestnut of salaries was raised by some members of the community. At that time I was not party to what was being discussed in the committee—I only saw what was happening on the television of a night-time, and you, Sir, as a committee member consistently refused to tell me what was going on, for which I respect you. No-one seemed to want to publish details in respect of where the major proportion of Dr Mal Hemmerling's salary came from—

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

Mr BRINDAL (Hayward): As a member of the Economic and Finance Committee, I took part in the latter stages of the preparation of this report.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It improved from then on, Mark.

Mr BRINDAL: I note that the member for Napier says it improved from then on. I hope he continues to believe that after I have finished this contribution. I realise that you, Sir, were on that committee, and that the membership of that committee has changed somewhat from the date of the report. I would remind all members of this House that, when I was elected to the committee, much of the evidence for the Grand Prix Board report had been collected, so in many ways I was guided by the deliberations of those who had heard all the evidence. Therefore, I commend those members of the committee who were responsible for this report, because I do not believe in commending myself. I think they did a good and sterling effort, considering many of the facts available and the amount of work which the Economic and Finance Committee has completed in the relatively short period of its existence.

In that respect, we must acknowledge publicly that the guiding light in the initial stages of the committee, and the author of many of these early reports, was the Minister of Primary Industries, the member for Hartley. Therefore, I commend the report in so far as it goes, but

members will have noticed that my support is somewhat qualified. That leads me to raise in the context of this debate the way in which the Economic and Finance Committee operates. I would hope that it, and all committees of this Parliament, act on an ongoing basis. In other words, if we bring down a report, that report is our best effort at that time but, if there is any need to reopen, re-examine or in any way look anew at the matters raised in the report, we should do so.

In that context, I note that the Ombudsman operates by this procedure. He will accept a complaint, look at the complaint but not necessarily act upon it. However, when he receives a second complaint, he always refers back. He argues that, when a complaint is lodged, that opens a file and in fact the file never closes. In that context, I would hope that the Economic and Finance Committee would work in the same way. I particularly note that the new Presiding Officer is present, and I hope he will concur with my sentiments. There are aspects of the report with which I am not now happy.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Why?

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Napier asks, 'Why?' He had better attend the public hearings of the Economic and Finance Committee if we decide to take up these matters. Basically, the Economic and Finance Committee gave its best efforts, but in many instances it had to rely on figures given to it by witnesses who were being examined, and the committee had no choice. Since the report has been presented, other facts have been given to members of the committee, and there is a suggestion that some of the figures on which the committee acted in good faith may well not be as accurate as they were believed to be when they were first presented.

Other matters have been brought to my attention which I believe could well have merited the attention of the committee. I do not necessarily condemn the committee for not looking at those matters at that time, but I believe that the matters that have been raised with several members of the committee are serious enough to warrant a revisitation of the Grand Prix report in the future.

In that context, I have recently discovered, as an example, that ours is the only Grand Prix office in the world which operates for 12 months of the year. Even perhaps the most famous Grand Prix in the world, the Monaco Grand Prix, has an office which for four months of the year has two clerical staff, and all the executive and senior officers are free to contract their expertise elsewhere in the world. If South Australia is unique in that its Grand Prix is the only one that has a 12-month operation, one is led to question the economic wisdom of that. I believe that some question is associated with the costs presented to the committee, and I think that needs to be re-examined, as other matters also need re-examination.

I commend the committee for its work; I think it did an excellent job within the resources available. Again, I say to the House that I hope the Economic and Finance Committee and all standing committees of the Parliament will be vigilant watchdogs, and that means not that we should worry at a bone until we are satisfied and then walk away and bury it but that we should worry at a bone and we keep worrying at that bone until we are sure that it has been stripped of all its meat. I for one do not believe that all the meat is stripped off this bone.

To the member for Napier, who talks about people carping and criticising—virtually the tall poppy syndrome—I say that the Grand Prix is essential to South Australia. It is an important event, one which I would rank with other equally important events such as the Festival of Arts. For that reason, every member of the Economic and Finance Committee and I—and I think every member of this House—believe that we must be ever vigilant to see that all the processes, all the procedures and everything that is done is done absolutely correctly. If we wittingly or unwittingly allow any malpractice to creep in, that malpractice will feed upon itself and eventually there will be such a level of putrefaction and decay that the whole structure will collapse.

I argue in this place that the Economic and Finance Committee and such committees, in undertaking a watchdog role on boards such as the Grand Prix Board, are not undermining those boards: rather they are seeking to strengthen them. One thing is important to this State, and it is not the Grand Prix, any member of the Grand Prix or any member of the executive staff: it is the event. The job of the Economic and Finance Committee and this Parliament is to safeguard the event and to safeguard the public purse. In that context, I commend to the House the efforts of the Economic and Finance Committee.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): The motion before the House is an interesting one, and some of the remarks might have been better made in another forum. There is no doubt that Adelaide is not Monaco. It may well be that the Monaco Grand Prix operates with the doors of the office open for an hour for two, six or 12 months, but Monaco has a number of other features associated with it which, in terms of international tourism, make it a place that sees many more bodies than does Adelaide. The reality is that the Grand Prix in South Australia has been important since 1985 not only in shaping the way in which our State has handled the tourism question or its own future development, in many ways, but in achieving a great measure of employment and prosperity that would not have been achieved had that event not been held here.

Our making remarks such as 'We haven't stripped the bone totally yet' is not the way we ought to be proceeding. I take the view that, if there is any guilt—and the implication in some of those remarks is that there is guilt—at the appropriate time it will be dealt with. I do not believe that any prisoner should be taken into court and told that they are guilty until proven innocent. Some of the remarks made about this issue were not intended by the mover of the motion. It seems to me that one objective of the committee system of this Parliament is to chase the ineffective, the irrelevant, the incompetent and, if necessary, the corrupt. We start out not by assuming guilt but by a proper referencing procedure and by a thorough investigation, and we come down with a report and findings.

Indeed, all this happened before I was appointed to the committee by this Parliament. The inquiry into the Grand Prix Board pre-dated my tenure as the Presiding Member. I have looked at the report and the minutes of evidence associated with it, and I believe we need to follow up a number of questions. However, our talking about stripping bones and so on is not a useful exercise. I do

not believe it is the way that we ought to go. I do not believe that that road has much merit. I make quite clear—and indeed I have made clear in debates on this committee in this House—that I am committed to the fullest of public exposure where that is appropriate and in the direction of the committee.

I have also made clear that we will pursue the items that are referred to us by our own internal referencing system, by members of the public and, lastly but most importantly, by this House. The one point that needs to be made clear is that we will do that properly, we will protect those people who need our protection, and we will pursue those who should be pursued. Where the Grand Prix Board is concerned, a very important report has come down. It raises some questions which merit further consideration, and those matters will be considered by the committee in due course. Again, I make the comment that waving a truncheon where it is not appropriate to do that is less than helpful.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): This is the first time that we have had a serious debate on and consideration of a report from the Economic and Finance Committee, which previously was the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. The point I am making is that previously, when the Public Accounts Committee brought down reports, we did not debate them in the House. I have listened with interest to the contributions of other members, and I thank them for their observations. I believe we have started a worthwhile forum, and I would hate to see that practice cease. It should provide an opportunity for members of the committee or of this House as observers to pass judgment on the reports of the Economic and Finance Committee. After all, we are talking about accountability, and the ultimate accountability is to be prepared to allow a report be debated by one's colleagues.

In 15 days we will have the opportunity to see Nigel Mansel, I hope, create a world record for the largest number of wins in a Formula 1 Grand Prix race. We can consider ourselves fortunate because, in 1983 when it appeared that a Formula 1 Grand Prix event would be held in Australia, the Rocks in Sydney was the nominated location. From a television and population point of view, it would have made a fantastic race. It would have been on a par with the race in Monte Carlo or even better. Whilst I have not attended the Monte Carlo event, from what I have seen on television I think it is boring. That is why I believe that Kym Bonython and Bob Lott, the Deputy Chairman of the Jubilee Committee, made the right decision when they asked Premier Bannon to go to London to negotiate for Adelaide to be the chosen city for the Formula 1 Grand Prix. From this State's point of view, it was well worth obtaining, because it has brought benefits to the State.

The Economic and Finance Committee now has the right to examine the financial viability of this event, and the Grand Prix Board should not fear that type of investigation. The committee has the right to follow up this report in about 12 months, and no doubt it will want to look at one or two other issues of concern. The Adelaide event is over four days compared with three days in most other cities. It is a success, and I believe it will be financially viable if we ask that it be financially

viable—and it can be. It is no good our saying that it will never show a profit. I believe it can and that we can insist that it show a profit without detracting from the event.

It brings many tens of thousands of people to Adelaide from interstate and overseas. Without the support of people from New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, we would not see record attendances of about 320 000 people over that four day period. So, we can thank our fellow Australians for supporting this event, which is televised around the world. It has assisted in the establishment of the name 'Adelaide', and there is no doubt that the major sponsor, Fosters, considers that it is probably one of its best investments, because it has helped sales internationally. I thank all members for their contribution, and the committee will no doubt appreciate the comments that have been made. I commend the motion to the House.

Motion carried.

TRANSCRIPT FEES

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Gunn:

That the regulations under the District Court Act 1991 relating to court and transcript fees made on 2 July and laid on the table of this House on 6 August 1992 be disallowed.

(Continued from 7 October. Page 674.)

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I believe that the House agreed to the adjournment of the debate because it saw some merit in the contention of the member for Eyre that the increase in transcript costs would be a further burden upon people who seek to use the criminal justice system in South Australia. Indeed, when this matter was examined by the Attorney-General and his committee, they came to this inescapable conclusion. However, it is with great reluctance that I oppose the proposition. When we examine the reasons why one must oppose it, we come to the logical conclusion that it must be defeated. Transcript fees in South Australia will rise to \$4 a page if this proposition is defeated, and that is reasonable when compared with fees in other jurisdictions. In the Commonwealth jurisdiction—the Family Court, the Federal Court and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal—litigants have to pay a basic charge of \$6.50 a page plus a loading of \$2 a page if they want a same day transcript.

Mr S.G. Evans: It is still scandalous.

Mr FERGUSON: The member for Davenport says it is still scandalous but, when he compares the cost of production in South Australia with the cost of production in other States, he will see that we have been able to produce transcript in this State at a far better rate than has any other State. In every other jurisdiction, charges are much higher than the \$4 a page charge that will eventually apply in South Australia.

The other inescapable fact is that these charges were part and parcel of the State budget. In New South Wales, the rate is \$6.50 a page if the matter to be transcribed is less than three months old and \$7.50 a page if the matter is more than three months old. In Victoria, the rate is \$5.40 a page. Transcript charges in South Australia have been maintained at reasonable levels because the Court Services Department has continually made productivity

improvements with the implementation of new technology and improved work practices.

I wish to deal with the suggestion that transcript charges in South Australia represent a barrier to ordinary citizens who seek justice. The vast majority of cases are heard in the Magistrates Court, and in a large proportion of those cases evidence is recorded in one form or another but is transcribed only in the event of one party lodging an appeal. The exceptions to this are part-heard lengthy or complex matters and committal procedures. The package of legislation that was proclaimed on 6 July this year will lead to many cases that were previously heard in the District Court being heard in the Magistrates Court, thereby reducing court costs for many litigants. In the higher jurisdiction, matters that result in a trial are generally reported by the Court Reporting Division of the Court Services Department and, in approximately 90 to 95 per cent of such cases, a running transcript is provided.

This service enables the judge and counsel to review the evidence as the case proceeds and provides a valuable aid to counsel during cross examination of witnesses. The member for Eyre has suggested that the provision of tape recordings would enable litigants to review proceedings at the end of each day. That is true, but the usefulness of such recordings would be very limited. In fact, the current trend is for the transcribed evidence to also be captured electronically and fed into a computer to provide search and retrieval facilities.

I should say that such facilities ought to be available to Parliamentarians in South Australia, and I certainly hope that in future technology will eventually go in that direction. Such facilities reduce the amount of time spent by counsel reviewing evidence and ultimately reduces costs to litigants.

In the current economic climate, it is important that those who use court facilities provided by Government contribute to the cost of providing them. When a litigant is required to pay a substantial fee to his lawyers for their services, it is not unreasonable that he should make a significant payment for the use of the facilities which the Government provides for the resolution of the case. If a more 'user pays' rationale is to be adopted it is necessary, for the sake of integrity, for there to be a direct relationship between the particular fee levied and the actual service involved. Such a relationship has been applied to the fixing of transcript charges.

The current cost of producing transcript is approximately \$9 per page. On 1 January 1991 transcript charges were increased from \$2 per page to \$3 per page. The \$3 a page at that time was based upon the cost of \$9 per page whereby each party and the court paid an equal share. However, it was argued at that time that the court should not have to bear one-third of the cost, especially in civil matters, where litigants have been unable to resolve their dispute and have brought the matter to court for resolution. We were of the opinion that those people who are better able to pay should pay more. However, that is a matter that would be difficult to resolve.

It followed, therefore, that if this cost was to be fully shared between the litigants the price of transcript should be \$4.50 per page, which it eventually will be. This general principle that the production cost of transcript be fully shared between the litigants was adopted by Cabinet

when approving an increase in transcript costs in September 1991. However, it was argued at that time that, if the price of transcript was increased too rapidly, demand would decline to such an extent that the total revenue would fall. Cabinet therefore approved a strategy of limiting increases to 50c increments each 12 months, commencing in 1991, until the price of transcript reached \$4.50 per page.

The current increase from \$3.50 to \$4 is the second such incremental increase, with the third and final incremental increase of 50c due to come into effect as from 1 July 1993. This will then bring the cost of transcript to \$4.50 per page, thus enabling transcript production costs to be fully shared between the litigants. It was further agreed that if demand was seen to plateau, all other things being equal, or decline then subsequent increments could be put in abeyance. No such trends are evident at this stage.

In late 1990 Cabinet directed the Court Services Department to review all court fees, with a general aim of increased cost recovery and in particular the pursuit of cost recovery in commercial matters. The subsequent report proposed a wide range of new fees as well as substantially increasing court fees to comply with the Government's direction. Although the report was strongly supported by Treasury, there was vehement opposition from the judiciary, the Law Society and sections of the community.

The review argued for the creation of a separate fee structure for commercial matters. In accordance with those arguments and the justification for higher fees, some grounds seemed to exist to increase transcript fees for commercial matters. I thoroughly and absolutely support this proposition. However, not only is it very difficult to have a simple administrative structure to identify such matters, but there are many problems associated with the concept. All matters are treated on their own merits irrespective of whether they are commercial or otherwise. Many commercial matters involve bankruptcy and so the companies themselves may be and often are destitute.

Whilst the review recommended that various fees be established for commercial matters, because it is an area within the courts where differentiation between a commercial and non-commercial matter cannot readily be ascertained, it is not considered an appropriate area to have a dual fee structure.

I believe, as I am sure do all members, that the cost of \$9 per page of transcript is high, even though in South Australia we have achieved the lowest cost of all States. We have considered this matter carefully and it is our view that it should be carefully and continually looked at in order to ensure that the cost of producing transcript can be further reduced.

The increasing cost to litigants is taking the cost of justice outside the realm of normal and everyday people. New technologies are now being introduced. Voice actuated machines are not all that far away and the experimentation now going on in the United States may in the future produce new technology that will further reduce the cost of court transcripts.

I hope that when this debate is read those people associated with producing court transcripts will take every opportunity to make sure that they can reduce the

cost of those transcripts. I am opposed to the motion moved by the member for Eyre. After carefully considering the matter, I believe there is no alternative but to oppose the motion and accept reluctantly the increase in the price of transcript. I hope that all members will support that proposition.

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

OLYMPIC GAMES

Mr BECKER (Hanson): I move:

That this House congratulates Sydney and supports its bid for the year 2 000 Olympic Games.

In moving this motion I am mindful of the tremendous amount of hard work that is necessary to be done by any city bidding for a major international sporting event. In the last decade Australia has bid for five major sporting events and spent about \$80 million, so far without success. That is why I believe it is very important that we, as a nation, get behind Sydney in its bid for the year 2 000 Olympic Games.

Perth unsuccessfully bid for the 1990 Commonwealth Games, which were held in Auckland. Brisbane, unfortunately also unsuccessful, bid for the 1992 Olympic Games, which have just been held in Barcelona. Melbourne bid for the 1996 Olympic Games, and those have been won by Atlanta. Adelaide bid for the 1998 Commonwealth Games and they were won by Kuala Lumpur. Now Sydney is bidding for the year 2 000 Olympic Games. It is time that a major sporting event was allocated to probably one of the greatest sporting nations in the world. Taken on a per head of population basis, there is no doubt that Australia provides the keenest, the finest and the most amateur oriented competition in the world. Our athletes do not have to cheat or debase themselves to the levels that some other countries have done over the past 15 years or so. As a nation, we are very proud of the achievements of Australian athletes, coaches and sporting officials because they are truly amateurs and they are truly representative of and great ambassadors for their respective sports.

The 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, of course, were the pinnacle of sporting opportunity in this country. It is now 36 years since we have had the opportunity to host the Olympic Games. That is the only time that we have hosted the Olympic Games, and it must be borne in mind that Australia is one of only three nations that has competed in every Olympic Games and in every Commonwealth Games. Looking at the various regional games held within our part of the globe, we have also been the only major competitor in those areas. I believe that it is now up to the sporting barons of the world—the 93 people who make up the voting delegates of the International Olympic Committee—to rule in Australia's favour.

As competition we have Beijing, which on behalf of China has put in quite a substantial bid. The Chinese Government has been quietly going around the undeveloped countries assisting with major sporting facilities. The city of Port Moresby, in Papua New Guinea, has had a sports stadium built by the Chinese

Government. Some countries in Africa have had swimming and athletics facilities built. In Mauritius a magnificent sporting stadium was built by the Chinese Government.

It was not until I was in Zimbabwe that I discovered the reason for the Chinese Government's assisting those countries. That arose because one of the workmen tried to defect from the work camp. The Chinese ship in all the necessary material to build the facilities, set up a compound and bring in the workers, who are kept within the compound 24 hours a day and who sometimes work two and three shifts to build those facilities. It was alleged to me in Zimbabwe that the workers were prison labour. In other words, rather than keeping the convicts in its own country, China was sending those people around the world building these sporting facilities.

Of course, that makes it very difficult for a country like Australia that plays the game fair, square and honest. If we give aid to a country, as we do consistently to Papua New Guinea—\$350 million a year with no strings attached—we do not say to Papua New Guinea, 'You have to vote for us.' We let them make their own decision.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes interjecting:

Mr BECKER: I hope they did vote for us. I would be very disappointed if they did not when it came to the Commonwealth Games. That is the way we do it. I hope that China is not using its provision of overseas aid to put pressure on developing countries to vote for it.

The other cities that have nominated are Istanbul, Tashkent, Manchester, Berlin, Milan and Brasilia. Therefore, eight cities are bidding, and we can imagine the intensity and keenness of the competition.

Sydney has put together a superb bid with the aid of its State Government and the Federal Government sharing the cost equally. They are spending \$300 million to establish in Homebush Bay the first stage of the requirements for the various sporting facilities. By September 1993 the Sydney International Aquatic Centre and the International Athletic Centre will be established and they will be ready in time for the voting decision, which will be made by the International Olympic Committee in Monte Carlo on 23 September 1993. Those facilities will achieve the twin purposes of strengthening Sydney's bid and enabling the city to host other international events as well as local and national competitions.

The athletic and aquatic centres will be the principal venues for 15 of the 25 Olympic sports and are located within a short walk of the Olympic Village, to be constructed at Homebush Bay should Sydney's bid succeed. Conceptual design for the Olympic stadium at Homebush Bay is now being prepared and will be completed as part of Sydney's bid. The stadium will house opening and closing ceremonies as well as a range of events including athletics, football finals and equestrian individual jumping.

Sydney's bid centres on the Olympic ideal—the belief that the city can host an event which will really advance the goals of the Olympic movement. The Sydney bid company conducted a limited competition recently between leading advertising agencies to devise a theme for Sydney's campaign. The successful agency, Clemenger Sydney, proposed a simple, clear and effective

theme, 'Share the spirit', which has been adopted by the bid company and will be applied throughout the bidding process.

Having had the opportunity to see the submissions put forward by the Sydney bid committee whilst I was accompanying the then Minister of Recreation and Sport in Cairo, Acapulco and Rarotonga (Cook Islands), I consider Sydney's presentation to be far superior to those of the other bidding cities. Beijing's was a travelogue which, with respect, although a beautiful city from what we were shown, looked awfully empty. We did not hear from Istanbul or Tashkent. As regards Manchester, the poor delegate in the Cook Islands was extremely nervous; I think he was thrown in at the deep end to put forward the submission. I cannot understand what is going on in Britain in wanting to bid at this level again, unless they are fully committed to bidding seriously for the Olympic Games.

I understand that Berlin is having tremendous problems within the new unified Germany in supporting the ideals of a bid. That country having had the Games in 1936, I think it is time that the Olympic Games came to the southern hemisphere rather than being concentrated on the European sector.

The Milan delegate put in a reasonable submission, but it looked as though he needed more training. I do not recall Brasilia having made a presentation at that stage. However, it gives members some idea of the commitment and organisation that is needed to put forward a bid of this kind. Of course, a tremendous amount of money is required. Melbourne had a budget of \$20 million, but I believe the final figure far exceeded that amount of money. It put in an extremely strong bid but, of course, was out-voted by the Americans and the city of Atlanta won the right to hold the games in 1996. That was terribly disappointing.

Sydney has a budget of \$20 million and it is hoping it can capitalise on the hard work that was put in by Melbourne. No doubt Sydney will need all of the \$20 million, if not more, because hosting the Olympic Games is big business, as I have found out by reading and studying the book *Lords of the Rings*, written by two investigative journalists—Vyv Simson and Andrew Jennings. The book is about the power, money and drugs in the modern Olympics. It is not a very complimentary book and it does some damage to the Olympic movement in trying to highlight what has happened in the past. However, another book, *The Olympic Revolution*, is the Olympic biography of Juan Antonio Samaranch, who is the President of the International Olympic Committee. The book was written by David Miller, who is a highly respected chief sports correspondent for the *Times* in London. That book provides a better perspective of what the Olympic movement is all about.

To host an Olympic Games would cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$1.5 billion. That is big money, but then the television rights are huge, too. In 1956, I understand Melbourne was paid about \$80 million by Channel 9 for the television rights to the games. Today it costs hundreds of millions of dollars. American television alone paid something like \$US401 million for the television rights to the Barcelona 1992 games. I believe Channel 7 in Australia paid about \$70 million for the Australian share of the television rights. For the Seoul Olympics in

1988 the NBC American television station paid \$300 million. At Los Angeles in 1984 the American Broadcasting Corporation paid \$225 million.

The Los Angeles Olympics showed a profit of some \$215 million. I understand the Barcelona Olympics will record a quite substantial profit and the Korean Olympics were also profitable. The situation must be handled properly with astute marketing. Some very large companies, such as Coca-Cola, Adidas, 3M, Mars, Chocolates International and Kodak, help to make the Olympics a viable proposition. But, more importantly, we should now join the Lord Mayors of all Australian cities who have written to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Bid Committee and support its efforts and application and wish it the best of luck and every success in obtaining the 2000 Olympics for Australia. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr De LAINE (Price): I support the motion moved by the member for Hanson and would like to take the opportunity again to congratulate the honourable member for the tremendous support he gave the former Minister of Recreation and Sport (Hon. Kym Mayes) in the Government's bid for the 1998 Commonwealth Games for Adelaide. It is certainly long overdue for an Olympic Games to be held in Australia. Since the games were reconstituted in 1896 only one Olympics has been held in Australia—Melbourne in 1956. In fact, they are the only Olympic Games to be held in the southern hemisphere.

While the member for Hanson has dealt mainly with the commercial and financial aspects of Olympic Games, I want to deal with the issue mainly from an athlete's point of view. The Australian team's performance at the Melbourne Games in 1956 is the best ever performance by an Australian team. We won 13 gold medals, eight silver medals and 14 bronze medals—a total of 35 medals. At the recent Barcelona Olympic Games, held this year, Australia won seven gold medals, nine silver medals and 11 bronze medals—a total of 27 medals. Many people were disappointed with this tally because of the unrealistic expectations created by a very unknowledgeable media in terms of international sport. It is one thing, Mr Deputy Speaker, as you would know, to win national championships, world championships and even Commonwealth gold medals, but it is another thing entirely to win Olympic medals, whether they be gold, silver or bronze.

Unlike world championships, Olympic competition has full representation from all countries of the world—all the strong nations—and the pressure on athletes is tremendous, being the absolute pinnacle of competition in the world. The performance of the Australian team at Barcelona was fabulous, particularly when we look at our small population. At Barcelona this year only nine countries finished ahead of Australia in relation to the number of medals won. It was a tremendous effort by our athletes given the fact that over 40 countries with much larger populations than Australia won medals and we still finished tenth on the overall medal tally.

As I mentioned previously in the motion I moved in August, a major problem for our athletes is that, because virtually all of the Olympic Games events are held in the northern hemisphere, most of our athletes compete out of season. Some of the winter sports are okay but, because

most of the sports are summer sports, our athletes compete out of season. It is true that many of our top athletes travel overseas to chase international competition, but the factors against them are, of course, that they are away from home, family and loved ones, they are not working and therefore have financial hardship to contend with, they are in strange surroundings with different climatic conditions, different food and, above all else, they are forced to live out of a suitcase, which wears pretty thin after a few weeks when one is on the circuit travelling.

As I said, Australia is well overdue to host another Olympic Games, having held only one, which was back in 1956. That is one reason why we are due to hold a games. Another reason is that Australians have a very fine record of medals won at previous games. I have just quoted the number won at Barcelona this year. Australians have won a disproportionate number of medals in relation to our population since 1948, when the games were reconstituted after the war. Another reason is that other games have been held in Australia very successfully in the past, for example, the British Empire Games, held in Sydney in 1934; the Olympic Games, held in Melbourne in 1956; the Commonwealth Games, held in Perth in 1962; and the Commonwealth Games, held in Brisbane in 1982. Added to that, there is Adelaide's bid for the 1998 Commonwealth Games, with our marvellous sporting facilities and infrastructure and our proven ability to run top international events, such as the Formula One Grand Prix.

As the member for Hanson mentioned, our bid was the best technical bid ever for a Commonwealth Games. Unfortunately, Adelaide lost the 1998 Commonwealth Games purely on political grounds. I wonder whether there will be a thrust to give the Olympic Games to an emerging country, as was the case recently with the 1998 Commonwealth Games. If politics are left out of it, I think Sydney will stand a very good chance of winning these games. I believe that Sydney has the capability and capacity to host the 2000 Olympic Games and, if successful, will stage one of the greatest Olympic Games ever held. I am very pleased to support the motion, to congratulate Sydney for its initiative, and to fully support it in its bid for the 2000 Olympic Games.

Motion carried.

EL ALAMEIN

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Minister of Business and Regional Development): I move:

That this House, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein, records its deep appreciation of the sacrifice and service of Australian and Allied Forces in this turning point in the Second World War.

Fifty years ago two great armies and two great generals faced each other on a strip of hard, hot, lifeless desert close to a railway halt called El Alamein. Those who were there remember the heat, the dust, the flies and more flies. There was sickness and there was homesickness. Missed mums, wives, girlfriends, kids—themselves enduring the blitz, the rations and the hardships, and fighting their own war in the armament factories and land armies.

To the north of Alamein was the sea. Forty miles inland lay the vast salt marshes and quicksands of the Qattara Depression. It was here that the Battle for Egypt was fought. Facing Rommel's Africa Korps were a quarter of a million Allied troops—British, Australians, New Zealanders, Indians, South Africans, Poles, Czechs and the Free French. My late father in the Royal Tank Regiment was one of them. The Commander of the Allied Forces was Bernard Law Montgomery, a brilliant eccentric with a unique ability to communicate, enthuse, inspire. Tirelessly he trained, lifted morale, and restored confidence and purpose to a weary Eighth Army. Montgomery's brilliance was that he was able to define and simply explain his strategy to his Generals and his private soldiers. He took them into his confidence. They knew what they had to do and were prepared to do it.

The German defences were strong. Anti-tank batteries and half a million mines covered an area five miles deep. A passage had to be cleared to allow Montgomery's 1 100 tanks to engage Rommel's Panzers. For the Allies there had to be a 'break in', a crash through, a dog fight and a 'crumbling' of the enemy. Keep the initiative. Maintain the pressure. Stick to the plan.

On 23 October 1942, at about 9.40 p.m. a deafening barrage of 1 000 Allied guns lit the horizon. There was confusion, dust, mines and mortar. Casualties on both sides were high. The British lost 200 tanks in the first two days. It was a battle of attrition; attack; and counter-attack. Day and night for seven days progress was slow. On 2 November 1942 a breakthrough, quickly exploited by the New Zealand Division and the 7th Armoured Division, triggered Rommel's retreat. By 13 November, Tobruk, heroically defended for so long by the Australians, was retaken. By 20 November Benghazi and the pursuit through to Tripoli. The Eighth Army had driven the Axis forces back more than 1 400 miles, a distance as far as from London to Moscow.

It is easy 50 years later to fail to understand the significance of that grim battle in the desert. Europe was enslaved; free nations had fallen; and the mass exterminations had begun. It was civilisation's darkest hour. Since Dunkirk, setback had followed defeat. At Alamein, in the heat, the rescue began. Those who took the desert gave hope to the oppressed and nourishment to a great cause. They fought not to conquer but to liberate. Veterans of Alamein do not like to be called heroes. They tell you they were ordinary blokes with a job to do, a duty to perform. But that tells only part of the story. Our troops at El Alamein knew why they were fighting and knew that some things were worth dying for. They knew that freedom, not tyranny, must prevail.

In his eloquence Winston Churchill summed up the pivotal role of El Alamein in the fortunes of the war, as follows:

Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

In remembering the sacrifice and service of the 9th Australian Division and the entire Eighth Army, again Churchill provides perhaps the best and most enduring tribute:

After the war when a man is asked what he did it will be quite sufficient for him to say, 'I marched and fought with the Desert Army.'

We will remember them.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I have great pleasure in seconding this motion which I believe will obtain the concurrence of all members of the House. I have great pleasure in doing so because, like the Minister who just resumed his seat, my father was also there, along with the father of the member for Adelaide, the father of the Hon. Jamie Irwin in another place, and the father of the former member for Alexandra (Hon. David Brookman). Undoubtedly, a number of other people were part of that group, known as the 'drop shorts', the artillery, Second 7th Field Regiment, based here in South Australia and also in Western Australia. As a result of the experiences of that event, and other involvement with the Army and ex-service organisations, my father was the inaugural President of the Alamein Association here in South Australia and, as its President, was involved deeply with the Alamein Association for many years, but not quite up to the point of his death in 1988.

I draw the attention of members to a book which is available in the Parliamentary Library and which is very aptly titled *We of the Turning Tide*. It is written by a South Australian, David Goodhart, and is prefaced by my own father who had been his commanding officer and who had assisted in making available to him quite a number of the documents relative to the battle. Earlier today I also made arrangements to make available to a Mr Gordon Tucker of this State a number of the original maps used in that battle and which he in turn will use at a special commemoration to be held at Mount Gambier in the coming weeks.

Might I refer also to the statement made by the Minister when he referred to this little man, who was a big man, Bernard Montgomery. It is significant that, at the time of the Alamein campaign, he was a General. He subsequently became a Field Marshal, and later still was made a Viscount. It is very significant that he became Viscount Lord Montgomery of Alamein. In other words, the influence of that event in the western desert was very significant to him, and is reflected in that document. The book to which I have referred contains this brief caption opposite a photograph of Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein:

They fought themselves and the enemy to a standstill until flesh and blood could stand no more. Then they went on fighting.

That was truly significant of the activities of the Australians, the New Zealanders, the Poles, the South Africans, the Indians and the British to whom the honourable member has referred. The dedication in this book is one of significance to this debate. This book is dedicated to those who lie in the El Alamein cemetery as silent witnesses that great deeds were done. The honourable member's comments in bringing this matter to the House very clearly draw attention to those great deeds.

There is much information relative to the various groups that were directly associated with the battles and a number of the associated factors; in the preface appear statements by some of the senior members of Eighth Army at that time. A personal message went out to all troops on 23 October 1942, the opening day of the offensive—and I have a copy of the original document in my possession. It states:

The battle which is now about to begin will be one of the decisive battles of history. The sooner we win this battle, which

will be the turning point of this war, the sooner we shall all get back home to our families. Let us pray that the Lord mighty in battle will give us a victory.

Therein is a clear indication from Bernard Montgomery of his dedication and the belief he had in himself and in the people with whom he had associated. A little after the event, General Montgomery's confidence not being misplaced, a document went out from General Alexander, the CNC of the Middle-East, who used the following words:

The battle of El Alamein has made history, and you are in the proud position of taking a major part in that great victory.

Again, that document was forwarded to all troops directly associated with the event. The fact is that large numbers of those people who were part of the events of 50 years ago are no longer with us. As the honourable member has indicated, some did not complete the battle, but they were very much a part of the victory. For those who will group together in many parts of the world in the next few days to commemorate this event, I know that, as the honourable member has said, we will not forget them; we do so at our own peril. This motion is one of considerable merit, and I call upon all members to give it their concurrence when eventually the vote is taken.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I wish to add my tribute to those of the other speakers in relation to this motion. Although we are referring to the battle of El Alamein, the actual siege of Tobruk commenced on 9 April and finished on 10 December 1941, creating the longest siege in British history. I would like to pay tribute particularly to the Australian troops who took part in that operation. I refer specifically to the Australian Ninth Division, which included all the infantry support troops, the Eighteenth Australian Infantry Brigade, the remnants of the English Ninth Battalion Rifle Brigade, two battalions of Royal Horse Artillery, the Northumberlands, the tanks, and the English anti-tank and anti-aircraft units, not forgetting a squadron of Hurricanes and fighters. In fact, the garrison consisted of more than 40 000 soldiers who stopped what then seemed to be the invincible might of the German army.

The sea lanes between Tobruk and Alexandria had to remain open and, if our navies had ceased to operate in these waters, supplies and ammunition would have ceased, but that was done by the RAN, commonly known as the scrap iron flotilla, and the Royal Navy. The fighting was trench warfare; our troops were continuously mortared and bombed by stuka air bombers, and a raid of 250 bombers was not uncommon. Of course, the infantry still had its normal duties to carry out, attacking the enemy and repelling his attacks, plus patrolling no-man's land after dark.

The menu was bully beef—bully beef and biscuits twice a day. If the enemy did not wipe out the parties, the cooks tried to concoct this food, but it was still bully beef and biscuits. Water rations were 1½ pints per person per day, and that was for everything—for drinking, for washing oneself and for shaving. It is very hard to impress on others, particularly on young people, the conditions of battle.

In the first five months of the siege, no fresh fruit or vegetables were available. Towards the end of the siege, a few vegetables managed to get through, but there certainly were not many. After months of hard fighting

on a limited diet, which was low in nutrition, the troops became covered in sores, so the Australian command decided to withdraw the troops, and this was not always appreciated by some of our allies.

I have had the pleasure of visiting Egypt, and while I was there I viewed the war graves. They certainly bring to startling reality the sacrifice that young Australians made in this conflict. As far as one can see over the horizon, there are the graves of young Australian soldiers. I should like to pay tribute to the men who were prepared to sacrifice—not only those people who died but the many people who were wounded, some of whom were disabled for the rest of their life—so that other members of Parliament and I can stand up here in a free and democratic society representing the people of our electorate.

I would like to conclude by quoting Sir Winston Churchill who, in regard to this battle, said:

Looking back on the unceasing tumult of the war, I cannot recall any period where its stresses and the onset of so many problems all at once in rapid succession bore more directly on me or my colleagues than the first half of 1941. The scale of events grew larger every year but the decisions required were not more difficult. Greater military disasters fell on us in 1942, but by then we were no longer alone and our fortunes were mingled with those of the grand alliance. No part of our problem in 1941 could be solved without relation to the rest. What was given in one theatre was taken from another. The effort here meant a risk there.

Our physical resources were harshly limited. The attitude of a dozen powers, friendly, opportunist or potentially hostile, was unknowable. At home we faced the war against the U-boats, the invasion threat, and the continuing blitz; we had to conduct the group of campaigns in the Middle-East; and, thirdly, to try to make the front against Germany in the Balkans. And we had to do this for a long time alone.

The beating in of our desert flank while we were full-spread in the Greek adventure was a disaster of the first magnitude . . .

I sent the following message to General Wavell, 'You should surely be able to hold Tobruk, with its permanent Italian defences, at least until or unless the enemy brings up strong artillery forces. It seems difficult to believe that he can do this for some weeks. He would run great risks in masking Tobruk and advancing upon Egypt, observing that we can reinforce from the sea and would menace his communications. Tobruk therefore seems to be a place to be held to the death without thought of retirement . . .'

The allied forces, which included many thousands of Australians, were certainly able to do that, and I take great pleasure in accepting this opportunity to extend my congratulations to them for the way they handled that theatre of war.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): I would like to compliment the member for Henley Beach on his remarks regarding a subsidiary matter related to El Alamein—that of Tobruk. I take this opportunity to flesh out a few historical details and pay tribute to the British, Indian, New Zealand, South African and, above all, Australian troops who took part in this campaign of the war.

The lack of awareness that so many Australians have of Australian military achievements grieves me. Often they know far more about the Battle of Britain or American campaigns in the Pacific than they know about what their own citizens have done in the defence of our country. It particularly grieves me that so little tribute is paid in this country to the New Guinea campaign where Australian soldiers in the battle of Milne Bay inflicted the very first military defeat that the Imperial Japanese Army

was to suffer. I am disappointed that so few Australians pay tribute to those brave men who turned the Japanese back at Kokoda. The fiftieth anniversary of the defeat of the Japanese at Kokoda takes place in a few days. I myself was not aware, until I saw a program on television a couple of months ago, of the amazing performance of the 75th and 76th squadrons of the RAAF, with their Kitty Hawks based in the mud of Port Moresby, and the damage that they inflicted on the Japanese—again, the first defeat that the Japanese Air Force encountered.

There were two battles of El Alamein: the first, in July, was a stalemate in which Rommel was held, and the second, between 23 October and 4 November 1942, saw his defeat. The 18 months or so leading up to that second battle of El Alamein had not gone well for the Allies. The brave citizens of Malta held out against the might of the Luftwaffe and managed to hang on to their strategic position in the middle of the Mediterranean, a position that was vital for the Germans to obtain in order to protect their over-extended supply lines in Africa. It is significant that, as far as I know, the people of Malta are the only example of the George Cross being awarded not to an individual but to an entire group of people. The Maltese community in South Australia would be proud of that heritage.

Also in that period 1941 to 1942 the Anzac forces—and, in particular, the Australian Ninth Division, as has been pointed out by the member for Henley beach—held onto Tobruk, earning themselves the title from the angry Rommel of 'The Rats of Tobruk', a title that they adopted as a badge of honour. Between them, Malta and Tobruk threatened Rommel's over-extended lines of supply. The Australians were asked to hang on for just two months at Tobruk; they managed to hang on for eight months and were then replaced and moved to Egypt, theoretically en route back to Australia where Curtin had called for them because of the imminent danger of invasion of Australia.

Rommel again attacked Tobruk, and the South African and other allied troops lost in one day what the Australian Ninth Division had held onto for eight months. One of the worst consequences of that was that Rommel, who was desperate for fuel, was able to seize 2.2 million gallons, when he eventually captured Tobruk after the Australians had moved on. It was a period of very bad defeats and the fall of Tobruk was almost equivalent in psychological terms to the loss of Singapore.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I will thank the honourable member opposite to let me make my contribution in my own way. Churchill badly wanted a victory in August. He was doing badly as a leader: in fact, his leadership was under challenge. A motion of no confidence in him was moved in the House of Commons, and 40 of his own members abstained. Likewise, Rommel needed a victory. He had to traverse the El Alamein area to reach into Egypt and attack the Suez Canal and, as part of the grand strategy, to link up with the German armies in the Caucasus and perhaps even meet the Japanese midway in the Middle East or India. He knew he was over-extended; nevertheless, he was confident. Mussolini was so confident that he ordered into North Africa a white horse on which he was going to ride to lead the entry into

Cairo. There was panic in Alexandria. The British fleet passed through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea. The British Embassy began to burn its files, and the British Ambassador ordered a special train waiting with steam up to carry him and his staff to the comparative safety of Palestine. Auchinleck had said:

The enemy is stretching to his limit and thinks we are a broken army . . . he hopes to take Egypt by bluff. Show him where he gets off.

In the first battle of El Alamein, the Eighth British Army was able to do just that, but shortly afterwards Churchill replaced him with Alexander. He then put the Eighth Army in the charge of Gott, who was shot down in his plane and killed on the day of his appointment, and Churchill reluctantly appointed Montgomery, only because another change of general would have been seen to be disastrous. Churchill visited Cairo and tried to get Montgomery to attack Rommel ahead of Montgomery's intention. At the end of August, Montgomery responded to Churchill, as follows:

If the attack begins in September it will fail. If we wait until October, I guarantee a great success and the destruction of Rommel's army. Must I, despite this, attack in September?

Churchill yielded and Montgomery had his way. Eventually, he had his great victory by holding back until he had superiority in numbers and in the air. There was a certain amount of luck involved: three German generals were killed in the first few hours and Rommel himself was ill. Rommel also had to contend with continuous conflict with the Luftwaffe and other sections of the German armed forces which had other priorities than his.

The Australian Ninth Division did very well indeed for itself. The Thirtieth Corps Commander, Lieutenant-General Sir Oliver Leese, wrote to the division saying:

The main mass of heavy and medium artillery was concentrated on your divisional front. It was obvious that the enemy meant to resist any advance along the coastal route and, as we now know, they concentrated the whole of the Panzer Corps against you.

Your fighting gave the opportunity for the conception of the final break through the centre, but this could never have been carried out if your front had been broken.

Alexander later said:

Your reputation as fighters has always been famous, but I do not believe you have ever fought with greater bravery or distinction than you did during that battle when you broke the German and Italian armies in the western desert. Now you have added fresh lustre to your already illustrious name.

Perhaps speaking with a certain amount of hyperbole, Churchill described the battle as the turning point of the war. Perhaps that is not quite true, because it was not quite on the scale of Stalingrad; nevertheless, Churchill was quite accurate in his own terms when he said:

Before Alamein we never had a victory; after Alamein we never had a defeat.

By resolution, the House today can honour the memory of the gallant heroes of El Alamein, particularly those Australians of the Ninth Division. One must remember, of course, in paying tribute to those who fought to give us the freedom to democratically disagree with one another, that it is not warmongering. It is not warmongering to recognise sacrifice provided that that recognition is accompanied by a determination to work for peace so that future generations are not called upon to make that same sacrifice. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Ross Smith): I would like briefly to join this debate to add to the comments of my colleagues on both sides of the House and to mark the significance of this occasion. I think it is most appropriate that the Minister has initiated debate on this matter and it is most important that the House of Assembly in South Australia should acknowledge this anniversary. Much of the appropriate sketching of the history of events leading to El Alamein and its significance have been covered eloquently by previous speakers.

I just want to say a few words about the context of that significant battle and its impact and effect on morale and attitudes at that time. One must remember that the battle of El Alamein occurred at the end of a sequence of considerable military disasters involving those trying to hold the line for what I think could be rightly defined as principles of freedom and self-determination.

Indeed, if any war can be put in terms of right and wrong, and I think on many occasions those lines are blurred, it certainly involved that 1942 in Europe and subsequently in the Pacific through that war. Those of us who went through the agony of the Vietnam conflict, as combatants, conscripts or civil objectors at home, understand the difficult moral questions that war in all its guises can give rise to. I do not believe that anyone can say fairly, so far as the Second World War was concerned, that there were not major moral issues and that right was very much on our side.

The further the history of that period is explored—the further it recedes and so a proper perspective can be gained—the more certainly that has been underlined. In a way, the past few years have seen the end of the Second World War through the finish of the Cold War, which was really a continuation of what was started by Hitler, Stalin and others in the '30s. As far as the battle of El Alamein was concerned, it was at the end of a series of disasters.

Remember, the war declared in 1939 went through a number of phases. First, the phoney war. At that time the troops were recruited here in Australia: they were volunteers and not conscripts. They were young men who went to Britain, willingly, and were determined to fight for a cause that they thought was right. They did their training at Salisbury Plain. My father and his two brothers were in that group who left these shores in 1940 to do their duty. The Battle of Britain occurred and the Australians, in particular, were sent to the African, Greek and Crete campaigns, which proved disastrous.

In fact, for my two uncles, their part in the war as combatants finished in Crete where they were captured by the Germans and they spent the rest of the war in appalling conditions in prison camps in Germany. So it was for other young Australians. Others lived to fight on not just through the desert war but subsequently in the Pacific, in New Guinea. We had the Crete disaster, and we had the early victories turned into major defeats in the desert. Generals such as Wavell, of enormous percipience, culture and leadership abilities proved unable to prevail.

Auchinleck was replaced by Montgomery and among the leadership casualties was one who is well known to South Australians, Sir Willoughby Norrie, who subsequently served with great distinction as Governor of

South Australia in the 1940s and into the early 1950s. At the same time, Hitler had invaded Russia and at the end of 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Australia then had the terrible dilemma of how to deploy its forces. There was great pressure to keep them in the northern hemisphere as part of the European war and in the desert—

Mr LEWIS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I raise the question of relevance. The motion is about the 50th anniversary of El Alamein. It says nothing about other aspects of the war. While I know that members opposite want to ventilate their knowledge of history of the war, it has no relevance whatever to this debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! No, I do not accept the point of order—

Mr Lewis: I did not think you would—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I do not accept the point that the honourable member is making. I believe that it is quite relevant to talk about those people who took part in the war and where they figure in our history. The member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am sorry that the honourable member begrudges a few minutes of tribute to these great Australians who did their duty.

Mr LEWIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not begrudge anyone anything—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: —as suggested by the member for Ross Smith.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! When I stand, Standing Orders are quite clear that you are to sit down. If you transgress again I will have no hesitation in naming you. The member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As should be clear to all members of the House, in particular the member for Murray-Mallee, the significance of El Alamein can be understood only in the context of the war and what happened to that date and who in fact was involved in those hostilities. There have been millions of battles throughout history, regrettably, in all parts of the world at all times. El Alamein has a particular significance, and it is only by putting it in that significant historical context that the motion can be better understood and proper respect paid.

Let me now move, as I was doing before I was interrupted, to my concluding remarks. We in Australia at that time were confronted with that terrible dilemma, where the desire of Winston Churchill and those fighting in the European sector was to ensure that the Australian troops, those holed up in Tobruk and those available in the Air Force, the Army and the Navy, should remain in the Middle East, and the desire of the Government of Mr John Curtin, a fortunately patriotic Government elected to take charge of the war effort in Australia, was to bring those troops home in order to defend our own shores against the threat of the Japanese.

While all these diplomatic manoeuvrings were going on it was a very difficult time on both the home front and battle front. At the end of the day all those things were resolved to the good, as we know, by the courage, foresight and dedication of those involved. That is where I think we see the particular significance of El Alamein, because for the first time it broke the concept of German impregnability. Certainly, they had been bogged down on

some fronts—the invasion into Russia and other areas—but up to that point it could not be said that they had been beaten in battle in the way they had been beaten in El Alamein.

Of course, that applied to battles that were going on in the Pacific as well, against the Japanese juggernaut that seemed to have exactly the same measure of competence and success that would make it impregnable and touched right on our shores through the bombing of Darwin that was going on at that time. El Alamein proved to be an enormous psychological boost. In many ways it marked the turning of the tide, very definitely, on all fronts. It relieved Australia of the dilemma I was talking about, in the sense that it could be seen that in the European sector, with the combined forces that were there, with the Americans joining, Australia could devote all its energies and resources to the home front, as it indeed began to do. All in all it is something that is well worth marking in this House and I congratulate all those who have spoken. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Mount Gambier): I do not want to extend the debate for longer than a few moments but, as a member of the RSL and the Naval Association of Australia, as an ex-serving member of the Royal Navy, I first took it as a compliment to join the Australian RSL and share the company of men and women such as those who fought from the South-East at El Alamein.

I would just like to thank the members who have spoken positively in support of the motion and convey to them the fact that in only 10 days I will be joining the 9th Australian Division reunion, which will be held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the El Alamein battle, which was decisively won by the Allies.

That reunion will be held in Mount Gambier. It has been convened by the President of the steering committee, H.H. Ashby (Herb), who has a DCM; by the Secretary, K.H. Wait (Ken), who has a Military Medal; and by Colin Cameron, who is in charge of public relations. It is wonderfully supported by all members of the RSL and by members of the public in the South-East. The serving members of the 9th Australian Division, 2nd AIF, are looking forward to the event tremendously. It will give me great pleasure to join them for the luncheon on the 31st and again at the commemorative ceremony on the Sunday and to be able to convey to them the fact that members of the House of Assembly have spoken honourably about their achievements in the Second World War on behalf of Australian and world citizens.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I wish to be associated with the remarks relating to this motion. I think it is good that the House has debated this issue today. We wish well all those reunions that will no doubt take place in many parts of Australia. The member for Mount Gambier has indicated that a major reunion will be taking place in Mount Gambier in the near future. I think all members will wish well all those participants in that reunion.

Many constituents in my electorate took part in the battle of El Alamein. Many wore Australian uniforms, many wore British uniforms and no doubt some wore the uniforms of other nations. The reality in 1942 at El Alamein was that Bernard Law Montgomery took command of the British 8th Army from Claude

Auchinleck nine weeks before the battle commenced. He reorganised available forces at that point in Egypt and managed to secure, with the full support of his troops in the battle of El Alamein, Persian oil and the Suez Canal, eventually leading to the allied invasion of Sicily, Italy and then north-western Europe.

The El Alamein anniversary is significant, because it was the first concerted effort to smash German control in North Africa. Within a matter of moments after this battle took place, Operation Torch took place and that secured the North African theatre from German occupation. Within 12 months of this battle the allied armies approached their tasks with a new vigor.

It was at a key point in the history of the Second World War—at a time when the Royal Air Force had managed to master the skies over Europe and soon over North Africa and the entire Mediterranean, and at a time when the fledgling American Air Force, the Army Air Force or the Army Air Corps, as it was at that point, was also starting to exert its authority—that a greater drama was being played out around and in the city of Stalingrad.

Some months ago a constituent telephoned me and indicated that he and his family were going to the El Alamein celebrations in Egypt, and I wished him well. We had a long discussion about what that battle meant to him. Where that was concerned, he said, 'We did not win much before Alamein and we did not lose anything afterwards.' I think it is commendable that such men fought and answered the call of duty and faced the most formidable war machine that the world had ever seen. They not only faced it: they defeated it.

Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart): I have great pleasure in supporting this motion, and I am sure every member of the House will do so. I am fortunate enough to have the only tangible acknowledgment of El Alamein in my electorate in the form of the El Alamein Army Camp. It is noteworthy to see that that is in South Australia and that we have acknowledged all those heroes in the battle of El Alamein. I had an uncle who served at El Alamein. He was one of the lucky ones who came back. Some of the stories that he told to me as a child were quite horrendous and showed some of the evidence of man's inhumanity to man. I was always of the opinion that I would hate to see that continue, so I became very much a pacifist.

All those who have taken part in this debate have spoken genuinely in support of this motion. I note with a great deal of interest that the member for Mount Gambier has said that there will be a reunion or celebration in Mount Gambier for the 50th anniversary of this battle. I also noted with a great deal of interest the background to the battle of El Alamein that was given by the member for Ross Smith. I should like to put on record that there is more evidence of that battle, whilst not actually acknowledging El Alamein, in the fact that one of the areas of Whyalla has been acknowledged as Whyalla Norrie. I have a feeling that that was an acknowledgment of one of our great commanders in that battle. With those few words, I have a great deal of pleasure in taking part in the debate acknowledging the battle of El Alamein and putting on record my gratitude to all those who fought in that battle.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I wish to make a few comments so that anybody reading the debate will understand why a vote will be taken on this motion. Those who read the debate will see that we suspended sessional orders so that this matter could go on because the House saw it as important on both sides of politics. There are members on both sides of the House who have not spoken but who would still like to speak, including some who have served in the forces not in the Second World War but in later conflicts. In particular, the member for Hayward wanted to make a contribution.

I ask that we try to close the debate off bearing in mind the time schedule obtained. I hope that those who read the debate will note the last few comments so that they may know that this motion is important to all members. I know that the motion will be passed unanimously. However, people should know why more members did not speak, even though they would have liked to do so.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): Lest the Minister who proposed this motion deliberately makes mischief in respect of any part of the debate and the proceedings of the House during the course of it, let me place on record my—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: That is absolutely outrageous.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LEWIS: —profound respect—

Members interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: He is well known for his ability to fabricate things.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Fabrication is clearly a reflection on a member's truthfulness and it is therefore unparliamentary.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I request the member for Murray-Mallee to withdraw those words.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Hayward will please sit down. The member for Murray-Mallee has the call.

Mr LEWIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, without reservation of any kind I withdraw. Let me place on record my profound respect and gratitude to all Australian service personnel in all conflicts in which they have been involved at all times since Federation and even before Federation. There is no question but that they have served this country well and are well known internationally for their ability to do so. The service personnel involved in the battle of El Alamein in any way shape or form certainly deserve the commendation and respect of all members of this Chamber.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Minister of Business and Regional Development): I should like to thank members for their contributions to the debate this afternoon. This is an extraordinarily significant occasion in the history of our nation and Commonwealth. For me it has deep personal connotations; my father served in the desert forces in the Eighth Army for some years and was at El Alamein and a number of other major battles as a member of the tank corps at that time. Therefore, I have a very deep interest in this issue. I know that the member for Unley has relatives who served at El Alamein and, of

course, at a later stage the member for Napier served in the Middle East in the British forces.

It is very significant, too, the range of experiences that have been related today from a variety of nations, because El Alamein was very much a united effort of the allies. They were able to achieve victory because of unity, and as a result they were able to achieve the end of the war and peace. Around the world over the next few days there will be commemorative ceremonies marking the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of El Alamein. I understand that in Britain in the past couple of days the royal family has attended memorial services for the veterans and for those who paid the supreme sacrifice at the battle of El Alamein, which was mentioned by a number of members as the turning point in the Second World War.

I certainly intend to ensure that this motion, which I hope will be endorsed by all members of this House, is sent to veterans of the El Alamein campaign. I also think it would be appropriate to send a copy of the remarks to Viscount Montgomery of Alamein who is, of course, a member of the House of Lords and the son of Bernard Montgomery. I thank all members who have made a constructive contribution to this debate and who have honoured both the dead and living who fought for our freedom.

Motion carried.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I move:

That this House notes the industrial relations policies of the Liberal Party at the Federal level and, in particular, the policies of the Kennett Government in Victoria and also notes the Opposition in South Australia has promised to support similar anti-worker, anti-union measures aimed at undermining decent standards of living for all South Australian wage and salary earners.

The motion relates to what I think will be a very key issue in the next 12 months. In the electorate at large a number of giant issues in one form or another will be resolved in the next 12 to 18 months—on both the Federal and State levels. The Federal Liberal Party's industrial relations policy can be described only as having had a very bad start. The reality is that the architects of this policy were dissatisfied with the Liberal Party of the 1970s and 1980s. The old time Liberal Party was very successful electorally in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s and then again in the Fraser years. The recipe for that success was, in many respects, a balanced, less doctrinaire and dogmatic approach to politics.

What we now see in our conservative opponents in Victoria, and it was tried a bit in New South Wales, but they backed off there, over the Tasman in Tasmania and particularly now in Canberra and here in Adelaide, is an arrogance and a disregard for traditions in this country. We see a dogmatic and doctrinaire approach that I believe will be firmly rejected by the community. We see that approach in education, in health and in many other areas. But, it is within the realms of industrial relations that we see it at its clearest and sharpest. The reality is that the new policies being put forward in many respects had their origins in the 1970s with people like Dr Kemp and Costello, who were writing publications at that time

indicating their dissatisfaction with the way the Fraser Government was dealing with problems of industrial relations.

While I was no supporter of the Fraser Government, I think it needs to be made quite clear that at that time the industrial relations position in Australia did not see workers frightened as indeed they were in the nineteenth century. The Fraser Government and the Tonkin Government here in South Australia never sought to turn back the clock to the nineteenth century. They did not wish to go back to the Tolpuddle Martyrs and to all those people who were sent to this country from Britain on less than voluntary terms for organising workers against the bosses in the nineteenth century.

What we see now is a naked doctrinaire policy that seeks to destroy the basic working conditions for men and women in this country—working conditions that have been agreed to, that have been lived by, that companies have been satisfied with and that have gone on for many years. The key to these changes is the employment contracts. In New Zealand, where this provision was brought in by the new National Government, a significant shift has been seen from the share that labour takes to the share of the employer. In New Zealand, the provisions that were introduced with that Act saw the legitimate role of trade unions undermined and, in particular, the legitimate role of trade unions in determining wages and conditions for their members white-anted.

In New Zealand, in many instances, a large number of companies, such as Fisher and Paykel, disagreed and took that disagreement all the way to the halls of power. They clearly made the case before the select committee in New Zealand that they wanted to continue with the award system; that they were happy, both as a domestic supplier in New Zealand and as an exporter of finished product, with the existing award structures. Many other New Zealand companies, a number of which have had successes on not only the domestic but also the international market, adopted the same approach. The same people who seem to propel the Liberal Party in this country and their National Party friends over there would not accept the wiser counsel of companies like Fisher and Paykel.

The employment contract was introduced in New Zealand and overnight many of the working conditions that people in that country had enjoyed for many years came to an end. In fact, as each award expired a whole new set of provisions was put in place in respect of how the new awards would be renegotiated. What has happened in New Zealand is that about 65 per cent of awards have now expired since the Employment Contract Act was introduced in May 1991.

It is interesting to point out that in New Zealand the real casualties in that system are the young, the female and, largely, the casual workers. What has happened over there is that the concept of the working day and working week has ended. That is what the promise is here in Australia. The promise by the Liberals and the National Party—the Coalition—is that the concept that we have all worked on, namely the working week and the working day, is over. What we will see and what quite clearly has been announced in Canberra is the end of penalty rates as such. What we are also seeing is that the basic stripping

of conditions which workers in this country have taken for granted is now on the drawing board.

If cheap labour were ever the sole answer to a country's economic problems, Bangladesh would be booming. The reality is that it is not the answer and it never has been. It is a cynical attempt to wind back the working conditions and pay of ordinary wage and salary earners in this country so that capital gets a greater share of profitability. In fact, what will happen if the Federal agenda gets up, we are told in the various bits of information that have come out in this policy, is that penalty rates, various leave provisions and a whole range of other things which workers have struggled to have put in their awards will be lost. We also find that the role of a trade union to protect its members will be legislated against.

We are also told in the industrial relations policy that simple provisions such as the payment of union dues by pay deduction will be banned in Australia. We are told that workers who have struggled out there with their unions and employers to establish workplace bargaining in various awards to make companies more profitable will see this swept away overnight, and what will ensue after that is a series of management and employee agreements, contracts which in many instances, if it follows the New Zealand model, will see the value of labour, the price that is paid for labour, reduced to historically low levels.

One clear cut example of where this policy is going is that which was announced not so long ago by the Coalition in its youth wages policy of \$3 and \$3.50 per hour. The reality is that that is slave labour. It will not create more employment out there. It will simply see a significant shift in our community with the rich getting richer and the poor, who are working in the factories, on the farms and in all other areas, getting a much reduced wage packet each week.

I quote from the document that came from the Liberal Party, and I make quite clear that, at the Federal level, this is the promise of things to come, irrespective of how the State agenda unfolds. At page 5 of the preliminary section, the document states:

Complementary legislation will be sought from the States but, if necessary, the Commonwealth's full constitutional power, except the external affairs power, will be used.

I suppose the Coalition would have used the external affairs power also except that it has run on the argument for a number of years that what happened in Tasmania with respect to the dams was crook. However, it will use every other power it can to ensure that that agenda is imposed on all the States if it cannot get agreement in States such as South Australia. Of course, the Hewson Government, if it ever comes to be, will not get agreement from the present Government in South Australia, so long as it is here, to these sorts of draconian and anti-worker, anti-union measures. On page 2 of this policy document, the bald statement is made:

This is not a policy of confrontation. It is a policy for cooperation and reconciling old antagonisms. It is a team approach. It is a strategy for winning more jobs and higher real wages. Rising living standards and higher employment can flow only from more cooperative, productive and competitive workplaces.

Well, Father Christmas will soon be coming to town, and I suggest that, if anyone wants to believe that sort of

nonsense, they must believe in Santa Claus. The reality is that the New Zealand Employment Contract Act which is proposed in Victoria and eventually throughout Australia will see a reduction of pay to the lowest award classification rate. It will see the elimination of overtime, penalty or shift rates, regardless of the hour of the day or night that people work. I hope that somebody from the Opposition goes and tells that to all the nursing sisters out there and many of the other people who rely on those penalty rates to top up a decent wage. In fact, for many years, they have not gone out on strike to struggle for more money and they have not agitated for a greater take-home pay packet, because penalty rates contributed to wage justice.

If this policy is implemented, the concept of the 38-hour week will be dead. The casualisation of employment will see workers expected to work many more hours than that without the loading provision coming into play. We will see meal breaks and rest breaks negotiated—not negotiated with the unions but negotiated between the boss and some of the employees. We will see annual leave loadings and other benefits such as that white-anted by these contract provisions. I commend this motion to the House and hope that every member takes the opportunity to speak in this very important debate. It is the hope of all members on this side that the Liberal Party will come clean in this debate and tell us whether or not it supports the sorts of measures that its Leader has in mind for the wage and salary earners of this State.

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

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I move:

That this House notes the concerns of the leaders of Australia's churches that the goods and services tax will discriminate against the disadvantaged in our society.

In recent days I have been appalled at the Liberal Party's attack on the church leaders of Australia because they have had the temerity to criticise the goods and services tax on food and essential items, should we have the misfortune to have a Coalition Government elected to office in this country. The attack has been mindless in its execution and quite often produces the logic that the church leaders' point of view is 'on the left of the agenda rather than one dictated by the gospels'. It is a rather curious criticism, merely to indicate that anything that disagrees with Liberal Party policy is 'on the left of the agenda' and is thus intrinsically bad. That is one of the stupidities of this debate.

It reminds me of the time when the conservative people in Australia labelled Methodists as being leftist because they suggested that world peace might be a good idea. If this Liberal line of thought is to continue, the churches will come under fire for being leftist every time they have something to say. The Catholic Social Welfare Commission has argued very strongly that food should not be the subject of a goods and services tax, suggesting that such a tax would be corrosive to human dignity. The commission has been supported by leaders of both the Uniting Church and the Anglican Church in this stance. I have been disgusted by Senator Chaney and other leading

Liberals who have stated that their opinion reflects nothing more significant than a small over politically—

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

Mr FERGUSON: Before the dinner adjournment, I stated that I was disgusted by Senator Chaney and other leading Liberals who have stated that the church's opinion reflects nothing more significant than the views of a small, over-political, left wing policy unit and not those of the whole church. Any thinking person in Australia would have to concede that a tax on food is indeed a tax on human dignity. One of the proudest boasts that Australia has made in its recent history, at least in the past 50 years, is that no Australian need starve.

The basic necessities of life have always been available, underpinned by the safety net of the Social Security system. From time to time, people might make stupid mistakes in the way they handle their finances, but there is no need for any person in Australia to starve. Following the bitter experience of the Great Depression, we were under a series of conservative Governments, and Social Security payments were not provided. The Australian Labor Party introduced laws to provide Social Security benefits to make sure that no Australian would starve. Indeed, under the conservative Governments in those days, many people found themselves without sufficient food.

The conservative movement in Australia has now determined that the basic necessities of life will be taxed. One can only agree with the comments of the Catholic Social Welfare Commission about the goods and services tax that the principal plank in the Coalition tilt at power in taxing people for the selection of food is to undermine the essential dignity of every Australian. The church has been under attack (and these are not my words but those of the church) for producing this paper, but I can understand its defence when it says that it is simply putting forward a moral point of view. It wants to put forward another side of the argument that should be taken into account. The church's role is to do that.

The church is critical of the goods and services tax. It involves the very paradigms of human dignity—the economic ability of the poverty-stricken to cope—and the church has an unequivocal mandate to comment on that. In recent years, the church has been distancing itself from Party politics, and it has taken the opportunity from time to time to criticise all political Parties. The Hawke Government was not immune to criticism from the Australian bishops. That criticism of the church—that it is merely going for a left agenda—is one that any thinking Australian would have to reject. The mere allegation that the church is leaning to the left merely because it criticises Liberal policy is vague indeed.

I agree with the General Secretary of the Uniting Church Board for Social Responsibility in New South Wales, Mr Harry Herbert, when he states:

It would be nice if the Government and Opposition stopped using the churches. Surely the churches should be able to put their views on economic matters without being attacked. If they cannot do this, it is going to intimidate them from coming forward and entering the public debate.

The way in which the Liberal Party has attacked the church merely because it has a different view on the

goods and services tax is an absolute disgrace. The goods and services tax on essential food items will be especially disadvantageous to the poor people in the country. Farmers with negative income who can now escape many forms of tax will not be able to do so with the introduction of the goods and services tax. Although the conservative Parties say that they will provide compensation for poor people who have to pay the goods and services tax, it has been agreed by John Hewson that, in some cases, it will be administratively impossible to do this, especially in regard to the poor rural population. John Hewson has shrugged his shoulders and said that there will be winners and losers.

It is unfortunate that the losers will be those in the poor sections of the community rather than in those areas where incomes could be reduced. I appeal to State members of the Liberal Party to go back to their Federal colleagues and explain to them where they are wrong. It is time for the Liberal Party to rethink the goods and services tax; it is time for them to eliminate a tax on food and essential services; and it is time for them to think again about their tariff policies and about changes to their tourism policies. It is time that the Liberal Party in this State stood up for the people of South Australia.

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

KURRALTA PARK COMMUNITY KINDERGARTEN

Mr BECKER (Hanson): I move:

That this House instructs the Minister of Education, Employment and Training not to approve the recommendation by the Western Region Children's Services Office to close the Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten.

The western development plan has recommended that services in cluster group 8—Kurralt Park, Netley, Plympton, Vermont, Glandore, Clarence Park and Clarence Gardens pre-schools—have separate time frames for their submissions. It has been suggested that this area is over-serviced with a large number of part-time pre-school centres. The western development plan will seek to reduce the number of services by closing at least two centres. It is anticipated that the majority of the remaining centres will become full-time, enabling increased flexibility in service delivery. Further consultation with services will occur before firm proposals are drafted for this cluster group.

I have come across those familiar phrases in the past, particularly in the Education Department. A few years ago, we had a terrible experience in Fulham when the school was closed because someone from within the Education Department, for sheer political purposes, decided to close that school, rip up the area and put in cluster housing for the Housing Trust. That does not matter: they can do that, and they have everyone in the area offside now and they will never vote Labor again. The Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten wrote to the Minister of Education, Employment and Training on 11 September and sent a copy to me and to other members of Parliament, together with a copy of a petition signed by the parents, friends and supporters of some 1 400

persons either residing in that area and/or using the services of the kindergarten.

After my investigation of this issue I do not think I could have put the case any better than has been set out in this letter from Nelly Jaksa, for the Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten Committee of Management:

Dear Minister,
Re: Western Development Plan Cluster 8 Group and Draft Proposal

Due to the recent draft proposals by the Children's Services Office's Western Development Plan the community of West Torrens has been informed that the Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten is to be closed. The Committee of Management of the Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten, on behalf of its community, strongly oppose the closure.

The Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten has been providing valuable early childhood development programs, catering for the needs of its 'ever growing' community for the past 40 years. Continual high enrolment and attendance by children from varied socioeconomic backgrounds has been maintained throughout the years, especially so in the past five. The kindergarten also attracts families who have children with special needs, including Aboriginal and non-English speaking backgrounds, and particularly children from sole-parent and/or low-income families.

The committee of management feels the reasons behind its closure is unwarranted. The West Torrens community is undergoing rapid urban development with increasing numbers of young families moving into the area, making the move to close the kindergarten irrational and implausible.

Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten is located centrally within the community and is easily accessible. Other services successfully operating within the kindergarten are: occasional care (social justice grant); playgroup; multiple births playgroup; toy and book library for children; reference library for parents; parenting education; 'drop in' centre for past and present parents; respite care for grandparents and carers; trading table with proceeds to charitable causes; voluntary community participation in beautifying and upgrading the kindergarten grounds.

A questionnaire to evaluate the needs and socioeconomic background of the families that the kindergarten services revealed that:

35 per cent of families are on pensions, unemployed or students

60 per cent of families have a family health card

33 per cent of families are from a multicultural background

28 per cent of families have to walk everyday

18 per cent of families have no car.

This indication of significant social need in the local community reinforces the social justice requirement for a kindergarten in this locality, in line with the CSO's responsibility under the Children's Services Act. This has already been recognised by the CSO with the provision of a social justice grant for respite occasional care targeting non-working parents. Our parents are concerned that the 'newly located' centres are not within reasonable walking distance. In addition, there is an element of risk involved when crossing major intersections, particularly during peak periods.

One could go on to say that it is not safe to walk around the streets during the day, either, and particularly in that location. It continues:

The location of the Kurralt Park Community Kindergarten has not been looked upon favourably by the Western Region CSO. Contrary to this opinion, the families who choose to use this kindergarten for their children's preschool and childcare needs value its advantageous geographical site which provides a safer, unpolluted and peaceful atmosphere for the children.

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: Do you know where it is?

Mr BECKER: Who is the idiot who said that?

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: Do you know where it is?

Mr BECKER: Come on! I know where it is; I know the whole area extremely well. That is just a sheer reflection on those who worked so jolly hard over the

past 40 years to make it a good kindergarten, and it is worthy of support. The letter continues:

The committee of management wishes to acknowledge the council of West Torrens for their support in the continuing use of its building and financial support in the buildings' repairs and maintenance.

At least the council does do something to support this particular kindergarten and recognises its needs. It continues:

We should also like to bring to your attention the needs of those who have made a committed decision to be full-time parents, to participate in their children's upbringing particularly in their early and crucial formative years. The kindergarten's half-daily sessions and occasional care program fulfils the requirements of these families. The pre-school child is able to utilise those sessions more effectively and yet be home to enjoy family togetherness. The good balance of this kindergarten's half-daily sessions and family upbringing will undoubtedly contribute to a healthier lifestyle for our children.

We recognise that South Australia leads the way in the provisions of children's services and that the State Government is committed in providing the communities with an availability of additional centres.

The Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten has clearly shown its worth to its community for the past 40 years. Our caring community is proud of the kindergarten's achievements and questions the need to terminate the services provided by the kindergarten.

Our strong community has voiced our protest to the Western Region CSO by presenting the above facts at the Western Development Plan meetings as well as personal phone calls by members of the community to the Western Regional Director, Ms Eva Les.

We believe these are strong, valid reasons that have not been recognised for their significance by those drafting the development plan. Therefore, we appeal to the Western Region CSO to reconsider its decision. The adamant stand taken by the drafters of the Western Development Plan to close down the kindergarten, regardless of our appeals, has compelled us to lodge a petition to the State Government of South Australia via the Minister of Education to recognise the plight of this community.

The purpose of this letter, therefore, is to advise you of the impending petition that will be submitted to you personally on 1 October 1992.

We fervently hope that the voice of the community would help best determine the outcome of the Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten.

Thanking you.

Yours faithfully, Nelly Jaksa.

Copies went to the member for Walsh, Mr Brenton Wright (Director, CSO Central Office), the Hon. Mr Lucas, shadow Minister of Education, and me.

I could not have put the whole issue better than the writer of that letter. I have received numerous letters from constituents and residents who use this kindergarten and they all speak extremely highly of the kindergarten and the staff. One would expect that with all kindergartens. My experience over the years has been that the parents, the users of kindergartens, get quite attached to the services provided by the facility in their local area.

This kindergarten is unique. It has a little more than most kindergartens. It offers more in the range of services provided and it is unique in its clientele. The point stressed in this letter is that it is within handy walking distance. It is great for parents to be able to walk their young ones to a facility like that, given reasonable weather conditions. It is interesting to note that a large percentage of people do not have access to a motor vehicle, indicating the type of clientele in that area.

The Federal Government proposed to fund a child care centre there some years ago costing \$500 000. The land

was not made available and it was then built at Camden Park. It is ironic that when the building was finished the child care centre had the sign 'Kurralta Park.' Unfortunately, by the time I went home to get my camera to photograph the Kurralta Park Child Care Centre at Camden Park somebody had woken up and taken down the sign.

The area is changing. There is a tendency for the elderly people to move out and they are being replaced by young families. A transition is being undertaken in some of our inner suburbs. I predict that within the next five years we shall see a greater change within the inner suburbs. Again, there will be a greater number of parents and supporting parents. People will choose to reside there. With urban consolidation there will be the encouragement of providing greater accommodation for younger families. Looking at the geographics of the whole issue, it is the ideal place to bring up a young family. All the necessary facilities are available within that region to assist in parenting a young child. I believe it is a great shame to take away from that community something that they have built, developed and contributed towards over the years.

We should bear in mind that this kindergarten has taken the opportunities, when presented, to provide the facilities and to assist in keeping it going during the hard times. We must accept that periodically there are good times and bad times in these types of facilities. It will get highs and lows with regard to attendance numbers, but if the buildings and the facilities are there then we should look at the opportunities to keep these places going for the betterment and development of the children. They are the future generations, and we should not be putting barriers in the way of parents by making them travel greater distances or to somewhere else that is unfamiliar when the facility is there. This is part of social justice, the cost of Government and of the priorities that have to be accepted by the Government for and on behalf of the people.

It is very easy to sit behind a desk in some obscure office and say, 'Right, we will slash X off the budget and by doing that we will close Y, Z, A, B, C and D.' However, we cannot do that because we are dealing with people and human lives; we are framing young lives and, in so doing, we are providing at the early childhood stage a very important part of their life. Today we must accept that there is a need and there will be a continuing need. It is part of the priorities of the social justice program that we must be prepared to provide the sufficient funding for it. That is why I have raised this issue in the House.

I appeal to the Minister on behalf of the local community and on behalf of the generations that will use the kindergarten in the future, as well as those now using it and receiving the benefit of a very worthwhile facility that has been there for 40 years. It has stood the test of time and, given the opportunity, it will continue to do so in the future and to play a very important role within the West Torrens district. Therefore, I commend the motion and the efforts of all the parents who wrote to me pleading to have this facility remain open.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): I move to amend the motion as follows:

Delete all words after 'this House' and insert 'calls upon the Minister of Education, the Children's Services Office and the West Torrens council to jointly cooperate in ensuring the continued viable operation of the Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten on its current site or on another site in the immediate vicinity'.

I hope that within another two or three weeks both the motion and my amendment will be redundant, because I am confident that the negotiations that I have set in motion regarding the Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten will achieve a satisfactory resolution of this situation. I must express my bitter disappointment at the action of the member concerned, who has seen fit to intervene in my Walsh electorate, because in the 13 years that I have been a member of this Parliament I have never done so in his electorate. I have had many opportunities when I could have done so, but I had enough respect for him not to do that.

Prior to the recent redistribution I adopted a hands-off approach to the Netley Primary School, the Netley Kindergarten, Plympton High School and other similar institutions, despite the fact that half of the enrolments of those institutions came from my side of Marion Road. I did take up the problems of individual constituents who might have children enrolled in those institutions on the other side of Marion Road, but I have never taken any action in relation to the institutions themselves, such as those schools or kindergartens that were on his side of Marion Road. I am very disappointed that the honourable member's sense of decency seems to have vanished and that he does not have any respect for the responsibilities of another member of Parliament in his or her district.

I concede that following the redistribution, with electoral boundaries having been changed, there is a certain state of flux and many of us now have a reason to be interested in adjacent areas because those are the ones that we seek to represent following the next election. However, that is no excuse for the current member for Hanson in this case, unless he does not know his geography and he has got completely lost.

My understanding was that the honourable member has nominated for the seat of Peake, which is several kilometres away from the Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten. Unless he has got very lost and we have to give him a street directory as a Christmas present, there is no justification for his political meddling with the Kurralta Park Community Kindergarten. Perhaps he thinks it is in Peake. We will have to give him a map of Peake so that he realises that it is not. If he is so interested in matters in the western suburbs why is it that he will not support the member for Spence in his endeavours on behalf of constituents that the member for Hanson says he is going to represent one day?

Mr BECKER: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

An honourable member: Wait until you're called.

Mr BECKER: What did you say?

Members interjecting:

Mr FERGUSON: See me outside.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Henley Beach and the member for Hanson will come to order or they will both be outside. Did the member for Hanson have a point of order, or has he withdrawn it?

Mr BECKER: The point of order is the relevance of the point being made by the member for Walsh. He is not

sticking to the debate at all but talking about something else.

The SPEAKER: I do uphold the point of order. However, it is only two minutes into a 10 minute debate, and time is given to set the foundation for a case to be put. I am sure the honourable member will come back to the matter before the Chair which relates to a recommendation of the Western Region Children's Services Office.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: Apart from the member for Hanson, who has moved a motion which has no relationship to his electorate, I note also that the Federal member for Hawker, which does not contain Kurralta Park, is also seeking involvement although in her case not only is it not in her current electorate, it is not a Federal matter: it is a State one, a State matter in which I have been actively involved from the very beginning of that document's being released by the Children's Services Office.

I acted immediately on behalf of that kindergarten without any political grandstanding, without any Party political posturing. I am particularly fond of this kindergarten; it is one where I have always been made to feel welcome since I first took it under my wing in 1985 following the last redistribution. I believe I have a very good relationship with the parents and with Judy Neagle and the staff of the Kurralta Park Kindergarten. They have great community support, support which in the remaining time left to me after that point of order taken by the member for Hanson, I will explain.

There is great community support and great community involvement. One of the things I particularly enjoy about the Kurralta Park Kindergarten is that so many of the parents one sees there involved at kindergarten level one sees two or three years later at the Richmond Primary School as leading members of the community involved with the school council, and then later on at high school level.

I am very disappointed at the political posturing in here that has been taking place, and I am concerned that it may have an effect on the delicate negotiations that have been instigated by me in relation to this matter. The honourable member opposite quoted from the letter by Nelly Jaksa, and a very fine letter it was, because it contained several points that I had suggested she incorporate in the letter. So much for the knowledge of the member opposite.

I have attended quite a few meetings about this issue at the Kurralta Park Kindergarten and at other nearby venues. I have not seen the member for Hanson present at those meetings. Indeed, I met with the Kurralta Park Kindergarten executive here on the first floor of Parliament House one evening during a sitting only two weeks ago. I have lobbied the Minister and her predecessor; I have lobbied the Children's Services Office; I have lobbied the local branch of that body; I have lobbied the West Torrens council; and I have personally answered 60 letters from individual electors in my constituency and answered countless telephone calls.

I encouraged and assisted them to prepare a petition on which they have obtained nearly 1 500 signatures from people in their local community—not the usual sort of signatures that we often see that come from Christies Beach, Tea Tree Gully that have been collected in a

supermarket. These are signatures of 1 500 active supporters of the kindergarten and its immediate environment. I do not have time, unfortunately (partly because so much has been stolen from me by a point of order), to quote at any great length from various documents, but some of the points I have made, for example, in my representations to the Minister involve, first of all, the geographic one—that compared with the other kindergartens that were cited in that report from the Children's Services Office, the closure (and I quote)—

of the Kurralta Park Kindergarten would leave a gap in the provision of services in that particular part of the local district because of the distance of Kurralta Park Kindergarten from other centres. This should be clearly evident from the map even as the crow flies, and in actual practice the presence of creeks and other natural barriers makes it even more difficult to traverse the local territory.

I also pointed out:

A significant proportion of the parents are single parents without transport, and for this and other reasons it appears that a disproportionate number rely on walking their small children to the kindergarten.

The tragedy of it is this:

The closure of Kurralta Park Kindergarten would not redirect these individuals to another preschool centre. It would deprive them of preschool services altogether.

I sought the support of the West Torrens council because I knew how sympathetic to that particular kindergarten His Worship the Mayor, George Robertson, was: it was the kindergarten his two children had attended. I also knew that the local ward councillors, Ken Richards and George Demetriou, were also highly sympathetic, and so I wrote to the council as follows:

If council could dispose of the kindergarten land at Kurralta Park and at Plympton and then provide a new location on council land within a kilometre of the Kurralta Park Kindergarten, a new kindergarten could perhaps be constructed nearby which would not be vulnerable to closure proposals based upon its facilities being in any way substandard. The Kurralta Park building is not particularly good but there is a great community demand for a kindergarten in that suburb and there is tremendous support by residents for their local Kurralta Park Kindergarten because of its wonderful atmosphere and its dedicated staff.

I then went on to say:

An alternative solution might be to upgrade and extend the existing building on the existing Kurralta Park site, if that is a practical proposition.

As a result of that, the Children's Services Office has undertaken new negotiations with the West Torrens council. I am confident that in the short term the kindergarten will be saved. However, I am concerned that long-term preservation may be jeopardised by the meddling here today of members opposite with their stupid political posturing. I am concerned about establishing a long-term future for the kindergarten on a viable site with viable facilities. So much for what the honourable member opposite knows! I have a letter from Brenton Wright which concludes as follows:

I would therefore appreciate your comments and support for a solution that results in long-term gains for the community. Please let me assure you at this time that, should a solution involving the relocation of Kurralta Park prove impossible to implement, then the existing Kurralta Park Kindergarten will remain open in the current premises.

However, I am hopeful that because of the great support given by the West Torrens council over the years, and the support being evidenced at the moment, provided

negotiations are not upset because of the meddling by the honourable member opposite, they will be able to establish this kindergarten with a good, secure long-term future on this site in much more satisfactory premises.

I confidently believe that at the end of the day the various events I have set in train will not only preserve Kurralta Park Kindergarten, which I value so highly, but also will result eventually in a better quality facility for my constituents. I hope that my work is not spoilt by the honourable member's motion. I ask him to accept my amendment and, in the absence of that acceptance, I ask the House and you, Sir, who would not like something like this happening in your electorate with another member intervening in your patch of the woods, to support the amendment in lieu of the original motion.

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

STATE BANK

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): I move:

That this House views with concern—

- (a) the actions of the State Bank in the management of its non-performing loans;
 - (b) the composition of the GAMD Board; and
 - (c) the potential for further significant losses to be sustained by the GAMD;
- and therefore calls on the Treasurer to—
- (i) reconsider the composition of the GAMD Board to ensure that it contains people with proven track records in banking and management of businesses in receivership; and
 - (ii) provide quarterly financial statements, audited by the Auditor-General, to the Parliament on the operations of the GAMD.

In moving this motion I am cognisant of the changes that have taken place, but I am very unhappy with the fact and particularly concerned that the changes that have been instituted in relation to splitting the bad bank and the good bank will not serve the best interests of South Australians. While the Opposition agrees in principle to the change, I have some very serious concerns about the way in which the bad bank will operate.

It is important to reflect on some of the management decisions made by the GAMD Bank in its operations and, in particular, its management of non-performing loans. The Opposition has been provided with a number of examples and I have received some that I will share with the House. We will shortly have a rural finance report to the Parliament and I will not reflect on that but, as we criss-crossed the countryside and held meetings in various rural centres, members were advised of a number of examples of the State Bank bullying its rural clients.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:

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

Mr S.J. BAKER: I mentioned the case of Mr John Carmichael because he has raised the issue with me, and I have raised the issue with the State Bank. I presume that some correspondence is somehow trickling down to the Treasurer, who is responsible for the GAMD. Mr Carmichael was a member of two companies which were financed by the State Bank. His share of those companies is very small. He has a limited interest in them because there is a large number of shareholders or participants.

Mr Carmichael is in the process of being bankrupted by the lawyers of Pegasus under the instructions of the State Bank. What is becoming quite apparent is that this is a lawyer-led management of the State Bank's bad bank operations. I do not know from where the instructions have emanated, but it seems that, if you have a problem, apply all the legal power you can to that problem; threaten people and try to force them into bankruptcy. You might spend up to \$500 000 and, at the end of the day, it might be possible to recoup but a few thousand dollars.

The Carmichael case is very interesting because Mr Carmichael sought a part 10 arrangement under the Bankruptcy Act. Amongst a number of others, he had been affected by this recession. He was granted a part 10 arrangement to meet a certain proportion of his debts with his creditors. The State Bank representatives, who could not manage a chook raffle, turned up at the proceedings and were unqualified to have their debts recognised—unqualified because they were ill prepared. The solution, which is very interesting, is that the bank decided that, because it could not get into the part 10 arrangement, it would defy Commonwealth law and institute bankruptcy proceedings against Mr Carmichael. That is quite unconscionable, and in fact it could have recovered most of its moneys by some very simple means under the part 10 arrangement. Now we have a suit costing up to possibly \$100 000 to recover a few thousand dollars.

I have been provided with information about a motel and roadhouse complex on the Hume Highway in New South Wales. The original investors have defaulted on their loan, and a proposition has been put to the State Bank by one of the creditors to that same group of investors. The State Bank has seen fit to wipe off \$9 million of the loan and give it back to the people who were in receivership, although they had a decent offer from this person to whom I refer and the matter could have been settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. The interesting thing about this case is that the person who made the original investment decision was also involved in the renegotiation of the contract, and that raises some serious questions about the way in which the bank operates.

Last week a person who has been told to vacate his home rang me, and I have written to the State Bank about this case. He was caught up in the melee that occurred during the late 1980s, and has said that he will make every attempt to meet his commitments, because he mortgaged his house in partnership with his relations. That became a non-performing loan. However, there is enough equity in the house to ensure that he can keep his house and meet his commitments, so it can become a performing loan under a normal housing loan, yet again the State Bank has issued orders for him to get out. We have heard already the case of the Loverings from Kangaroo Island—quite despicable—where the State Bank—

Mr Atkinson: That is not a nice thing to say about the Loverings.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I am saying that the actions of the State Bank are quite despicable, as the member for Spence would well recognise. What has happened there is that the State Bank has not only instituted proceedings,

threatened the Loverings and called in as many of the relatives as possible to secure the asset by threat and intimidation but also has ensured that all the other financial authorities involved have been made aware, so that they have no credit with which to operate, no food to put on the table and no fuel to put in the tractor, because the State Bank is playing the bully boy instead of taking a reasonable approach. A large number of businesses in this country have gone bust through no fault of their own, basically through economic circumstances brought about by the mismanagement of the Federal Government, and some blame also attaches to the State Government.

We should look at some of the schemes of arrangement that have already been organised. In a recent paper, for example, was the case of Austereo, which had a very large loan with the State Bank and \$16 million was forgiven, with a scheme of arrangement put in place to allow Austereo to keep trading. I do not criticise that scheme of arrangement, but the way in which people are treated quite differently is very interesting. If you are large or seen to have some power in this town, then you have a scheme of arrangement. If you are a little smaller, you get banged round the head by the bully boys of the State Bank, and I presume that will continue under the management of the GAMD. There have been a number of other examples, which I will quote at another time.

My second item of concern is the composition of the GAMD board. I am concerned, as are a number of people throughout this town who have come to me and said, 'It's not going to work.' It will not work, because the people on the board have inappropriate skills. The board comprises a Mr Ruse, who will be the Chairman. Another member of the board is the Deputy Crown Solicitor, Mr Martin, and there is a person by the name of Glidden. I would ask this House to reflect on the wisdom of those choices. Mr Ruse, for example, has not had an enviable track record with the South Australian Superannuation Fund Investment Trust. We know that there must be a conflict of interest with Mr Glidden, because he is a Director of SABCO, and SABCO must be within the bad bank, the GAMD. I ask this House what the hell the Treasurer is doing with his appointments to the board. I am told that Mr Martin is quite competent but, again, I ask: what is the Crown Solicitor's Office doing in there?

If the Crown Solicitor's Office is to be represented, let us ensure that the board is properly balanced. Let us ensure that there is someone with strong banking expertise to guide the bad bank through its rocky passages; someone who has some skill in managing firms out of receivership; someone who can actually sit down and work out schemes of arrangement; someone who can actually pilot some of these firms through the difficult times ahead; and someone who can ensure that we get the best price possible for the assets within the bad bank, the GAMD. That is what I expected, but it is not what the Treasurer gave us. He gave us three people, at least two of whom I would query in regard to relevance and appropriateness for the job.

My next concern is about the potential for significant losses. We have over \$3 billion of assets within the bad bank, and it will need all the expertise of the staff to ensure that the taxpayers do not sustain further losses. This House already knows that the Treasurer has a liability of \$450 million on his books which he is yet to

pay and which he is hoping he does not need to pay. He has also admitted that there is a likely loss of another \$400 million which will somehow have to be financed, mostly through SAFA. So, to say that I am concerned is an understatement.

We are operating in a very difficult climate. The Auditor-General must be involved. We must ensure that Parliament is kept informed, and that is why I have suggested that Parliament should have quarterly statements audited by the Auditor-General to ensure that we are kept fully informed about what is happening within the bad bank, within the GAMD. To do less leaves this very inadequate board and a group of individuals, many of whom were responsible for some of the loan decisions that they are now having to reassess, in charge of over \$3 billion. We have suffered enough. Currently, the estimate of losses is \$3 150 million.

For this Parliament to not take action to ensure that \$3 150 million does not grow to \$3 500 million or \$4 000 million would be quite unconscionable. I expect this Parliament to accept my motion. I expect this Parliament to come to grips with a very difficult situation, because the times will not get any easier. The property market is still going down; businesses are still going bankrupt; the recession—that we had to have, according to Mr Keating—is a depression, and it will hang around for far longer than any of us would hope.

Under those conditions, we need far more wisdom and ability in the management of the assets of the bad bank. We need this Parliament to be kept up to date, and we need people to be answerable for their actions. In relation to those cases I mentioned, we need somehow to ensure that if things are going wrong, if decisions are being made which are not in the best interests of the taxpayers and the people concerned, someone can say, 'Let's call a halt to this; let's reassess this; and let's improve the situation so that we can get a better result than if it were to continue.' I recommend the motion to the House.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

AUSTRALIAN WHEAT BOARD

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Venning:

That this House urges the Federal Government to continue to provide a guarantee on the Australian Wheat Board's borrowings to enable the board to continue to make 'first payments' to Australian wheat growers.

(Continued from 7 October. Page 686.)

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier): When I rose to speak in this debate last week I said that I did not intend to get involved at that time because I wanted to do some research into the subject. The only reason I got involved was that a rather vicious attack was made by the member for Victoria against my colleague the member for Henley Beach. I confess that I became so irate over that attack that I entered into the debate. In some ways I wish that I had not, because I used four minutes of my time to in effect rebut the member for Victoria. If I had spent that time on research, which I subsequently did, I would have established very quickly that the motion moved by the member for Custance was a complete

waste of time and totally irrelevant. The motion was moved on 7 October. I made a quick telephone to the Minister, the Hon. Simon Crean, in Canberra (I happen to know Simon well—he is aware of my agricultural pursuits) who often gives me advice on the way I should plan my property. As a matter of fact, he has recommended that I go into deer farming. He thinks there is a good chance that I could establish a rather profitable business—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will link his remarks about deer to the Australian wheat growers, won't he?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Yes, Sir. I was trying to establish that I have a very good working relationship with the Hon. Simon Crean. When I eventually rang Simon he said—

The SPEAKER: Order! The custom in the House is to refer to other parliamentarians, whether they be in this House or in another House, by the electorate they represent or the position they hold in that Parliament. I would ask the member for Napier to honour that custom.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Sorry, Sir. When I eventually got through to the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, the Hon. Simon Crean, MP, I found that a press release was in existence, and the press release—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The member for Custance, who interjects out of his seat, Sir—

The SPEAKER: The Chair is well aware of that.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: —says, 'Rubbish.' I will read it out. The media release of the Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, Simon Crean, MP, on 8 October 1992 states:

'Government Announces New Wheat Marketing Arrangements.' The Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, Simon Crean, today announced a package of initiatives for the grains industry which provide a framework for growth to the end of the decade. Mr Crean said today's announcement provides the potential for the future development of a vertically integrated grains industry while also recognising the current reality of trading our commodity in a corrupted international trading environment. It will also promote security in the industry, allowing growers and other industry participants to plan with more certainty. 'The package has the agreement of the Grains Council of Australia (GCA), the nation's peak grower body, with whom I have held intensive discussions over the past 12 months. I have also consulted a wide range of other bodies associated with the industry,' he said. The key elements of the package are: the continuation of a single desk for AWB. The Government will review this position subject to the progress in the Uruguay Round and as any successful reforms arising from the Round become effective—

and this is the real crunch of it all; it is not my imagination but a media release of the Federal Minister—

an extension until June 1999 of the Government's guarantee of Australian Wheat Board (AWB) borrowings (as distinct from price underwriting) at 85 per cent of estimated net pool returns.

This is exactly what the motion of the member for Custance asks for. I have the utmost respect for the member for Custance. In fact, he advises me continually on how to operate my vast landholdings. He must have been aware of this, because the peak body of which he is a member has been involved in intensive negotiations with the Hon. Simon Crean, MP. I would never accuse the member for Custance of moving a motion which he knew was to be announced by the Minister the following day. The member for Davenport, yes, but never the

member for Custance. Therefore, I find it rather awkward that I have to expose the member for Custance for the little bit of hypocrisy that he indulged in on 7 October. No-one denies the concern of the member for Custance for the guarantees that wheat growers should have in this country, and I said that last week in my response.

No-one denies that the member for Custance has continually championed the cause of wheat growers not only in his electorate but in the whole of South Australia and Australia. The member for Custance has continually gone on record condemning the United States Government and the European Economic Community; in fact, he seconded one of my motions which condemned those countries for putting Australian wheat growers in the situation they face today. He then stands up and says there is a degree of uncertainty—and these are his words—in the Australian wheat growing community because there is no guarantee, and the day after, the Hon. Simon Crean, MP, announces after 12 months intensive consultation that this guarantee has been established. It might be that the member for Custance faxed his speech to Canberra and Simon Crean responded, but I think that is very unlikely.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: There is a real problem of credibility.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Napier will resume his seat. As the mover of the motion, the member for Custance will have the right of reply in this debate. Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: An attachment to the press release headed 'Agreed wheat package' states:

Government guarantee of borrowings—under sections 77 and 78 of the Wheat Marketing Act 1989, the Government's guarantee of AWB [Australian Wheat Board] borrowings is to continue at a level of 85 per cent of the aggregate estimated net pool return for the period from now until June 1999. The guaranteed borrowings will continue to be used to make advance and cash out payments to growers and for operational costs associated with wheat pools.

That is exactly what the member for Custance argued for. I have no problem with the sincerity of the member for Custance and what he wants to achieve for his fellow growers or with his using this forum to promote those concerns, but the honourable member should at least stand up publicly and say, 'It's a fair cop; I've been caught out' or I would even accept an apology in the corridor. But for the member for Custance, in effect, to cry foul is not in keeping with the usually impeccable way that he acts in this Chamber.

I am not saying that the Hon. Simon Crean telephoned the member for Custance but, bearing in mind the standing of the honourable member and that of his family within the grain industry, one would have thought that he could be accused—although I am not making this accusation—of making a speech just before it happened. I could have forecast after the 1989 State election that the member for Semaphore would be the Speaker and, when it happened, I could have said, 'I told you so,' but I did not do that: I let events take their course. Therefore, I could not be accused of hypocrisy.

I know that has nothing to do with the motion, but it is an analogy where someone, knowing in advance what an outcome would be, could make such a plea to this House.

The member for Custance was spot on in his speech about the area of uncertainty, but the Federal Minister said in his press release that there had to be intensive negotiations.

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

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Napier will resume his seat. The member for Flinders.

Mr BLACKER (Flinders): I fully support the motion, and I do so because notice of this motion was given on 9 September. That is when the member for Custance indicated that he wanted to move this motion—a long time before the Federal Government came out and gave a commitment to what it is all about, that is, some guarantee for the future of the wheat growers of South Australia. The member for Napier indicated that he strongly supports the agricultural areas; I suggest that he go out and speak to people in those areas, because they are concerned. South Australia is dependent upon wheat and grain commodities and, as in every other industry, it is important that a reasonable assurance in relation to income can be achieved. All this motion seeks is to encourage the Federal Minister for Primary Industries to give a guarantee.

Let me explain what the guarantee means: it would enable the Wheat Board to borrow money so that it could pay 85 per cent of the expected returns for wheat to grain growers as a first advance. Otherwise, as the honourable member would know if he checked with grain growers, it can sometimes take three years to sell wheat. Surely, no member in this House expects a commodity producer to wait for three years to be paid for that commodity. This is what the system is all about. Notice of the motion was given on 9 September and it was debated in subsequent weeks.

Last week we heard the member for Henley Beach spend his entire time talking about subsidies. This motion makes no reference to subsidies—it has nothing to do with subsidies. It will not cost the taxpayer any money and, if in one year the taxpayer is called upon, that money has to be repaid by the industry in the next year. Therefore, there can be no long-term impact on the taxpayer at all.

The motion relates to a guarantee by the Government to enable the Wheat Board to go to its financiers, whether they be within Australia or overseas, to borrow funds so that it can pay a reasonable first advance to Australian grain growers. The efficiency of the payments system has improved considerably, and it is now reasonable to expect that the first advance is in the grain grower's account 14 days after the date of delivery. That is something we certainly did not have in the past.

In the old days, with bagged deliveries, after the final load was completed, the farmer would go in, make his claim and do his calculations; three or four weeks later, a first advance payment would be made. He would then wait for the second, third or sometimes the fifth year for the final payment. This motion states that the Government should provide that guarantee so that grain growers are given access to those funds. After all, it is their grain that is being sold on their behalf. It is an asset that is being held in trust by the Wheat Board, and the

payment involved is really just an advance of the funds to be paid.

The motion was moved on 7 October. It has been commented that the Minister brought down his report on 8 October. Full marks to the member for Custance for moving the motion. It is not the difference between 7 October and 8 October that is important; what is important is the fact that the House was notified about the motion on 9 September. I give my full support to the member for Custance. The industry about which he is talking is one with which I have a close association. Most of my constituents are wheat growers and most of them therefore know the gravity of the situation. My only criticism of what the member for Napier said is that not 85 per cent but 90 per cent should be involved in respect of the guarantee so that the first advance can be paid. To argue from that point on is a matter of semantics. I fully support the motion.

Mr VENNING (Custance): I thank those members who have contributed to the debate. I have to say how disappointed I was tonight to hear the comments of the member for Napier.

Members interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Various matters are dealt with behind the scenes, and I thought that what the honourable member did tonight was pretty low. As my colleague the member for Flinders said, notice of this motion was given on 9 September, but the member for Napier had the audacity to suggest that I could be accused of pinching these ideas from a paper. What the industry wanted was well known. It was pure luck that I said 85 per cent when it could have been 90 per cent or 80 per cent. I took 85 per cent as a middle figure and that is the figure that the Federal Minister took. It was pure luck. The rest was well known.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

Mr VENNING: As the member for Coles says, it was astute possibly to take a middle road. I was disappointed that the member for Napier spent the time of the House trying to belittle the whole argument. This is a victory for

wheat growers, for commonsense and for the bipartisan approach, at least at Federal level. The comments in this House tonight do not become the member for Napier. I thank all who took part in the debate and I commend the motion to the House.

Motion carried.

MOUNT BARKER ROAD

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. D.C. Wotton:

That this House calls on the Minister of Transport Development to advise the Parliament what immediate action the Government is going to take to alleviate significant problems on the Mount Barker Road between Cross Road and the commencement of the South-Eastern Freeway due to hazardous driving conditions as a result of fuel spillages and considerable delays as a result of accidents and breakdowns involving heavy vehicles.

(Continued from 14 October. Page 839.)

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): I move:

Delete all words after 'House' and insert:

notes those actions already undertaken by the Government and those currently in train to alleviate hazardous driving conditions on the Mount Barker Road between Cross Road and the commencement of the South-Eastern Freeway.

If I have sufficient time I wish to outline those actions that have been and will be taken by the Government to address this problem. The motion moved by the member for Heysen concerns the problems caused by heavy vehicles using the South-Eastern Freeway and the Mount Barker Road, particularly when those vehicles are involved in an accident that blocks the road and causes delays to commuters. So that we can get some idea of the problem, I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* a table which sets out details of accidents that have occurred between Glen Osmond Road and the Crafers interchange over each of the past three years and in the first quarter of 1992.

The SPEAKER: It is purely statistical, is it?

Mr HOLLOWAY: Yes, Mr Speaker.

Leave granted.

Mount Barker Road—Between Glen Osmond Road and Crafers Interchange
(not including end intersections and interchange)

| | All Accidents | | | | Semi-trailers and Trucks | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------|------|----------------------|--------------------------|------|------|----------------------|
| | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 (1st Qtr) | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 (1st Qtr) |
| Fatals | Nil | Nil | Nil | 1 | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Personal Injury | 38 | 22 | 44 | 11 | 1 | 3 | 2 | Nil |
| Property Damage | 191 | 158 | 155 | 35 | 24 | 22 | 16 | 3 |
| Totals | 229 | 180 | 199 | 47 | 25 | 25 | 18 | 3 |

Mr HOLLOWAY: Those statistics show that there has been a decline in the number of accidents over the three years, particularly accidents involving semitrailers and trucks, and that decline in the accident rate has continued during the first quarter of the current year. That is hardly surprising since this Government has implemented a number of measures to reduce the hazard on that road. Some \$7.7 million has been spent on that stretch of road to deal with the problem.

First, I want to outline what the Government proposes to do in case there is an accident. We have certainly spent a lot of money to improve that stretch of road, but, because it is such an important link with the eastern States and because it is used by so many heavy vehicles, it is likely that from time to time there will be accidents, so we need a strategy to cope with that eventuality.

The Government has developed an emergency traffic diversion strategy jointly with the Police Department and the Department of Road Transport. This strategy

comprises the activation of large traffic hazard warning signs permanently installed alongside the Mount Barker Road. These signs are equipped with yellow flashing lights to alert the attention of drivers to the need to take special care. The strategy also comprises, as appropriate, diversions of traffic. There are two routes that can be taken. They are the Upper Sturt Road and the Greenhill Road, and there can be a diversion down the Mount Barker Road through emergency openings in the median barriers and then using the opposite carriageway of the Mount Barker Road.

The other part of the strategy comprises, where appropriate, the holding of large commercial vehicles at Glen Osmond or Crafers to prevent further delays on that road in the event of an accident. That strategy was developed three years ago. In the light of experience, it is now being upgraded in consultation with the police and the District Council of Stirling. Additional large traffic hazard warning signs will be installed on the freeway east of the Stirling interchange to warn Adelaide-bound drivers and they will also be installed at Glen Osmond on the approaches to the Portrush Road intersection to warn Crafers-bound drivers.

It is intended that these new signs will be activated by the police by remote control. Further, additional direction and warning signs have been installed along the Upper Sturt Road and Greenhill Road diversion routes to assist drivers and to prevent secondary accidents occurring along those routes when they are carrying the additional traffic volumes, in the event of it being necessary to divert traffic. Further, permanent stores of signs will be established along the Mount Barker Road to avoid the need for signs to be taken down from Crafers. Additionally, the practicability is being examined of converting existing traffic hazard warning signs to remote control and installing remotely controlled flashing lights on selected lighting poles along the Mount Barker Road to supplement the traffic hazard warning signs. So, they—

The SPEAKER: Order! Time has expired.
Debate adjourned.

At 8.41 p.m., the bells having been rung:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

APPROPRIATION BILL

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

That due to the changes in the structures of the various departments contained in the schedule of the Appropriation Bill a message be sent to the Legislative Council informing the Council of that fact and requesting the Legislative Council to return the Bill to enable the schedule to be altered.

Motion carried.

AMBULANCE SERVICES BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 11 August. Page 69.)

Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide): At the beginning of my contribution to the debate I should like to point out that it is my belief, and that of members on this side of the House, that St John is a particularly fine organisation with magnificent traditions. Indeed, some of my very earliest memories, and I am sure those of other members in the House, are of being at places such as the Royal Show, football finals, and so on, and the ubiquitous presence of the St John officers who were and still are loved and admired by South Australia's people. It is my view and that of the Opposition that everybody felt safer in the presence of the crisply uniformed St John officers, particularly with their universally present younger acolytes in grey shirts and black beret with a bag slung over their shoulders containing their various wares.

Those feelings remain towards the St John officers. However, it is my sad duty to report that I believe there is some ambivalence now in that attitude because of longer-term troubles—not, may I say, trouble with any specific service that is provided. Sadly, however, there is a lack of knowledge as to, and indeed an ambivalence because of, industrial troubles. I think it is a shame that those very positive feelings towards St John are in any way tainted. Many ambulance officers serving today to whom I have spoken are excellent servants who are dedicated to their work, and a number of them dislike what has occurred industrially over the past three to four years. Indeed, they have no hesitation in expressing their displeasure to me. That is because the people of South Australia, as I mentioned before, have perhaps had some of their feelings towards the St John officers eroded because of industrial troubles which they do not understand.

This Bill is the denouement of the past three to four years troubles but, in being the denouement of these troubles, it attempts to entrench a monopoly. It is my view that in entrenching this monopoly it presents any Minister of Health with huge conflicts of interest with which I shall deal later. There is now a question in relation to standards, as I will show later. Previous attempts were made to achieve these ends in 1991, and that is mentioned in the second reading explanation given by the Minister of Health, who I acknowledge in this instance is the former Minister of Health. The 1991 Bill attempted to define an ambulance service and, in doing so, caught a very wide net. Despite all the fears held in the community that many of the volunteer Rotarians, Apexians, and so on, who drove people to hospital would be liable to be fined if they were not licensed, the Minister's second reading explanation states:

Legal advice was that they would not be.

I find it strange—if the Minister is so sure that they would not be caught in this particularly wide net—that we are now going to this trouble 18 months on and many sessions of Parliament later with this redrafting.

Surely the advice provided to Parliamentary Counsel 18 months ago was adequate and, if not, one can only ask what went wrong. This Bill attempts to get around the problems created by previous attempts by defining an 'ambulance'. Unfortunately, however, the Government has been hoist on its own petard, and there are problems with this definition which I will demonstrate later. The effect on the public of South Australia of these industrial disputes, which I mentioned previously, is huge. Not

only have they caused uncertainty and ambivalence in the comfortable relationship that South Australians felt with the St John personnel, but also—and perhaps most importantly in relation to this Bill, which attempts to entrench a monopoly—the effect of the industrial disputes is felt in the hip pocket of South Australians.

About five years ago all fees for ambulance carries were \$120 plus mileage. On 1 December 1990 new ambulance charging arrangements came into effect as follows: for an elective carry the call-out fee in the country was \$82.60 with a kilometre rate of \$2.20 per kilometre, and in the city call-out was \$110 and \$2.20 per kilometre. For an emergency call-out in the country it was \$82.60 with \$2.20 per kilometre. However, on 1 December 1990 the emergency call-out fee in the city jumped from \$120 to \$300—a very significant jump. I shall deal with the causes of this jump later.

I have a personal example of what these emergency call-outs mean. A friend of my older daughter was surfing at the dump at Victor Harbor—a well-known surfing spot—and, as sometimes happens at these beaches, a young larrikin was unable to control his board and it cannoned into the back of the leg of my daughter's friend. There was some doubt (although I was not there at the time) as to exactly what effect this had caused, and someone (I am not sure who) called an ambulance. My daughter's friend was taken from the dump, and those who frequent the Fleurieu Peninsula would know that the distance from the dump to the South Coast is not great: exactly 4km. I know that it is 4km because shortly after that I received a bill for \$308.80 for a particularly well child to be transported 4km. That clearly consisted of a \$300 emergency call-out fee and \$2.20 a kilometre for the four kilometre journey.

Mr Atkinson: You should have asked who called the ambulance.

Dr ARMITAGE: The honourable member suggests that I should have asked who called the ambulance. I was too meek; I just paid the bill. Now the situation has altered further and it hits the hip pockets of the South Australian public even more, in that the call-out fee is now \$385, having jumped from \$300. As is well recognised and well known, on 1 July 1993 an emergency call-out fee for an ambulance will be \$450. I remind members that prior to 1 December 1990 the cost was \$120. That is a huge jump, caused as I shall detail later by the changes following the industrial disputes. It is a huge fee for people who are often in distress, because clearly everyone in the House realises that one does not call an ambulance in what one regards as an emergency if one is anything other than stressed. Those fees that I have demonstrated are the ones that we know. What South Australians do not know are the fees paid by SGIC for motor vehicle accidents. I believe that the public has a right to know. I would ask the Minister: what is the fee paid to St John by SGIC for each carry?

Various letters to the Editor have mentioned various figures, some of which may be inflated and some of which may be deflated, but I would put to the Minister that the figures must be available because it is a jolly big business. In the absence of the figures being provided, accusations of the compulsory third party scheme propping up the ambulances can be sustained. I am certain that the information, if provided, would stop those

accusations. I look forward to receiving that information. If the figures are provided, and they are not exorbitant, it will put the rumblings to rest permanently.

Another anxiety in relation to SGIC is the question: how many ambulances are despatched to each motor vehicle accident? Again I ask the Minister: is there any particular policy on this, given that there are call-out fees as I have detailed of quite large amounts? Clearly, if an ambulance is called out and is not utilised and a fee is raised, if that is impacting on the compulsory third party scheme, South Australians ought to know.

So, why have the ambulance fees gone up so much affecting all South Australians? I will quote from a discussion paper written on 10 August 1992 for the country conferences of St John Ambulance, in which someone high up in the administration of the organisation wrote:

It is true that volunteer branches do not have the very significant ambulance officer salary costs which are incurred in the metropolitan area and major country centres, and that the major component of the emergency fee results from the need to recover such costs.

We have the admission from someone in the administration section of St John Ambulance that the major component of the huge increase in costs results from the need to recover such costs.

It is particularly interesting to look at a small article that appeared in the *Advertiser* of 31 October 1991, nearly 12 months ago, in response to a question I had asked in the Parliament. The then Minister of Health indicated that the rises in call-out fees for ambulances, which I detailed, had nothing to do with the introduction of paid ambulance staff in the metropolitan area. I understand only too well the game of politics, but I am disappointed that the former Minister of Health was clearly misleading the public of South Australia as to the reasons for large increases in ambulance costs.

What, then, is the effect on hospitals of an increase in ambulance fees, given that there is a South Australian Health Commission directive as part of the Medicare agreement that transferring hospitals are to pay the fees? Again, the same document from which I quoted before in relation to the country conferences indicates:

There should be no impact on country hospitals as a result of our new fee structure as the Health Commission is committed to compensate them fully for the effect of the price variation.

I am pleased that that is the case, because I do not believe that the hospitals ought to be asked to cut back services because of fee rises over which they have absolutely no control. But is this the case in every public hospital in South Australia, particularly given the well recognised plight of public hospitals at the moment? The Bill further shows that the Minister has the power to set fees. I believe that South Australians may well ask: will the Minister guarantee in setting fees that there will be no reduction in services to meet the increases in ambulance fees?

In other words, will the Health Commission pay for fees generated by increased ambulance fees? If not, the public of South Australia has every reason to ask: what is the estimate of the effect of these increased fees on service provision? The total cost of the ambulance service before the paid staff and after the paid staff were exclusively employed has, in figures given to me,

involved a variation of over 100 per cent as a direct effect of the salary component.

That is what South Australia has paid for by its transfer of ambulance officers to paid employees. In any transaction, one gets something for the money, so what have South Australians got for these extra fees? I should like to quote the example of the Mount Gambier service. Before 1989, in the day-time there were two fully manned ambulances and, at night-time, two manned crews of volunteers. Now, following the transfer to fully paid ambulance officers, Mount Gambier, in the day-time, has one ambulance manned and one ambulance crew on call and, at night-time, one ambulance is manned and one ambulance crew is on call. In other words, for the extra cost—which I am told is in the vicinity of \$2 000 per week, although I will be happy for the Minister to correct me if I am wrong—there is half the ambulance provision. That to me does not seem like a good deal for the people of Mount Gambier. I may be naive but, if one pays a great deal of extra money, one would normally expect to receive more rather than less.

I should also like to highlight the example of Murray Bridge, where the paid ambulance officers staff the station since it has been designated a major country or city-type centre, but the volunteers are not allowed to work there. What I find interesting is that, because of the payment and the lesser number of ambulances available, it is not uncommon for the Murray Bridge ambulance to be transferring a patient to Adelaide, for example, at which stage it will call on Tailem Bend for cover, and Tailem Bend is a volunteer station.

There is a true dichotomy of views in that example. Further, one asks: what has the populace of South Australia received for the money it is paying? It has received changes to rosters where I am told a number of staff are now full-time rather than working overtime. I am also told that there are quite considerable compensation payments to the staff for these roster changes. Given the commitment of South Australians via their hip pocket and via their taxes and the Government contribution, it is reasonable for South Australians to ask: how many of these compensation payments have occurred, and what is the monetary figure? So, that deals with what has happened in various stations.

I should like to quote one example as to what an individual has got out of these changes. I would like to quote the case of an ageing man who had a haemorrhoid operation done at Murray Bridge. Because of the pressure on early discharges, this man was discharged from the hospital on a Sunday to be sent home to Tailem Bend. As is often the case in the country—and it is one of the most telling arguments against closing country hospitals—no Sunday public transport was available at that stage, and this ageing man, having just been discharged from hospital, could not afford an ambulance. So, the doctor who had discharged him, at the end of the round, going back to Tailem Bend, found this man hitchhiking home because he could not afford the ambulance cover.

Given these dilemmas for South Australians in general and individually, I think the attitude of some members of the Ambulance Employees Association—and only some, I stress, because I reiterate my previous statements that a number of ambulance officers to whom I have spoken are dedicated professionals—is called into question. It is the

view of members on this side of the House that one way of stopping huge fee rises is to bring competition into the system. As I have said before, this Bill unfortunately entrenches a monopoly.

I quote from a letter written to me by the Hon. John Klunder, when he was the Minister of Emergency Services, in relation to an inquiry I had received about a matter in Whitmore Square on 17 March 1992. It states:

At 7.58 p.m. on Tuesday 17 March 1992, the Police Communications Centre received a telephone call requesting that police attend St Lukes, as a meeting was being disrupted by about 30 ambulance employees who were banging on the outside door of the hall. At 8.07 p.m. two police patrols attended at the mission. Upon their arrival, the police officers observed between 30 and 50 people standing in close proximity to a locked doorway. The police officers spoke to a number of these people, who stated that they were St John officers who indicated that they were opposed to any organisation starting up in competition with St John.

That is nothing more and nothing less than union thuggery. However, the letter goes on:

In conclusion, police officers state that the persons outside the hall were, for the most part, quite orderly.

I believe that some of these 30 to 50 St John Ambulance officers were there with the express purpose of intimidating people who were talking about setting up a voluntary system for helping their fellow sick South Australians.

I accept that there were some there who were not disorderly, but I believe that the general thrust of what those 30 to 50 St John officers were intending to do is abhorrent. I think the anti-competition stance of those members of the Ambulance Employees Association is reflected in later parts of the Bill, with which I will deal later. Given that the AEA has instigated industrial action, we ask, 'What does it want? What are its goals from this industrial action?' To indicate this I quote from a letter that was written by the secretary of the AEA to Mr C.A. Campbell, the priory secretary of St John Ambulance Australia, on 18 March 1992. It states:

At a stop work meeting attended by 400 members (well over half the work force) held to discuss the dismissal of Mr . . . the following resolution was unanimously carried: 'This general meeting of the AEA calls for St John to withdraw immediately from the ambulance service.'

So here we have this universally recognised and loved institution of St John—worldwide recognition for its great services—and the AEA calls on it to withdraw immediately from the ambulance service. The letter continues:

In symbolic protest supporting our call, our members are currently covering the St John logo and name on all St John vehicles driven by them.

I think that that is very disappointing because I believe, just as I indicated the warmth of South Australians towards the St John Ambulance, that they would like that to continue. Clearly, the AEA does not want that to be extant. So I ask, 'Is it any wonder that South Australians have an ambivalent or uncertain attitude towards just what is going on with the ambulance services?'

Further talk of competition, which we have clearly seen the AEA members do not want, can be seen. The matter under question in this particular instance is differential fees for emergency work at country versus city stations where volunteers and paid employees work. Again I quote from the conference document on page 2:

Whilst it would be possible to have a different fee apply for emergency work which is carried out by purely voluntary staff centres without causing major confusion, difficulties would still exist where there is a close geographical relationship between the paid and volunteer branch and the client is likely to decide which service is to attend a case on the basis of the cheapest fee.

It is overpowering that that would have to be written down. Of course that would happen, but I would ask, 'What is the ambulance service there for? Doesn't it want to provide a service to South Australians as cheaply as possible? Is it there to provide jobs for the employees or is it there to provide a service?'

Clearly, if one looks at this example one has to say that it is not there to provide the cheapest possible fee for South Australians for their ambulance services. So I ask, 'What happens if there is no competition?' First—and this is undoubtedly the most important thing that happens if there is no competition anywhere—standards may drop. If there is no edge to maintain it is human nature to let things slide. If there is no competition in any sphere, it is my view and that of members on this side of the House—and I believe probably that of most people in South Australia—that standards drop.

To have a monopolistic non-competitive system enshrined in legislation for something as important as the ambulance service ought to be abhorred. What would happen if there were no competition? If there were only one licence, amateur sport would be drastically affected. At the moment, spectators provide an ambulance service to save money. Perhaps they are qualified—the parents of some of the people who play sport could be doctors—but that service is under threat under this legislation. If there is no competition, fees will rise—and I have already referred to that.

The 1990-91 annual report of the St John Ambulance South Australia Inc. is a fine document that details the many fine achievements of the St John Ambulance Service. It refers in particular to Andrea Smith of Vale Park, the young citizen of the year at Walkerville council—I well remember her receiving that award. On the front cover is a photograph of a number of cowboys, one of whom has clearly been gored in the head. This photograph is filled with irony, because it was taken at the Willomurra Rodeo, one of the first community examples of how South Australians are being affected by this new fee structure. An *Advertiser* article of 6 February 1991 states:

The mother of the bullrider who was badly gored on Australia Day wants ambulances stationed at rodeo events. At that particular time, St John Ambulance volunteers using a mobile medical unit treated Mr Maher after the bull's horn shattered bones in his cheek and upper nose and tore open his cheek . . .

But here is the crunch:

The co-organiser of the event at Willomurra near Kersbrook, Mr Michael McCormack, said the rodeo had planned to have an ambulance but could not afford the increased rates. Since new charges were introduced on 1 January it cost \$110 to have an ambulance at an event for the first hour and \$50 for every following hour with a travelling charge of \$2.20 per kilometre. The former rate was \$33 an hour with no travelling expenses.

Services are suffering. Money raised from past Riverland rodeos, which are under threat because of the non-availability of ambulances, has helped to build the Berri swimming pool, the hospital and the community centre. There are long-range ramifications. Charity organisations, one person said, should be able to get the ambulance at a lower rate, one they can afford. The then Deputy

Manager of St John Ambulance, Mr John Rawes, said yesterday:

The increased ambulance charges resulted from a State Government request to have the fees reflect the real cost of the service.

As I have indicated before, the real cost of the service is the wages paid to AEA employees. In regard to competition, at the country conference, the document from which I quoted earlier states:

Furthermore, to allow a competitive service in any form within the smaller country communities is a real threat to our core business.

I think most South Australians would regard the St John Ambulance Service as a service not a business, but when you see in stark language the words 'to allow a competitive service in any form . . . is a real threat to our core business', I think we can say to a certain extent that the service ethic has gone or, if it has not gone, it is on the way out.

Of course, that is a tragedy. Whilst on the subject of country volunteer ambulance services (which I was via their conference document), it is important to discuss the country capital reserve fund. This fund comes from moneys derived from profitable carries and, as I said, they go to the country capital reserve fund, and that money is often reutilised to provide better services and so on. It is clear from this fund that the country ambulance services well and truly pay their way. They deserve support, but legislative support for them is removed in this Bill.

Indeed, training for the people involved is not even recognised in this Bill. I refer to the Ambulance Services Act 1985 where, in section 4 (3) (e) (iii), in respect of the ambulance board, it provides that it develop:

the training and development of those who are engaged, or seek to become engaged, as employees or volunteers, in the St John Ambulance Service;

That is not addressed in this Bill. Perhaps more importantly, if we are looking at country services, a number of independent licences are held in the country, but there is a 12 month only grandfathering-in clause for these independent licences. I know what will happen at the end of 12 months or even before then, which is exactly why we intend to move an amendment to that part of the Bill.

Given the effect on the South Australian public of moving to fully paid staff, the public has a right to know that all efficiencies within the St John Ambulance Service are being pursued. Pages 48 to 52 of the report of the special review team 'Comprehensive Assessment of St John Ambulance Service', which I received unofficially many months ago and about which I am unclear whether there are any alterations, highlight a number of areas of expenditure that ought to be looked at. They include things such as the use of motor vehicles, general expenditure, the ratio of operational to non-operational staff, bad debts, logistic support services, double handling imposed by Government requirements and controls, minimisation of unnecessary carries, miscellaneous savings, waiting times at hospitals, publicity and promotions, changes to service delivery practices and so on.

I acknowledge that some of those have already been dealt with. I know that because the document I received is relatively old now, but I believe that it is important for

South Australians to know that all of those efficiencies that were identified by the consultancy have been dealt with. It is important that we know that so that we can be confident that our money has been well spent.

Looking at efficiencies, the media has recently highlighted money paid to Mr Bruce Paterson as a golden handshake or redundancy payment, and there are examples of people quoting that Mr Paterson had a service contract with the St John Council, which is still the overall employer of all paid staff, and his contract ran until his retirement age of 65. The final package was agreed based on the number of years he had to serve multiplied by his salary. Understandably, \$600 000 is seen as a large sum of money.

The South Australian public would like to know how many other redundancy payments have been made in the past few years by St John and, in particular, what is the source of those funds? I hope the Minister will enlighten us about that. The Minister's second reading explanation mentions a number of outcomes of the McKay review, such as a formal heads of agreement between the Government and the Priory, a document setting out the principles governing the conduct of the new ambulance service, the constitution of the nine person board of directors and a number of other extremely important documents when we are considering the future of ambulance services in South Australia.

None of those important documents is mentioned in the legislation and none has been provided to the Liberal Party. We are expected to debate legislation without what I suggest is reasonable information. I would seek that information as quickly as possible. Given the time limit for this debate, I believe it is impossible for us to give such important material the due consideration that it deserves, and I signal to the Parliament that we intend to look at those documents between now and when the legislation is debated in another place.

I mentioned earlier the dilemma in defining an ambulance and how the precursor to this Bill had caused a mess. The Bill clearly attempts to obviate the problem but, as I indicated before, it might well have created a greater monster. It seems to me from the definition of 'ambulance' that it would include such things as the Westpac State rescue helicopter. It would also definitively include commercial airlines which sometimes transport patients. I again cite a personal example. Many years ago, when I was at the Children's Hospital, I personally transported a patient to Sydney on a commercial airline, and clearly that was providing an ambulance service according to this definition. There are many problems with it.

What is the situation with a vehicle specially modified to transport a wheelchair with a patient on oxygen? What about Grand Prix medical vehicles? They are specifically modified and staffed to provide medical care when transporting a patient to hospital. Are those involved liable for a division 4 penalty of four years in gaol or a fine of \$15 000?

The definition of 'medical treatment' includes observation. Does that mean that a specially modified bus transporting children to and from Regency Park with a staff member present is an ambulance? What about interstate and RAAF aircraft? Does this definition include or exclude service ambulances? One country doctor wrote

to me indicating that vehicles often transport patients, perhaps for X-rays, and the patients are clearly observed because nursing staff are present.

Someone asked me about a wheelchair or a barouche transporting a patient between two hospitals. It happens quite frequently between the Children's Hospital and the Memorial Hospital. A patient may be transferred by a taxi that has been modified, and the patient may be accompanied by nursing staff for observation. What happens with the well-known St John Ambulance clinic cars? They are not modified or equipped, but they certainly provide an ambulance service.

What about hospitals that have far-flung campuses, such as the Royal Adelaide and Hampstead Centre? What about a nurse who travels with a patient from Port Lincoln to Whyalla in order to have X-rays because they are not available at Port Lincoln? Are they providing an ambulance service? The silly thing about the definitions as proposed is that, if one ran an ambulance service and made sure that the staff had no idea of what they were doing, one would be legal because the ambulances would not have been staffed to provide medical assistance.

We then move on to clause 6. This clause refers to a number of things, but in particular it mentions the provision of ambulance services of a high standard. Unfortunately, it does not define what a high standard is; unfortunately, it does not tell us who defines those high standards; and, unfortunately, it does not tell us who monitors them. I have had a number of representations about this matter, because people are concerned about it.

One person, who has a long history of involvement with the St John Ambulance Brigade, who has volunteered for ambulance work and who has served in higher office, indicates that a medical committee should be incorporated under this legislation. This person believes that such a committee should comprise a number of appropriate specialists, such as an intensivist, a surgeon, a cardiologist, a general physician, an accident and emergency fellow, a city GP and a rural GP. Indeed, it would be quite easy to have professional bodies elect such members. Given that standards are so important in the provision of an ambulance service, I think that is a reasonable expectation. Indeed, in a letter to a constituent of mine dated 21 July 1992, the former Minister of Health stated:

An ambulance services advisory committee has been established within the SA Health Commission to assess applications for licences to provide ambulance services and to advise concerning the granting of such licences. This committee is presently considering the complex issues of standards applicable to services to be licensed.

Clearly, thought has been given to the matter of standards, and I support that. However, I believe that the establishment of a committee such as I indicated before would seem appropriate. In addition, given that this committee would come under the Health Commission, it would be interesting to know who is on the committee, what standards they have set, whether they will continue to monitor them and so on for future reference.

In relation to the question of standards, there is no mention in the Bill of any commitment to continuing education or peer review in any licence reapplication process. It is a well recognised fact that continuing education is vital in a sphere such as medical and paramedical science, and I believe that ought to take a

large measure of precedence in terms of standards, but the Bill does not mention this.

I also refer to a letter written by Mr Jim Young, the Chairman of the Ambulance Board, to Mr Franklin Bridgewater, who mentioned the matter of a medical advisory committee to him. As Mr Young knows, I received a copy of that letter. Mr Young indicates that, whilst he believes it is unnecessary for the medical advisory committee to be established under the new Act, he would have no objection to such establishment. Whilst I accept that Mr Young might believe it is unnecessary, many people in South Australia would believe that the establishment of a formal body to monitor and set standards under the legislation is reasonable.

One of the other problems with the legislation relates to clause 6 (4), which provides:

The Minister may, if he or she thinks fit, grant a licence to an applicant in perpetuity or for a limited term as specified in the licence.

However, clause 8 provides:

Where, in the opinion of the Minister, a person has contravened, or failed to comply with, a provision of this Act or a condition of a licence, the Minister may, by notice in writing to the holder of the licence, revoke the licence.

I happen to believe that clause 8 is a very adequate clause but what happens if the licence has been granted in perpetuity? I ask also what 'limited terms' may mean? I think there is considerable room for manoeuvre there.

Most importantly, in dealing with clause 6, I would like to deal with clause 6 (1) (b). Clause 6 (1) (b) can only be described as extraordinary. The purpose of the Bill is to enact an association to be carrying on its business under the name SA St John Ambulance Service Inc. That association consists of the Minister and the priory, and that association, it is assumed, will be granted the present licence of St John. In clause 10 we have the Minister being part of the association. In clause 6 (1) (b) we have the Minister, in granting any other licences, having to take into account any detrimental effect, including financial detriment of any existing licence holder before he allows another licence. That is nothing more and nothing less than a conflict of interest between the Minister as a licence holder and having to take into account any detrimental effect, particularly financial, on an existing licence holder.

Even more so is this the case when one sees that fees for ambulance services are set by the Minister. If ever I have seen a Minister caught by a pincer movement it is that. I ask, looking at clause 6 (1) (b): what would the Minister do if someone came to him and said, 'I can provide ambulance services at a higher standard for the same cost'? I ask, what would the Minister do if someone came to him and said, 'I can provide ambulance services at a better service at less cost'? I know what the Minister would do. The Minister, under clause 6 (1) (b), would not grant the licence, because clearly it would have a detrimental financial effect on the existing licence holder, *id est*, himself. That is nothing more and nothing less than stupidity.

Surely, we could not have the people of South Australia subjected to the situation where an ambulance service which provides better services at less cost would not be granted a licence. There is no doubt, however, that that is what would happen with this legislation. Clause 6 (1) (b) adds absolutely nothing to the provision of

ambulance services of a high standard. It does nothing more than provide a monopoly. It talks not one jot about the provision of services, and such a clause can be removed from the legislation and not affect the provision of ambulance services of a high standard at all. And as such the amendments of the Liberal Party will seek to remove that clause and in doing so I believe we are actually being kind to the Minister so he will no longer be caught in that dreadful conflict of interest.

There is also considerable reference to regulations within this Bill. The regulations are clearly going to form a vital part of the way ambulance services are provided. Thus far we have not seen any draft regulations and I look forward to receiving them post haste.

Clause 7 gives various conditions of licences and allows the Minister of Health, under pressure from whatever interest group, to have unattainable conditions attached to another licence at his or her whim. That this may occur at one month's notice is particularly concerning. Further, the Minister ought to indicate to the Parliament the types of conditions that may cause revocation of a licence.

Part III of the Bill, which deals with the setting up of this association between the Minister and the priory, overrides the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act, which does not allow the incorporation under that Act of a business and, as such, the constitution of the proposed association, in particular dealings as to the membership, the board, distribution of profit, surplus assets and the winding up conditions must be seen before this Bill can be passed in its entirety. A copy of such a constitution ought to have already been provided to us. As I indicated before, I look forward to receiving it, but do not believe that we can give it due consideration within the time frame for this Bill. However, that does not mean that we will not look at it during the course of the Bill going through the Parliament.

By repealing the Ambulance Services Act 1985, as this Bill does, the legislative protection for volunteer services has also been repealed. Input that I have had indicates that both volunteer and paid staff are part of a single State ambulance service, yet only one is recognised in this new legislation. Amendments that we will move will seek to enshrine that in legislation. In particular, we believe that the structure of the Ambulance Board, as mentioned in the second reading explanation but not in the legislation, ought to be amended.

Clause 13 is particularly interesting also in that it deals with borrowing and investment. One can only ask: what are the criteria for the association's borrowing or investing? They are certainly not given in the legislation nor in the second reading explanation. Further, given that the Treasurer can approve borrowings and investments, who guarantees them? Is it the association? Is it the State? I eagerly anticipate a response.

Briefly returning to clause 10, which deals with the setting up of SA St John Ambulance Service Incorporated, one asks: what would happen to the volunteer assets within the country? These assets—many of them property and known as lamington castles because of the method by which they are funded—have been built up over many years by local communities with an outstanding input and a sense of ownership of those assets. Whilst I have heard rumours and various legal opinions, and so on, as to what may happen to those

volunteer assets, it is important, given the strength of feeling about them, that the Minister indicate in *Hansard* exactly what will happen to those volunteer assets, and why and how.

Clause 14 indicates that the fee for an ambulance service is payable by the patient transported.

This contravenes the Medicare agreement and the present South Australian Health Commission guidelines.

Mr Venning: That doesn't matter!

Dr ARMITAGE: The member for Custance says that doesn't matter; apparently it doesn't. What happens at the moment is a cause of enormous anxiety, particularly to country hospitals. At present, if a transfer occurs, the ambulance fee is payable by the transferring hospital, not the patient. Clause 14 (4) provides quite definitively:

The fee for an ambulance service is payable by the patient transported to or from a hospital.

If we are redefining the Medicare agreement, let us know about it. Let us not do it stealthily. Perhaps we did not know about it when we drew up the legislation, but at least tell the Parliament what is going on.

As I have indicated previously, clause 14 also provides that the fees for ambulance services will be fixed by the Minister. Given that the Minister is part of the association, given that he can only grant licences if there is no detrimental effect on any present licensee, and given that he has the power to control fees, it would be nice to know what process will actually occur in the setting of fees. Hopefully the Minister will enlighten us as to that aspect. Will he fix different fees for the country as opposed to the city because, as was indicated in the document from the country convention from which I quoted earlier, there are cost differentials between the two?

With respect to the present fee for an ambulance service being paid for by the hospitals, a number of country hospitals have put to me that they provide large sums of money to the ambulance services through this means, and they are angry that they are not represented on the board. Other people have asked what happens if the person transferred is a subscriber to St John. Clause 14 leaves some dilemmas for everyone.

At this stage of proceedings, I will close my remarks with the object of addressing further concerns in Committee. However, I stress that the Liberal Party believes that many of the Ambulance Employees Association members are dedicated to their job and provide an excellent service, but that some members of the AEA have different agendas. The Opposition is committed to the provision of the best possible and affordable ambulance services. It is also committed to the non-monopolistic provision of services, as well as to Ministers of Health not having conflicts of interest. So, given that the Opposition is committed to the provision of the best possible ambulance service, I signal to the Parliament that we do not believe that this Bill, as drafted, is the most efficient way of doing that. We intend to move some amendments that we believe will help the provision of ambulance services in South Australia.

The Hon. M.J. EVANS (Minister of Health, Family and Community Services): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mr VENNING (Custance): In rising to speak to this Bill, I congratulate my colleague the member for Adelaide on a very detailed and thorough assessment of this Bill. I have many concerns with this Bill, particularly in relation to rural people, and the member for Adelaide has highlighted many of them. My interest in this Bill centres around the volunteer services and their treatment under this legislation. Since the volunteers were withdrawn from the metropolitan area, which I thought was a terrible thing to happen, although it is now a *fait accompli*, there has been a need to remodel the State ambulance system, with the volunteers from the country working alongside fully paid officers from the city, and this ought to be on a State-wide basis. We must recognise that the paid staff would cover the metropolitan area, and the volunteers, with the exception of rural cities, would cover rural ambulance services, although there is no restriction on volunteers working in rural centres as well.

There is a very strong feeling that the purely volunteer services want to work in with country paid staff services. They need each other in the best interests of patient care. I know that throughout the State there are problems in the hospitals, and patient care is what is suffering. There was even a delegation here today to meet the Minister on this very point of patient care and hospital provision. However, by repealing the Ambulance Services Act 1985, the legislative protection for volunteer services has also been repealed. There is nothing there at all for the volunteer.

So, both the volunteers and the paid staff are part of a single State ambulance service, yet only one is recognised under this new legislation; the volunteers barely rate a mention. In dealing with a Bill about the St John Ambulance Service, the volunteers barely rate a mention. It is a pretty sad day, because these people form the vital part of the ambulance service. What will people in the country in need of an ambulance do?

You, Sir, would be well aware of the myriad functions we attend on weekends, such as sports functions, rodeos, football matches, district shows, etc., and the St John Ambulance Service is always there. I know from my own involvement that all the service personnel got from the Crystal Brook Show Society was a feed and a free park, and the service was provided at no cost other than, perhaps, a donation from the Show Society. This has been a tremendous service by volunteers—people who give up their valuable weekends to attend these functions in their own time. It is a service to St John and a service to the community, yet they do not rate a mention under this Bill. I hope that it is an oversight, although I do not believe it is.

This is a very cynical Bill that is further stitching up St John into a professional, fully paid outfit, and volunteers are not being encouraged. In fact, obstacles have been put in their way to make it even harder. Many members opposite have visited the country. The member for Albert Park and others are very welcome and do come to functions in the country. The member for Stuart, living in the country, would be well aware of the services of St John volunteers and know that it is not practical to expect

a fully professional service to operate in rural South Australia.

What will this Bill do about that? It just does not recognise the obvious. I get pretty steamed up when I know what these people give for nothing and the recognition they do not get from the Government in Bills such as this. City people travel on country roads, and have been known to have accidents. If we did not have the volunteers, would these people need to wait for staff of a professional, fully paid service to come from one of the regional centres? Although I do not want to pick on the member for Stuart, she travels the road to Port Augusta regularly. If she were to have an accident at Snowtown or Port Wakefield, where would she obtain an ambulance under a fully paid system—from Port Pirie or Adelaide?

I hope that the member for Stuart would not be seriously injured, because she would be there for a long time. I know of the service provided by Snowtown hospital and the Snowtown ambulance service, and it is very vital because of Snowtown's strategically important position. I hope that the Minister of Health, Family and Community Services knows that Snowtown hospital is on the hit list, but it is in a very strategic position because the next service is a fair distance away.

We need an ambulance in those areas, because city people do travel the roads, and they are often the ones who have accidents because they are not accustomed to driving on country roads. When you get to Snowtown, which is two hours from Adelaide, that is when the concentration lapses, and that is when accidents will happen. It is quite absurd to be discussing a Bill such as this. Overseas visitors to this State visit national parks and reserves and go on tours. Those people would be inadequately served if they contracted a sudden illness or had an accident. The volunteer service must be recognised in a Bill such as this. This Bill discusses ambulance services in South Australia, and those services are provided under the proud title of St John Ambulance.

The volunteers want the following paragraph inserted in this Bill (and I got this information from the minutes and from meeting procedure):

That the Country Volunteer Ambulance Committee, which is made up of elected volunteer ambulance officers and elected representatives from the volunteer country branch committees from each region, be empowered to advise the Ambulance Board on all issues which affect the country ambulance services.

I understand that we have modified that a little, and the member for Adelaide will raise this matter in Committee. That is a basic philosophy that we want to see embodied in this Bill. I can see our having a long hard look at this matter in Committee. I hope the Minister will take this matter on board. I have a lot of faith in the Minister; he has been listening, and he will help us with our concerns about this Bill.

The structure of the board also concerns me. Aside from the persons appointed by the Minister, only one person is to represent the country volunteer ambulance officers—and there are hundreds of them, as you, Mr Speaker, would know. The Paid Employees Association and the United Trades and Labor Council each has one nominee. I honestly do not know why the United Trades and Labor Council should have a nominee. What gratitude is this in relation to the country volunteers? They get one, the union gets one, and the Paid

Employees Association gets one. That makes two members representing paid officers, and the volunteer staff ought to have an additional representative to give an equal input to the Ambulance Board from paid and volunteer staff.

These are my main concerns with the Bill. Other concerns have been addressed by the member for Adelaide as the shadow Minister of Health, Family and Community Services, and I congratulate him on his thoroughness and the detail he has disclosed. He did not offer any bias in that respect. He mentioned the whole area involving professionals, volunteers, city, country, Government and the Opposition. We must approach this matter in a bipartisan way.

Volunteerism in general in this State is threatened as the Government encroaches onto volunteer service areas. Government policy is forcing many voluntary organisations to become more bureaucratic, professionally oriented and unionised. We know that other organisations have gone the same way, for example, CFS versus MFS, and that is very much a case in point. Volunteerism is an important part of country life and you, Mr Speaker, would be well aware of that. It fosters that strong sense of community that we find in country towns. I know that the member for Albert Park is a regular visitor to the country. I do many things in conjunction with him, and I know he thoroughly agrees.

This Government has no place in diminishing or eroding this quality in country life. This Bill epitomises the Labor Government's attitude to non-unionised rural volunteers giving plenty of their time and energy. The member for Adelaide also referred to the country capital reserve fund, and I have been trying to do some research on that. He said that country ambulances are well and truly paying their way. I am asking the question: are they indeed subsidising the officers of the city service? I hope they are not, but this is the crux of what we are saying.

In conclusion, volunteerism is a casualty of Labor Governments; it is a casualty of union control. Volunteerism is one of the finest ways, particularly through St John, for a member to serve his or her community, his or her brother or sister. It does engender companionship and a very solid and honest way of life. On these grounds I cannot support this Bill as it stands.

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): As with other members of the Opposition, I stand tonight to raise concerns about some aspects of this Bill. As members are aware, this Bill repeals the Ambulance Services Act 1985 and forms a two-member association between the Minister of Health and the Priory, which we all know as St Johns, to run the South Australian St John Ambulance Service Incorporated. This association was recommended in a review of ambulance services that was carried out by a steering committee under the guidance of Mr Dick McKay.

The Minister's second reading explanation mentions a number of outcomes of the review: first, a formal heads of agreement between the Government and the Priory; secondly, a document setting out the principles governing the conduct of the new ambulance service; and, thirdly, the constitution of a nine person board of Directors. I, like other members of the Opposition, are concerned that none of these things is mentioned in the legislation.

Quite clearly it would seem appropriate to view these prior to contemplating the Bill being passed in its present form. A number of clauses in the Bill give me concern (and I am aware a number of my colleagues also have similar concerns), particularly clause 4 which attempts to overcome the debacle that occurred in the community when the precursor to this Bill was released, as it was felt that all people transporting patients would be liable to a fine if they were not licensed.

This Bill attempts to obviate the problem by effectively defining an ambulance, but it is a concern of a number of members of the Opposition that in order to overcome this the Government has effectively created greater problems by appearing to exclude vehicles such as the Westpac State Rescue Helicopter, a vehicle of which I am well aware through my emergency services shadow portfolio, and also commercial airlines which sometimes transport patients. Clause 6 (1) (a) also presents some concerns because it mentions ambulance services of 'a high standard' but there is no mention of what these standards are and perhaps, more importantly, who or what body should set and monitor these standards. It is important to pause at this stage and examine some of the standards which appear to be occurring at present.

I reflect back on an incident which was reported in my electorate office just under a year ago by an aged constituent. My constituent was very distressed at the time and approached me with respect to an incident that involved his wife and the St John Ambulance service. To illustrate my point I will quote briefly from a letter I sent on 22 October last year to Mr Mick Gates, the Superintendent of the Command Support Unit of St John. In part I said:

I am writing as a follow-up to a complaint made to me by the spouse of the above named. [I will not use her name; I will refer to both him and his spouse by the surname X.] Mrs X was transferred from Orana Nursing Home, Henley Beach, on 16 October 1991 to Victoria Park Private Nursing Home at Fullarton Road, Dulwich. After an ambulance had collected Mrs X for transfer her husband was contacted by staff of Orana to say that St John Ambulance officers had refused to take Mrs X's single suitcase and walking frame as it was 'against union rules'. Mrs X arrived at Victoria Park Nursing Home in a distressed state as she did not have her walking frame with her. Mr X, who was in his mid-70s, drove to Henley Beach to collect his wife's belongings and took them to Victoria Park Nursing Home. He was particularly upset with St John as he had been a member of St John for many years even though he has had coverage through his private health insurance and in the past he has also donated money to St John. This incident does not reflect favourably on the St John Ambulance Association and the fine service that many South Australians have become accustomed to. It would be appreciated if you could investigate this matter and report back to me as to how and why it occurred.

The Superintendent of the command support unit replied to me on 7 November 1991. I was very disappointed with that reply, which states in part:

Subsequent to your original letter I commissioned independent reports from attending ambulance officers. Both officers state in their reports that Mrs X and the staff at the Orana Nursing Home were advised of the ambulance service's policy (not 'union rules') regarding the transport of patients' luggage. This policy states:

Patient and crew baggage will at all times be restricted to one small case which will be suitably restrained.

Once the safety aspects of the transport of luggage was explained, all parties were satisfied and in fact one case of Mrs X's luggage was transported.

Mr Matthew, the St John Ambulance Service is very conscious and concerned for the safety of both the patient and the

ambulance officers. At the present time, exhaustive tests have been carried out by St John's Ambulance Service and Milford Industries to determine the safest manner in which patients can be transported and equipment mounted and contained in our ambulances. To our knowledge, no other ambulance service in Australia is as safety aware as the State's ambulance service.

I was disappointed with that reply, because I did not expect the St John organisation to support the action taken by its paid officers on that occasion. I would be horrified if even one member of this Parliament were to stand in their place and support the actions of any employee of the St John organisation leaving an elderly lady in her 70s in tears at a nursing home because she did not have her walking frame. That was an absolutely disgraceful incident that should never have occurred and should never be repeated.

I had expected that my constituent would receive a detailed apology from St John for the way in which she was treated. I gave details of this case to a number of former volunteers of the St John Ambulance Service and they were absolutely appalled. In their words, this would never have occurred under the old St John system of volunteers. As many members of Parliament would realise, volunteers provide a valuable service to our community. They are there because they care about the needs of the people involved. They would have made sure that both the walking frame and suitcase were carried in the ambulance and that the elderly lady was not left waiting in tears at the nursing home because she did not have her walking frame. That was a most despicable act and I was absolutely staggered that St John supported it.

In many respects, it is not all that surprising. I refer to volume No. 1 of the newsletter entitled 'Volunteer Action' that was released in October 1989. An article on the front page of that newsletter encapsulates the whole problem as follows:

This newsletter is the first of a series designed to highlight the plight of St John Brigade volunteers in South Australia. It is produced by a group of former volunteers who have no 'political axe' to grind apart from revealing the reality of what has happened to St John Brigade ambulance volunteers over the past few years. Prior to the push to make South Australia's ambulance service a fully paid service, South Australians enjoyed one of the best ambulance services in the world.

Today, as a result of the constant drip of militant unionism, that fine ambulance service—a service once constantly praised by ambulance authorities around the world—stands on the brink of collapse. The volunteer action group wants the community to know the ultimate consequences of the paid officers' union action.

Why haven't the volunteers spoken out before? Simply the 'culture' and the regulations of the St John Ambulance Brigade have forbidden current members from speaking out. To do so would invite censure at best, expulsion from the brigade at worst. To St John volunteers, despite the extreme harassment you are facing from unionists, we ask you to 'turn the other cheek' for the moment. The VAG is trying to bring about change and put you back where you belong—at the vanguard of health services in South Australia.

Regrettably, the rest is history: St John volunteers in the metropolitan area have been all but eliminated. We have seen massive increases in the cost of ambulance transportation, and I defy any member of this Parliament to stand in their place and support the increases that have taken place, because I am sure that most, if not all, members of Parliament would have received complaints from constituents about the enormous hike in fees.

We have seen the volunteers almost eliminated in the metropolitan area and we have seen fees go up, service decline and we have seen people being put in situations in which they would never be normally placed. To top it off we have seen ambulances driving through this city of ours with 'St John' blacked out and 'ambulance' remaining. It was a black day for our State when that sort of action occurred through union thuggery in the St John organisation in this State. We have seen one of the bastions in our society eliminated and now we have a Bill before us that threatens to take that action even further into the country regions. I am not surprised that my colleague the member for Custance stood in his place to defend the St John Ambulance in the country region and express his concern that it may face the same fate.

Under this Labor Government we have seen a march on volunteerism in our community and a march in many areas. Through my own shadow portfolio I am also aware of a related concern in respect of Country Fire Service volunteers who feel threatened by moves on their organisation by this Government. They fear that they may face the same demise that has occurred to St John volunteers. There are also a number of other clauses in the Bill that give me and my colleagues cause for concern. I am aware that effectively by repealing the Ambulance Services Act 1985 the legislative protection for the volunteer service has also been repealed. We see that both volunteer and paid staff are part of a single ambulance service, yet only one is recognised in the new legislation. Volunteers are not recognised.

If this Government is serious about volunteerism in this State and if it wants to see it preserved and enshrined, this legislation offers an opportunity to preserve it. It is absolutely vital that the volunteer service be recognised in this legislation and preceding speakers tonight have already advised that the Opposition will be moving amendments to ensure that volunteers are included in this legislation. I look forward to Government members supporting the legislation because, indeed, there are members on the Government side of Parliament who claim that they support volunteering in our State. I call on them to honour those claims by supporting the amendments that the Opposition will be moving in Committee.

For example, the member for Albert Park is one who often speaks of volunteers in this place, and I look forward to seeing him and his colleagues standing by the words that they have uttered in this House in the past. Clause 14 (4) deals with the fee for ambulance service being payable by the patient transported, but there is some concern that this contravenes the current Medicare agreement on hospital transfers, because the agreement provides that the ambulance fee is payable by the transferring hospital. That issue needs to be resolved during the course of the debate on the Bill.

As to the regulations, because of their importance to the Bill, the Opposition believes that an assurance is needed so that, if the Bill is actually passed, it will not be assented to until the draft regulations and codes of practice have been developed and agreed to by all stakeholders in the ambulance service. I look forward to the new Minister of Health, Family and Community Services assuring the House that there will be no assent to this legislation until such time as all parties have had an

opportunity to look at these all important regulations that are associated with the Bill.

In a nutshell, the Opposition is against monopolies and strongly supports volunteers. What we want to see is legislation that enshrines those two aspects, because it is certainly important to the people of South Australia. Again, I defy any member of this Parliament to debate those two issues. I would be staggered and disappointed if any member were in favour of monopoly and were against the involvement of volunteers.

Before closing, I would like to read briefly from a letter that I received from just one of many St John volunteers during the height of the debate toward the end of November 1989 when the metropolitan volunteers were being bludgeoned into submission by the militant unionists who seem to have taken hold of the St John brigade in our State. The letter, in part, reads:

How is it possible for a union body, namely the AEA, to determine what non-unionists can and cannot do? How can a union body be so strong as to destroy a most venerable order, that of St John? Should more volunteers choose to stand down rather than wait to be made redundant, how is the Health Commission proposing to make up the shortfall? The increase in overtime must be considerable for existing career staff. Is this going to affect their capabilities by inducing stress and what about the increase in overtime payments?

I think that we have seen all those things that volunteers were concerned about at that time come to pass. Therefore, it is absolutely vital, in the Opposition's view, that the amendments that we shall be proposing in the Committee stage are passed. If our amendments fail to be carried, if these all-important things are not enshrined in this legislation, I shall have no alternative but to support this Bill in the name of maintaining volunteers in this State and eliminating any monopoly situation.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I am well aware that ambulance officers throughout this State have been awaiting this Bill for some time. In fact, it was before us at the end of the last session but, as with several other Bills, time did not permit for debate to take place. As the member for Adelaide, the shadow Minister of Health, Family and Community Services, has pointed out, whilst there is a lot in this Bill that goes towards a restructuring of the ambulance service, there are various items that are unsatisfactory and cause the Opposition great concern. It is not my intention to go over that area in detail; the member for Adelaide, in his eloquent speech, has adequately covered those points. I hope that persons interested in this debate will refer to the contribution of the member for Adelaide.

I wish to emphasise the importance of ambulance volunteers to South Australia and all South Australians. I continue to admire the people who voluntarily give of their service day after day, week after week, year after year, for the help, betterment and safety of their fellow South Australians. I know many of the volunteers in my electorate. I know that on many occasions their life is seriously interrupted and affected because they are called out on ambulance duty or because they are on stand-by and are limited in their movements over, say, a weekend.

Equally important, they are often asked to transport patients from one of the country areas to Adelaide and then, of course, to return. You, Mr Deputy Speaker, and most members present will appreciate that over much of my electorate that can involve a three-hour journey to

Adelaide and three hours back (six hours), plus the loading and unloading of the patient. In other words, a full day is taken up by these volunteers in assisting fellow residents. Therefore, it was of extreme concern to me when, several years ago now, the paid employees made their push to try to move volunteers out of the system.

I made several statements at that time, and I was contacted by some of the paid employees, who were very upset at the statements that I had made. They tried to point out to me that I did not know the system, that I did not appreciate the problems that ambulance officers encountered, and that I was not aware of the day-to-day running of the service. I must say that it disturbed me that some people were hell-bent on getting rid of volunteers at any cost. It was pointed out to me that I did not have any need to worry because it would not affect country areas. Well, unfortunately, that has already proved to be incorrect. It is incorrect in the first instance in that the near metropolitan areas have already been affected. So, if one looks at the Barossa Valley and the Gawler district, for example, I believe one would see that those ambulance services are fully staffed by paid employees.

The spin-off effect, which was beyond my expectation, was that many people who perhaps normally would have come forward and said, 'I would like to become a volunteer in St John Ambulance,' immediately asked themselves why they should volunteer when others are being paid, so they did not come forward. I know of one example. The St John Ambulance Service at Moonta on at least two occasions has had a public appeal for volunteers. There is no doubt that the push by paid employees is affecting outer country ambulance services, and that will continue. Whilst the outer country regions will probably retain their volunteers for quite some time, there is no doubt that eventually, if this Government continues to have its way and does not move to ensure that volunteers are guaranteed their places, we will be burdened with massive additional costs. However, we must recognise that the additional costs are with us already.

I was very interested to see an answer to a question on restructuring in the recent Estimates Committees. It was asked by the member for Newland. The answer from the Minister of Health states:

As country volunteers were withdrawing from the paid country centres, a country task force was established by St John to determine the most appropriate rostering arrangements to apply following the imminent total withdrawal of volunteers in these bases. The report of this task force has been received by St John management and negotiations are continuing to implement the final country restructuring process. While no additional State Government funding has been provided, the increased costs (\$1.2 million) are to be met by St John with funds generated from the improvement in revenue from the subscription scheme, improved debt collection processes and lower write-off to the subscription scheme and prompt payment discount not claimed by debtors.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there it is highlighted: increased costs of some \$1.2 million. That is the problem we will continue to face. The member for Adelaide has highlighted very clearly the massive expense of ambulance services. It is not surprising that so much of the cost is in the wage component, whereas previously that was virtually negligible. So, people will be very upset about the bill they receive after using the

ambulance service if they are not appropriately covered. That is something that we should have been avoiding at all costs but we are not.

The other thing that has disturbed me and that I again have taken up in my area relates to the testing procedure, the examinations and the skills required by ambulance officers. I want to make it quite clear that I have no problems at all with ensuring that ambulance officers are appropriately skilled and that they achieve a minimum standard. But what does concern me is that many of these volunteers are expected to have skills over and above those which one would normally regard as adequate. It concerns me not because I do not believe it would be great for them to have those skills; I believe that rosters can be worked out so that at least one person has the highest of skills and the other has a satisfactory minimum standard. My concern is that these people give of their time voluntarily.

They do not get paid; they give hours every week for instruction and to undertake test drills and the like. If they are to be asked to give a huge amount of extra time, potential volunteers will simply say, 'No; it is too great a sacrifice to make. It is too much of a dedication, because there are other things I want to do.' Again, it plays right into the hands of the paid employees who have the whole day, the whole week, literally the whole year, to be properly trained and properly skilled so that they can be experts in their field, probably far above the normal requirements.

It needs to be recognised that St John Ambulance is only one of the many volunteer organisations in country communities. As the member for Bright said, the CFS is another very important volunteer service, as is the SES. Those three services operate together in many instances. The hospital auxiliaries have done marvellous work for country hospitals, pouring millions of dollars into them, thus providing savings for the average taxpayer. The dedicated people who are involved in the Red Cross are to be commended on their continuing work and the way in which they operate. Of course, there are many other auxiliaries and volunteer organisations that I will not refer to tonight. Many of these people are involved not just in St John but also in these other organisations, as well as being involved in service clubs, sporting organisations and school auxiliaries. Much more consideration should have been given to these people in the past but, unfortunately, the scene has been set by this Government, which tries to remove volunteers wherever possible.

I highlight that this Bill repeals the Ambulance Services Act 1985, and it would appear to me that the legislative protection for the volunteer services will also be repealed. I believe that both volunteer and paid staff are part of a single State ambulance service, yet only one group is recognised in this new legislation. Input from the volunteers indicates the need to insert the basis of the following paragraph in the legislation:

That the Country Volunteer Ambulance Committee which is made up of elected volunteer ambulance officers and elected representatives from the volunteer country branch committees from each region be empowered to advise the Ambulance Board on all issues which affect the country volunteer ambulance services.

It is recognised that the interpretation of 'each region' could be somewhat loose, and therefore the Opposition

will seek to insert the following in relation to the advisory committee:

The association must establish a committee comprised of members who are volunteer ambulance officers to advise the association in relation to the provision of ambulance services in country regions.

It is absolutely essential that the volunteers be given recognition under this Bill. Unfortunately, the Opposition is concerned about various areas. It is a shame that the Government should try to introduce unnecessary criteria when all members, I would think, recognise that this Bill is long overdue. It is a pity that the Government did not

get it right in the first instance rather than looking to amendments to try to salvage the Bill.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.31 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 22 October at 10.30 a.m.