

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 3 March 1993

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

### EDUCATION, SPECIAL

A petition signed by 407 residents of South Australia requesting that the House urge the Government to increase special education assistance to schools was presented by Mr Matthew.

Petition received.

## QUESTIONS

### BUS SERVICES

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Premier confirm that southern suburbs residents are to suffer even more from his Government's financial mismanagement by being denied extended bus services? I have in my possession a press release prepared in the name of the Minister of Transport Development and documents prepared by the State Transport Authority to announce a new high speed transit link bus service between Noarlunga and the city and the extension of suburban and city bus services to link in with it. The press statement headlined 'A \$3.14 million public transport boost for the southern suburbs' announces Cabinet approval for the new transit link to begin this month as 'a major step in improving public transport in the south'.

The press release is dated 2 February, but the problem for the people of the southern suburbs is that it was never released. Cabinet vetoed the proposal, because of the very bad budget position. During a shadow Cabinet meeting at Noarlunga less than a fortnight ago, many local residents complained to us about the inadequate public transport links with the city and the fact that they were forced to suffer even more for the State Bank losses and the other financial debacles of this Labor Government.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** The honourable Leader has not exactly got the situation correct; he never does, of course. He makes reference to Cabinet having vetoed the proposal; that is not correct. The fact is that the series of proposals about improved transport services in the southern suburbs has been the subject of consultation with the community in the southern suburbs for some time, and a series of proposals came forward to the STA that are part of the consideration of improved transport services in those areas. The STA had anticipated that the services could commence from some date in March, I think, but it has turned out not to be possible at this stage as the matter is still being pursued.

There is nothing unusual about dates being set for commencement of services and then that date not being able to be achieved. I can recall some years ago as a

local member actively interested in improving transport services in the northern suburbs in my own electorate that I was very keen to see services, including reasonable access to rail services, introduced for the first time to areas that did not have them at all, such as Paralowie and Direk.

At the time, the then Minister of Transport—in fact, he was a member of the Tonkin Liberal Government, Michael Wilson—set up a process involving community discussion about what routes ought to be put in place, and various other issues, and I commended him for that at that time and I still do. What came out of that were a series of proposals, and times were proposed when these services should commence. The STA said, 'These services can commence', although I forget the exact month that they could commence. In reality, however, it did not happen. They did not commence at the time it was said they should commence. I never complained about that at the time, because I recognised there were legitimate reasons why the commencement date of those services was not able to take place. Some delay occurred in relation to those matters. If in fact—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:**—it was correct that the Cabinet with respect to these proposals had indeed said, 'No, these proposals are not on; these proposals will not happen; this is a Cabinet submission that is rejected', then there might be some validity to the honourable member's question, but that is not the case. This and other matters are being considered by the Government and have to be done in that context, in the context of not only this financial year but also future financial years.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** We will come out with a statement on these routes and any other changes to transport services in due course. The honourable member would do well to wait on that and not allow himself to be misled by incorrect information that has been given to him.

## EDUCATION, TERTIARY

**The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Baudin):** Will the Minister of Education, Employment and Training explain to the House the implications of the Federal Coalition's deregulatory plans for tertiary education on South Australian universities? My question arises from an article which featured in the *Australian* newspaper today highlighting the plan by the Coalition to provide some university students with vouchers and to allow universities to sell their services in the marketplace and set their own fees. The Executive Director of the Australian Vice Chancellors Association is reported to have said that some universities under that scheme could go broke.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** I thank the honourable member for his question. It is a very important one, because it will impact upon the lives of almost every family in South Australia, particularly those families who now, for the first time in the history of this country, can aspire for their students or themselves to attend higher

education through universities. The policies currently being presented by the Liberal Coalition, and I understand supported by the South Australian Liberal Opposition, are so extreme that academic students and voters alike are unable to assess the effect which they will have on higher education in South Australia. That will become apparent as I proceed with my answer.

Under the system of market education, universities offering degrees that generate high paying jobs will prosper and grow through an increase in intakes. I am referring to the traditional universities that offer courses such as medicine and law. However, universities and newer institutions that offer the more diverse and innovative courses could struggle to survive. I will quote from an article in this morning's *Australian*:

Some of the newer institutions would have trouble attracting students.

This fast food chain approach to the delivery of higher education in Australia is fundamentally flawed, and I am happy to explain why. The Coalition fails to recognise the substantial public good in higher education, that is, its benefits go well beyond the expected income of graduates. I refer members to another statement in this morning's *Australian*:

...especially while the universities are being called on to reskill the work force, reshape the economy and more generally orchestrate some sort of national reconstruction.

To move to a market driven system based purely on fad, fashion and the income potential of what can be earned at the end of the course is hardly a well planned and nationally organised approach to higher education. While universities are being called on to reskill the work force and reshape the economy, and if Australia is to position itself with a competitive edge in Asia and in the Asian Pacific region, clearly these are issues of national and State interest and importance, and must be addressed.

There is also the question of equity, and I know it is one very dear to your heart, Mr Speaker. No-one knows what a university might charge for a degree, but it is important to note that the cost to foreign students to do a degree in medicine at Melbourne University is about \$144 000. In an article in the *Sunday Telegraph Mirror*, the education writer, Marilyn Parker, clearly and succinctly explains what this means.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** I take a point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order. The Minister will resume her seat.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** I draw your attention to the length of this answer, Sir.

**The SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister to draw her answer to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** It is important, because the question was, 'What is the impact on South Australian students?' I quote:

Under the Coalition's plan, money and, indeed, not ability or attainment will be the acceptance criteria.

She goes on to say:

What will such a freedom do to academic standards in our universities? You are starting to think that the Coalition's plans will cause an increase in enrolments of white males from wealthy families.

Indeed, that is exactly what will happen. We will see a return to the system that many of us remember from the

1950s and the 1960s, where only the wealthy and only white middle class males had access to university places.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** The Opposition does not like this, because we are talking—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister is now debating the question. I think the Minister has answered the question. I ask the Minister to resume her seat.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** Shall I finish, Mr Speaker?

**The SPEAKER:** Very briefly.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** I just want to conclude by saying that tertiary education is for the poor, for sole parents and also for women.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Coles.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Mr Speaker, the moment has passed.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! When the House comes to order, I will call for the next question. The member for Bragg.

#### TOTALISATOR AGENCY

**Mr INGERSON (Bragg):** Will the Minister of Recreation and Sport table all correspondence from the former Minister of Recreation and Sport, Hon. Kym Mayes, to TAB management concerning Mr Mayes' requests that TAB employment be given to people known to him? In answer to questions raised in this House yesterday, the Minister admitted that his predecessor had successfully sought employment in the TAB for people known to him. The Minister further claimed that no influences had been exerted by the former Minister on the TAB.

I am reliably informed that the letters and a number of subsequent phone calls from the former Minister responsible for the TAB clearly recommended that these people be employed. I have in my possession the list of 38 names of people who received employment with the TAB allegedly as a result of patronage and nepotism practised by Mr Smith. At least six of these names have been identified to me as having been recommended to the TAB by the Hon. Kym Mayes.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTY:** First, the property that the honourable member seeks is not in my possession and—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTY:** —as I said yesterday—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTY:** —all members make representations to government and non-government employers with respect to the representations that they have received from their constituents. Indeed, the

honourable member who asked the question has made representations to me about employment for a person whom he was representing and who was seeking employment when I was Minister of Education. All members—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat. Day after day, the member for Bragg asks a question and continues after the question is asked. I have warned him once, and I caution him to watch what he does in this House. Interjections are out of order.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** As I was saying, I think that the criticism that the honourable member is making and indeed the language he uses misrepresent the situation and, as I said yesterday, the honourable member is pursuing a vendetta against a particular Minister—

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** —he has done it time and time again in this House—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Bragg.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** —and he is seeking to do it again. The issue that was at stake in the TAB inquiry was whether the General Manager had used undue influence with respect to an officer of the TAB who had the responsibility to employ people in a particular section of the TAB. As I said yesterday, on the advice of the Crown Solicitor, the conclusion was that there was not undue influence in that situation which would prove that there was the concern that had been raised, and rightly so, in the report of the Government Management Board.

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader is out of order.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** The sifting of hundreds of letters and representations that no doubt have been received by the TAB will not advance the issue one iota with respect to the allegations the honourable member is making. It is simply a ruse that the Opposition is raising in this House in order to pursue its political line of attack on a particular member of this House.

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

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

## ROCK LOBSTER FISHERY

**Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart):** Will the Minister of Primary Industries advise the House whether it is correct that a decision has been made for the early closure of the southern zone rock lobster fishery and, if so, what is the reason for such closure?

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** I thank the honourable member for that question. This is a most serious and sensitive issue. Following a meeting with SAFIC, I announced this morning that I will be implementing an early closure of the southern zone rock lobster fishery to protect the resource and to ensure that the long term future of the lobster industry in the South-East is not

jeopardised. In effect, it means that the fishery will be closed for the month of April. It is not something sudden or unexpected.

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** No. The honourable member needs to get his facts straight. He and I were at Millicent for a meeting of the southern zone rock lobster—

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Victoria is interjecting and is out of order. The Minister.

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The member for Victoria and I were at a meeting of the southern zone rock lobster management committee in about October or November when the issue of the total allowable catch was being discussed. This is not something sudden or unexpected. There has been extensive consultation going back over the past two years, and during the 1992 winter closure, scientists at what is now the South Australian Research and Development Institute, which was then the Department of Fisheries, undertook port visits within the southern zone to outline the present biological stages of the stocks based on the available scientific data. It brought back a report that the total allowable catch annually for 1992-93 should be 1 600 tonnes.

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Victoria once again is interjecting and is out of order. I do not want to caution or warn anyone. However, members' conduct must be within the Standing Orders which the House has adopted. The Minister.

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The southern zone rock lobster management committee meeting earlier this year agreed that, based on the best available scientific advice, the most appropriate total allowable catch for the southern zone rock lobster fishery was 1 650 tonnes. The Port MacDonnell Fishermen's Association also got independent scientific assessments of the southern zone rock lobster resource, and I understand that its report, which I have not seen but of which I have been made aware, also suggested a catch level at this figure.

That catch level will be exceeded at the end of this month, and we would be at catch levels, similar to the 1991-92 year, of about 1 940 tonnes. In the long term, if this scientific data were ignored, the fishery would be undermined and the resource would collapse. I have had to weigh up the situation. I have consulted extensively and the honourable member is well aware of this issue: it is not something new to him—

*Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** —but obviously he will play to the gallery. I have not acted lightly. I have made this decision in wide consultation with the fishing industry. At the 28 February management committee meeting of the southern zone rock lobster group it endorsed this decision, nine for and seven against. True, that is not unanimity but it is a majority, although probably not the overwhelming majority that I would have liked from the management committee. Nevertheless, it is a clear

endorsement of the decision to close in April. The decision was endorsed by a clear majority of the fishing interests who are willing to act responsibly. I hope that those people in the minority, after two years, after extensive consultation and after considering all the scientific data available, will work constructively.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This is Question Time and this is an appropriate statement to be made in a ministerial statement.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume his seat. I have raised my concerns for some time about Question Time. I draw the attention of the Opposition to the fact that it takes time in Question Time for me to respond to interjections as well. However, I point out to Ministers that they do have access to ministerial statement time, which is there for a purpose. Perhaps they should consider that, rather than giving long-winded answers to questions.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** Thank you, Mr Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I would ask the Minister to draw to a close as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. T.R. GROOM:** Mr Speaker, I can bring the matter to a close, and I hope that the member for Victoria will stop interjecting so that I can make the answer short. In conclusion, the clear indication to me as Minister is that if the current lobster catch levels continue in the southern zone at the present level, with the present level of breeding stock, the ability to maintain a viable fishery would be eroded and the fishery would ultimately collapse. I do not believe that the member for Victoria would do any different from what I have done if he were in this position.

#### TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light):** Will the Premier agree that if the former TAB General Manager, Barry Smith, was guilty of practising nepotism and patronage, as the Government Management Board report concluded he was, the Hon. Kym Mayes is equally guilty? If not, is there one standard for public servants and another for Ministers?

Section 6 of the Government Management and Employment Act states that 'no power with regard to personnel management shall be exercised on the basis of nepotism or patronage'. The author of the Government Management Board's report on Mr Smith concluded that Mr Smith had breached this section, and he stated:

I consider that to be a serious matter.

All Ministers are required to comply with this Act. The finding against Mr Smith must equally apply to the Hon. Kym Mayes.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Some important points need to be picked up here. First of all, nepotism implies that someone has required the favour or employment to be given to some relative of the person doing the asking, and the allegation made about Mr Smith was in that respect. What we have here is a member of Parliament who has acted as a local member of Parliament writing on behalf of—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Once again, I point out to the Opposition that time is taken up by the Chair having to take action to bring the House to order. The honourable Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** There is a very important question here as to what is and is not proper for a member of Parliament representing constituents to do.

*The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** From 1982 to 1985 I was Minister of Education. The Education Act quite clearly makes it illegal for any politician—not Minister—to be involved in the employment of teachers. The very question that the member for Coles now asks by interjection can be asked of politicians on her side who approached me for favours in relation to the employment of teachers, involving members of their families.

**Mr Brindal:** Name them.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** When I pointed out to those people that it was something not permitted under the Education Act, they accepted that. There, we had a clear situation of an Act of Parliament that makes it illegal. In the case of the TAB it has been a more confused situation regarding coverage of the GME Act. Indeed, the TAB itself had legal advice that it was not under the coverage of the GME Act. That is one of the reasons that was used by Mr Smith in relation to the issue concerning him in these matters. The Schilling report has been referred to. I think it is worthwhile drawing attention again to the statement made by the Minister on this matter when the report was tabled just a couple of weeks ago. I am quoting from the Crown Solicitor's comment on the Schilling report, where at page 3, item 3, it states—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order. The honourable Premier has made a serious accusation of illegality. I believe he has reflected on me and on every member of the Opposition by saying that we were involved in an illegal act and by refusing to name individuals. I believe that is a personal reflection and I ask that he withdraw.

**The SPEAKER:** The response by the Premier was that he had been approached, and I have no idea who approached him. I certainly do not intend to ask him who approached him. I cannot say that it is a reflection on any individual. You, personally, as the member for Hayward, have taken umbrage at the statement, and I have no idea whether or not you are personally involved. I do not uphold the point of order. The Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I come back to the ministerial statement which I think members should listen to. It states:

Notwithstanding the view formed by the author of the Government Management Board report, it is by no means certain that the allegations of patronage and nepotism are capable—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** I am reading from the ministerial statement; it is in *Hansard*. It continues:

It is by no means certain that the allegations of patronage and nepotism are capable of being proved in the course of any litigation. Mr Smith denies the allegations. The Government Management Board report confirms there is no evidence that Mr Smith—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** —expressly requested that certain persons be employed. Further, a recent inquiry by the Crown Solicitor's Office confirms that Mr Smith's conduct was at worst only implicit, and certainly over the 18 months prior to his suspension Mr Smith made it expressly clear to the staff member she had the decision as to employment in her area and it was up to her.

I have actually seen an example of one of the letters that my colleague sent, and I can say that it is the type of *pro forma* letter that I have seen written by members of Parliament on both sides of the House in a number of areas of Government. It is a *pro forma* type of letter that quite clearly indicates—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier will resume his seat. We are halfway through Question Time. We are into our fifth question and response. It is totally in the hands of this House how many questions are asked in this time. If members continue to interrupt, I cannot guarantee how many more questions will be asked. If members allow it to flow, we may get more questions in. One of the major complaints is the lack of questions asked during Question Time. The conduct of Question Time basically is in the hands of the members. The Premier.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** The letters clearly indicate that they were sent to more than one organisation and that this was a kind of casting the net out introducing people. They also indicate that they are for any positions that might become available, and they indicate that contact should be made between the organisation and the person referred to in the letter—in other words, directly between them and the potential applicant for a position and not with the member for the constituency. It is quite proper that that is the way it should be done. Ultimately, those positions should be determined on merit, if there is a position available, and be determined by the organisation interviewing such a person and finding out how such a person stacks up against other applicants for the position. Coming back to the very first point I made, if there were to be a substantial allegation of nepotism against the member for Unley—

*Mr Ingerson interjecting:*

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** Yes, patronage, of course, because nepotism would be about relatives. If there were to be such an allegation, one would have assumed that every letter that had ever been written by the member to any area that had some vague connection with him would have been a success; in other words, that person would have got a position—and that, Sir, is not the case by his own acknowledgment.

I think, Sir, it would be fair to say that various members of this Parliament have written letters to organisations saying, 'Will you consider this person? The CV is attached. If you have a position available, will you consider this person against other applicants?' Some of

them actually do get a position but a great many—in fact, the majority—do not get a position. There are some interesting points here about what is reasonable and what is not reasonable. I used to be Minister for Industry, Trade and Technology, and that has under it various funds that help business and for which business can apply.

I have to say that businesses in my electorate approached me as the member for Ramsay, as I now am, to support them or to tell them what might be available from Government sources to assist their industries. Although some members may not be interested in helping businesses in their area, a number of members from both sides wrote to me introducing company A, B, or C, asking what I was able to do for them. I received approaches like that from companies in my electorate. The presumption is that I have been guilty of patronage when I have sent the names of—

**The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore:** You are drawing a very long bow.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** It is not a long bow because this came to me through the department under ministerial authority. It involved companies that were wanting money from the Government to assist with various kinds of trade promotion activities. I felt that it was my obligation as a local member of Parliament to pass—

*The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Coles.

**The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD:** —the information about these companies on to the department because failure to have done so would have been reprehensible. It would have meant denying companies in my electorate due access to proper opportunity. That is what the issue is about; yet what is being implied by members opposite is that I should be accused of patronage in those circumstances. I have no idea how successful those companies were for the most part. Some came back to tell me if they were or not but others I have no idea about. I suggest that members opposite should think very carefully about the kind of implications they are trying to draw from this episode.

## ELECTRICITY TRUST

**The Hon. J.E. TRAINER (Walsh):** Did the Minister of Public Infrastructure knock back a 6 per cent productivity pay rise for Electricity Trust of South Australia workers? Will he inform the House on this issue as to what the facts are? I draw members' attention to an article on page 20 of today's *Advertiser* in which the member for Victoria makes a claim of that nature.

**The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER:** I thank the member for Walsh for his question, because it enables me to put the facts of the matter before the House. I was appalled at the lack of accuracy, in fact, at the complete inaccuracy, of the article in this morning's *Advertiser*. Having said that, I must exonerate the *Advertiser* from any wrongdoing because it clearly reported the words of the member for Victoria as he put them to this House yesterday during the debate on the Supply Bill.

All I can say is that it has not been a good week for the member for Victoria. He has shown his ignorance of

the very Act of which he tried to show my ignorance. Since then, he has argued that I have the power to dismiss the board by going through Parliament and thereby he has clearly shown his ignorance of the difference between Government and Parliament, which, for a former Leader of the Opposition, is an appalling admission. In this case he was completely wrong. If he had checked out the facts—and he has had the information in his possession for a week because he made the same claim on a nationwide program on 26 February—he would have found out the following information. He would have been told that the ETSA unions have reached agreement in principle with the trust on a corporate enterprise agreement and are currently involved in a process of consulting their members. He would have been further informed that, amongst many other things, the agreement provides for the very 6 per cent productivity pay increases that he claims I have knocked back. I have no doubt that the *Advertiser*, now that it realises how far up the garden path it has been taken by the wrong information provided to this House yesterday by the member for Victoria, will now make every effort to give the truth the same prominence as it gave to the garbage that was served up to it by the member for Victoria.

#### REMM-MYER

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I direct my question to the Treasurer. Does the Government now effectively own the Remm Myer project? If so, how much has it been forced to repay the syndicate banks that participated in the funding of the project? After two years of negotiation, in 1990 the State Bank secured the agreement of a syndicate of mainly overseas based banks to participate in the funding of the Remm project. I understand that their exposures totalled \$296 million. However, the agreement permitted those banks to withdraw from the syndicate if certain conditions were not met by the end of March last year. In July last year, the Liberal Party was told by the former Chairman (Mr Nobby Clark) that the bank was still negotiating with the syndicate to maintain its participation. I understand now that financial responsibility for the project has been transferred to the Group Asset Management Division.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** It is hardly a secret that the Group Asset Management Division has responsibility for—

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** If that information is available, I will get it for the honourable member.

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I should have that available in my head?

*Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** I am very sorry to disappoint the honourable member. The Group Asset Management Division has goodness knows how many non-performing loans and somewhat disappointing assets. I must admit that I carry very few of them around in my

head. From time to time, some of them are drawn to my attention by the honourable member opposite and, indeed, by other members opposite and I involve myself in those when I am requested to do so. The Deputy Leader has requested me to do so on this occasion, and I will do so, and see what information is available and bring it back to the House, as I always do.

#### TAFE VOUCHERS

**Mr QUIRKE (Playford):** Will the Minister of Education, Employment and Training explain what effect Liberal Party policies for the delivery of technical and further education, including a voucher system for some students, will have in South Australia?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the Minister to keep her answer as brief as possible.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** I certainly will, Mr Speaker, but it is a vitally important point and, as the South Australian Minister responsible for this area, I have been asked by the people of South Australia to answer this question. Like the Victorian experience, I do not think that the Federal Liberal Party wants the electorate to know what its agenda is. In fact, it is very unclear. What we do know is that the Federal Opposition is proposing a voucher system to subsidise vocational employment or vocational education for young job seekers. These are the people who will be paid \$3 an hour under Dr Hewson's youth wage policy. Vouchers will also be provided for those long-term unemployed over 45 years of age.

What will happen to everyone else, the young and not so young, who want to attend technical and further education courses? They will be required to pay increased, up-front fees in a system that is based on deregulation, not on proper planning, not on an overview of what is needed in terms of vocational training and skills for this country. There has been no mention in the Opposition's policies on technical and further education about planning, nor has there been any mention of equality of opportunity. It is simply a system where education is available to the privileged and the wealthy. I put it to the House that it represents a return to the 1950s.

Labor is concerned about the development of a truly national system of vocational education and training. It has not introduced and it will not introduce a system that is market driven or fees based, indeed, that has up-front fees, which is what the Coalition is proposing. It is important to note that Dr Kemp has so far not made any connection between TAFE and the higher education sector of universities and it has been put to me that he does not want to have this progressive skill development and educational system leading from one system to the next. What we face in this State is a return to the 1950s, and a return to education and training for the privileged and the wealthy.

#### REMM-MYER PROJECT

**Mr BECKER (Hanson):** I direct my question to the Treasurer. What provision has the Group Asset

Management Division made for a loss on the Remm-Myer project and what assurance can the Treasurer give that this is sufficient to avoid any further taxpayer bail-out of State Bank losses? It has been reported that the Remm-Myer project will result in a loss of \$436 million to the bank, based on a current valuation of the project of \$290 million. However, I understand that the Valuer-General's latest valuation of the project is only \$150 million, raising the possibility that the eventual loss on this one project could be well in excess of \$500 million or more than 25 per cent of all State Bank write-offs.

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** As I understand it, the provisioning that has been made is consistent with the valuation that was done by a reputable valuing firm here in South Australia, Colliers—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS:** Well, I'm not a valuer; I am not prepared to argue with Colliers. If Colliers says, that X is the valuation, I have to go along with that. Neither I nor anybody else in this Chamber has skills greater than Colliers in this area. If the Valuer-General has valued it somewhat lower, I assume on the basis of its being sold today, that is what you would get. I can assure the honourable member, as I have assured the House on previous occasions, that neither the Remm building nor any other asset is for sale today, unless there is good value for it. It is not the intention of the Group Asset Management Division to put the Remm project on the market at a fire sale price. If, indeed, the Valuer-General has valued it at \$150 million, I assume that is on the basis of its being on the market today—and it is not.

### SPEED LIMIT

**Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park):** My question is directed to the Minister of Business and Regional Development representing the Minister of Transport Development in another place. Will the Minister advise the House—and I believe you, Mr Speaker, would be interested in this—what process or processes were used to arrive at the decision to increase speed limits on Military Road and West Lakes Boulevard? During 1992, 6 000 questionnaires were distributed from my electorate office to my constituents on this issue. The results were conveyed to the Department of Road Transport's working party. Many of those questionnaires, whilst supporting the increase in speed limits, expressed concern about safety, particularly that of elderly constituents. One letter, from the Delfin Property Group, which developed—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HAMILTON:**—this prime estate, states:

I received your circular questionnaire regarding the proposed introduction of 70 kilometre speed limits on West Lakes Boulevard, Military Road and Old Port Road and would like to comment as follows:

West Lakes Boulevard: I believe between Military Road and Frederick Road should remain at 60 kilometres per hour. The only section of this road which is clearly designed for an

increase in speed limit is the section between Frederick Road and Clarke Terrace.

In relation to Military Road, the Delfin Property Group says:

This road is certainly not designed to accept an increase in speed limit as there is—

**Mr LEWIS:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. For the member for Albert Park to assert that something is certainly not designed is an expression of opinion, a comment, not an explanation to the House.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not uphold the point of order. Is the member withdrawing leave for the question?

**Mr LEWIS:** If he goes on any longer I will.

**The SPEAKER:** Is the member withdrawing leave for the question?

**Mr LEWIS:** At this point, no, Sir.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Is the member withdrawing leave for the question?

**Mr LEWIS:** At this point, no.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I want a 'Yes' or a 'No'.

**An honourable member:** He said 'No'.

**The SPEAKER:** No, he did not. When the honourable member is in the Chair, he can make the decision. Is the honourable member withdrawing leave?

**Mr LEWIS:** At this point, no, for the third time, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Is the answer 'No'? I will keep asking until the honourable member says 'Yes' or 'No'.

**Mr LEWIS:** Mr Speaker, I said, 'At this point, no.'

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will not accept that: 'Yes' or 'No'.

**Mr LEWIS:** No.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the member for Albert Park to bring his question to a close as quickly as possible.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I intend to, Sir. I will wind up by saying—

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

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

**Mr HAMILTON:**—that Delfin says:

There is on-road parking; this road is extensively used by cyclists; numerous streets enter onto it, and it has no median strip capacity for U turns.

Hence my concern for elderly residents and children in this area.

**The Hon. M.D. RANN:** I guess any of us who are regular readers of the Messenger Press newspapers—I do not just mean the Navel comment in the *City Messenger*—would realise that the member for Albert Park has been dedicated to road safety during the time he has been in this Parliament. I remember the case of a woman who was involved in a fatal accident in West Lakes Boulevard and the changes that were made as a result of that and various other concerns relating to Football Park. Certainly, there have been changes. The increase from 60 to 70 kilometres per hour on these and other roads followed RAA concern that speed cameras were being used within the metropolitan area where the actual vehicle speed limit was not realistic. In response, scientific methodology was used according to the Department of Road Transport to determine speed zone values along individual roads, taking into consideration actual vehicle speeds, the style and intensity of roadside

development, and the types of accidents which might have happened on those roads.

The member makes some valid points, and I know that my colleague the Minister of Transport Development would certainly like to have discussions with him regarding his concerns. The Minister says that there will be no changes where road safety could be compromised, that maintenance gangs have been putting up new speed limit signs in the areas affected by the changes and that the changes will be monitored closely over the next two to three months and, if necessary, they will be reviewed.

#### EAR, NOSE AND THROAT SURGERY

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** My question is directed to the Minister of Health, Family and Community Services. Will he confirm that there is a six month waiting list for ear, nose and throat outpatient department appointments at the Royal Adelaide Hospital? In the circumstances, how can he go on supporting health policies which deny patients such urgent treatment? On 1 December last year, a man (whose name I am happy to provide to the Minister) was advised by his doctor to seek specialist advice on a growth in his throat. He contacted the Royal Adelaide Hospital and was told the first available outpatients appointment was in July this year. In recent weeks, the growth in his throat has enlarged, and he telephoned the Royal Adelaide Hospital again yesterday. After being told the first available appointment was now August and explaining his circumstances he was told flatly, 'Take it or leave it.'

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** The first thing we should look at in the overall interpretation of these figures—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** —is, for example, that, in the last month that figures are available for the November to December period, the overall waiting list at the Royal Adelaide Hospital actually fell by 32 patients. That is the overall impact in the Royal Adelaide Hospital. In other individual hospitals, different statistics were recorded. But, since the honourable member mentioned that particular hospital, it is certainly relevant to look at the overall reduction there. Of course, as the Federal waiting list money takes effect in the January to April period, we will see further reductions. In fact, the overall waiting list for the five metropolitan teaching hospitals also fell in that period. Of course, the reduction was small, and obviously the reduction is not sufficient to justify any optimism in that area as yet.

However, we do have problems in particular specialities and, as the honourable member raised the issue of ear, nose and throat, I will cite orthopaedic surgery as another principle example where individual specialist areas are not responding as we would like. Of course, there are a number of reasons for that. Some of them relate to the number of doctors who are trained as specialists, a factor which is, of course, under the complete control of the royal colleges, and I believe that the practices in relation to the training of these specialists should be examined closely. I think the royal colleges also need to review their own practices in those areas. We also need to look at the fact that the number of

procedures which can be performed is expanding rapidly. The very well quoted example throughout Australia is that some 20 years ago almost no hip replacements were performed—in fact, five in 1972—but last year 150 000 such procedures were performed across Australia.

In 20 years there has been a change in that orthopaedic speciality from five procedures to 150 000. Obviously, that shows the massive increase in the number of procedures that our public hospital system is performing, but in those limited specialist areas, clearly additional doctors are required to perform those operations. If those specialists would cooperate more with the public sector in providing their time and their sessional services, more procedures could be done. I am more than prepared, as always, in this place or outside it to examine individual cases put forward by members of either the Opposition or the Government. My office is approached from time to time by those who seek to have some action taken, and those cases are always examined. Individual medical priorities have to be looked at in each case. Surgeons manage their own booking lists, and I am not about to intervene in that process. Certainly, I will seek a review of the data if the honourable member cares to provide me with further details.

#### HEALTH POLICY

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** My question is directed to the Minister of Health. What would be the effect of the Federal Coalition's health policy on South Australia, given the views of numerous experts—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** —that these policies would result in the dismantling of Medicare, increased changes and a decline in health services for all South Australians?

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr Meier:** Who set you up for that one?

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

*Dr Armitage interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Adelaide is out of order. The honourable Minister of Health.

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** This is the question that the member for Adelaide did not ask and perhaps should have in terms of relevance, because whilst—

*Mr Meier interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** I warn the member for Goyder.

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** There were many implications in the question, and I do not know that Fightback was one of them. However, it should have been. Fightback alone would take some \$115 million per year from South Australian hospitals. If we are talking about the impact on procedures in public hospitals, that would be the equivalent of taking nearly 900 beds out of the public hospital system in this State. That is more than the capacity of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. One can imagine the impact on health care in this State of the removal of that number of beds from our health system. It would take us back to the charity medicine model of yesteryear—a two-class health care system, where South Australians were faced with the option of either being



wealthy enough to pay for private sector insurance for private medicine or to go without.

That \$1.3 billion which the Federal Coalition would seek to take out of our health care system would have a very serious impact on health in this country. That money should be spent on behalf of all Australians in placing funding within our public hospital system and not just on medicine for the rich. What about the impact on the 13 million Australians who would be ineligible for—

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The House will come to order. The member for Davenport.

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** Mr Speaker, I take a point of order on the basis that the Minister is debating the answer. He is the person who argued for short answers and for a change to Standing Orders, but he himself is doing what he condemned others for doing.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I uphold the point of order. I ask the Minister to bring his response to a close as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** Certainly, Mr Speaker. Clearly 13 million Australians will be ineligible for bulk billing and will not be able to meet the costs of the health care system which the Coalition would raise. The co-payment of \$4.65 every time people visit a doctor is a proposition that I believe most Australians will reject. But Fightback will do nothing to reduce the numbers of people going through the public hospital system. The incentives by the Coalition to take out private health insurance will pay for only private treatment in a public hospital. That will mean more people competing for those beds in public hospitals.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. The member for Coles.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker, it seemed to me that the Minister was coming very close to flouting your ruling, and I ask you to rule on it.

**The SPEAKER:** Once again I ask the Minister to bring his response to an end as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. M.J. EVANS:** It is quite clear that Fightback will actually mean longer waiting times in public hospitals. That is the clear message, and I am happy to conclude on that point.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** If the House will come to order, we will move on with questions.

*Dr Armitage interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** That includes the member for Adelaide.

### S.P. BOOKMAKING

**Mr OSWALD (Morphett):** My question is directed to the Minister of Emergency Services. In the absence of any current investigation into illegal S.P. bookmaking within the South Australian Police Force, what information can the Minister provide on the level of illegal S.P. bookmaking networks in this State, and what

assurances can he give that South Australia is not becoming a new popular address for illegal operators who are being forced out of the eastern States and Vanuatu because of the effective surveillance of their respective gaming and vice squads?

It has been put to me by senior police sources in Victoria that illegal bookmaking in that State now has an annual turnover in the vicinity of \$2 billion covering cells and networks throughout that State. It has also been put to me that evidence indicates that the senior echelons of organised crime in Victoria are now moving into illegal S.P. bookmaking operations because it is more profitable than trading in drugs and, if they are caught, the penalty is relatively minor, as the offence is treated as a summary offence.

The same police sources have informed me that the Victorian evidence is that S.P. operators from the eastern States and as far afield as Vanuatu are known to be looking at Adelaide as a place to set up operations because they know that we do not have a gaming squad to harass them and that our local Police Force does not know the real extent of any illegal activities because it has no-one specialising in the field.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** What this Government is doing, by its many amendments to the Racing Act, by its attempt through the TAB and by the proposals for telephone betting now being considered by the Government, is to tap in and endeavour to capture that money which is so often spoken about by people within the industry and which relates to S.P. bookmakers. It is a constant worry. I am not sure whether anyone can actually put a figure on it. Over the years, many experts in the field have tried to estimate how much money is being handled by S.P. bookmakers and how much comes back through legitimate forms of betting in the process. It is a really complex issue. What my colleague the Minister of Recreation and Sport is doing in terms of his support for the recommendations, such as the auditorium and telephone betting, will capture a large part of that S.P. bookmaking money. I hope that, in the process, that assists the industry, as I believe it will, to develop facilities, capital equipment and other support for State money.

I will refer the matter to the Police Commissioner for a comprehensive report, but I believe that we have to be very careful when we look at S.P. bookmaking, because often these legislative steps are taken and they do not capture the money which I believe exists and which is predicted by many of the experts to exist.

*Mr Oswald interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** Well, there are different views about what the honourable member has just said. They vary within the industry and I am sure within this House as well. I will obtain a comprehensive report from the Commissioner. I believe that the way this Government is approaching the industry and endeavouring to bring that money back into legitimate betting forms is the best form of attack.

### ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE CENTRE

**Mr De LAINE (Price):** Will the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs explain to the House a recent cultural

initiative that celebrates the International Year of the World's Indigenous People? With 1993 being a significant year for Aboriginal people in Australia, I understand that the Minister was involved in an historic announcement at Port Adelaide last week which will ensure the preservation and enhancement of Aboriginal languages in South Australia.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I am very pleased that the member for Price has raised this question. Not only has he a personal interest as a member of Parliament and a member of the community but the Aboriginal Language Centre is located in his electorate. The Premier and I were privileged last Friday to attend the opening of the Aboriginal Language Centre, which is the first of its kind in South Australia. It is a significant step. For over 150 years in this State and for over 200 years nationally, Australians—particularly our predecessors—have largely ignored the rich cultural heritage that existed with the Aboriginal communities.

We believe that some 25 languages with a great number of dialects exist in South Australia alone. Fortunately, because of steps taken by past Governments, we are now able to recover those languages, and we believe that, through the Language Centre, we will be able to establish with the communities a very rich heritage, which has existed in South Australia.

Languages that are actively spoken include Pitjantjatjara and Yunkunjatjara and all the dialects which exist within those languages. We have some 1500 speakers of Pitjantjatjara alone, so that language exists in a living form, but there are other languages which we can and do retrieve, and there are some seven of those that we believe we can bring back through the Language Centre. Not only will that enrich and add to the cultural diversity of this State but also, through the Language Centre at Lipton Street, we will be able to develop for non-Aboriginal people the opportunity to extend and explore those languages so they can gain an appreciation of the heritage that we have inherited through the Aboriginal communities in South Australia.

The centre is a milestone: I congratulate the Aboriginal community, particularly Frank Lampard, who has chaired the interim committee. He and his committee have done an excellent job. I congratulate the Kaurna people, who formed the opening, and I thank the Pitjantjatjara people from Indulkana who opened the ceremony last Friday in Port Adelaide.

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#### TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

**Mr LEWIS:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: did I hear the Minister seek leave to make a personal explanation or a ministerial statement?

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member has been here long enough to know that ministerial statements come before Question Time and that members seek leave

to make a personal explanation subsequent to Question Time. The Minister has sought leave to make a personal explanation.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** Yesterday and today in this House the member for Bragg made certain allegations against me in relation to the TAB. The honourable member said:

...while the Minister for Recreation and Sport, the Hon. Kym Mayes, telephoned Mr Smith and also wrote to him and his personal assistant requesting that employment be given to at least six people...

That statement is incorrect, and I wish to put on the public record the facts in regard to this matter. At no time did I request the General Manager of the TAB or any other staff member of the TAB that employment be given to any person. As is perfectly standard and perfectly proper for members of Parliament, I did refer constituents or their family members to the TAB for consideration for casual positions. I did not at any time seek for those referrals any consideration by the TAB beyond the normal and appropriate selection procedures undertaken by the TAB. Nor did I apply any pressure of any sort for the TAB to go beyond the normal procedures in relation to these referrals. My records show that I personally referred 15 people to the TAB, three of whom received employment. Three other constituents may have received TAB casual employment after being referred in the appropriate manner by my electorate staff to the employment officer at the TAB.

Yesterday's statement by the member for Bragg contains another inaccuracy which needs to be corrected, namely, that I spoke to the General Manager of the TAB in relation to these referrals. It is perfectly appropriate to attempt to assist constituents by referring them to organisations where they can be considered for employment in the proper and appropriate way. Over the years I have referred a large number of constituents to a wide variety of organisations for consideration for employment. Indeed, in relation to some of the 15 people referred to in this statement, my records reveal that I wrote to a number of other organisations and major private companies requesting that they be considered for employment.

I am sure that all members regularly and quite properly in the course of their duties provide referrals for constituents or others seeking employment. Indeed, I can recall that the member for Bragg himself approached me last year asking me to find employment in the Public Service for a prominent Adelaide footballer. I responded to the member for Bragg by indicating that I would be happy to refer that person to the Commissioner for Public Employment for consideration in the proper manner but that it would be totally inappropriate to seek to circumvent the proper procedures for employment in the Public Service. I will continue to assist my constituents who approach me seeking references or referrals in their attempts to find employment. As in the past, I will continue to do so in a perfectly proper and appropriate manner, according to my duty as a member of Parliament.

## GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

**Mr D.S. BAKER (Victoria):** I guess that is the swan song that the Minister just delivered to this House, but what I want to talk about today is a most irresponsible act by the Minister of Primary Industries. What the Minister of Primary Industries announced today was the closure of the South-East rock lobster fishery for the month of April, which will cost those fishermen down there \$4 million. Three weeks before the month that is to be closed, he announces it. Normally, the fishery closes in May and everyone projects their income over that period of time, but this \$30 million industry is now being put in jeopardy by the irresponsible attitude of the Minister and by the blackmail by the Director of those fishermen down in the South-East. I do not say that lightly. This has been going on for the past five years, and it is about time this Minister woke up to it.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** I will say it outside, and I will say it to you outside.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! While the honourable member is in the House, he will address the Chair.

*Mr Hamilton interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Albert Park is out of order.

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** What the Director of Fisheries said to these people at the fishing meeting (and I have been to three of those meetings lately) was, 'Take this, or I will close it down.' What he meant by taking it was that, if they did not accept the 1 650 tonnes—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. The member for Napier has a point of order.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** My point of order, Mr Speaker, is that the member for Victoria is referring to the Minister as 'he' and he—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Victoria knows the rules.

**Mr D.S. BAKER:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. This fishery is protected in two ways, and it is right and proper that the Minister should protect the fishery on behalf of the State. It is protected first by the size limit, so it can never be fished out, because there is a legal limit as to the size that one can take from that fishery, and that is right and proper. It is also protected in that fish, especially berried females, cannot be taken during the breeding season, which is from May to the end of September. Apart from that, it is the commercial fishermen who decide what fish can be taken within the law—the size limit—and how much is taken. They have been fighting for years to have a total allowable catch, and there was some hope of that when integrated management came in some six months ago.

The Minister went to the first meeting, and I went to that first meeting. I have been to subsequent meetings, and at each of these meetings the Director of Fisheries said, 'If you do not accept a total allowable catch of 1 650 tonnes, I will close you down.' Now he has done it; now he has convinced the Minister that that is what

should be done, and that is blackmail. All those fishermen want is a reasonable total allowable catch. They are quite happy to look at closing in October to make sure that the berried females have ample time to produce next year's catch, and they are quite happy to look at quotas, but what they do not want is to be blackmailed by the Director, and that is what has happened now. The Minister's statement is very interesting; he says he has given careful consideration to all these issues and the scientific data relevant to the fishery. I challenge him to produce those scientific data, because they are not there.

The 1 650 tonnes a day that the Minister wants as the total allowable catch is the average catch over the past 20 years. In fact, that comes to 1 633 tonnes. Why would he want to drag this fishery back that far when up to 2 000 tonnes has been taken out of the fishery? Why does he want to do it that way? I think it is about time the Minister stopped listening to the Director and started listening to the integrated management team in the South-East and in the northern zone. They want to manage the fishery; they are prepared to be responsible; but they will not respond to blackmail. I would urge those fishermen in the southern rock lobster zone to look at every legal method they can to make sure that they are fully protected from losing \$4 million next month in response to the blackmail of the Director. It is outrageous for a Minister to carry on in this way, and I would say that the Director should be sacked.

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

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier):** Unlike some members opposite who continually take up the time allotted to them for making speeches by reading letters and articles into *Hansard*, you well know, Mr Speaker, that I usually give my contribution as I see it. It is mine, it belongs to me, I give it straight, and members in this Chamber take it or leave it. However, this time I will deviate from my usual practice. The reason I do so is that the *Advertiser*, for obvious reasons—and I do not have to go into the reasons—has chosen only to print anything to do with the Liberal Party in the Federal election campaign in such a way that hopefully its readers will be lulled into a feeling that salvation is just around the corner if they vote Liberal.

Thankfully, in the eastern States there is still a balanced view available to the community and, to try to give the dear citizens of South Australia that balance, I would like to read the following article that appeared yesterday in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Under the title 'Campaign notebook' by Mike Seacombe, the report is headed 'Bring me the lame, the blind, the gullible', and it goes on to state:

If you took a wrong turn on the way to the Liberals' campaign launch at the Wesley Centre yesterday, you encountered a Uniting Church service in a quiet chapel. If you took the right turn, you encountered a noisy, brash, southern Baptist-style revival meeting. Welcome to Brother Love's Travelling Economic Salvation Show.

You know what these kinds of meetings are like. Some shonk deftly uses rhetoric and a powerful knowledge of the gospel to convince the gullible and the desperate, the blind and the lame, that they will be cured if only they believed strongly enough. Of

course, the believers never are cured. They are called up on stage to testify, but they are sold false hope. They only line the pockets of a predator. The main difference between John the Baptist's show yesterday and the usual revival meeting is that the desperate preceded the preacher on to the stage.

There were five of them. Jennifer, mother of three whose husband lost his job; Sam, farmer and father of four, caught by interest rates and low commodity prices when he tried to expand; Beverley, hairdresser whose business went bust; John, invalid pensioner who had to wait seven months for an operation; and Michelle, divorced mother of two, whose welder qualifications cannot get her a job.

Jennifer sounded bitter, Sam matter of fact, Beverley close to tears, Michelle scared. John, in a neck brace and with a walking stick, just seemed confused. These people were genuine. They weren't paid. The Liberal Party sold them hope and called on them to testify to their faith. It used them.

The audience, slick and rich and well fed, had earlier given their loudest applause for the hardest of the hard right—Bronwyn Bishop, John Howard and Jeff Kennett. Many of them probably felt genuine sympathy for the five, but it's hard to avoid the conclusion that the Party only felt they would be a good marketing ploy.

Then Brother Love himself hit the stage. Not the John Hewson who once said that reaching down to help life's losers meant pulling everyone else down; the new John Hewson who got a heart transplant late last year. He said the test of leadership was being able to look the five 'in the eye and tell them quite honestly that we can solve their problems'.

But how would an under-resourced public education system teach their children? Would a deregulated labour market guarantee a single mother enough to live on? How would a farmer cope with more expensive rural services? How would a chronically ill man fare in the new health system? How would the GST help a hairdresser? He never said. He just promised generalised miracles. Full employment and lower taxes. Huge gains [in] productivity. All the scripture of the market.

He left them with hope, but no answers. Who cares? Once the salvation show has moved on, people tend not to notice that the lame are still lame. The predators will have their tax cuts.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Newland.

**Mrs KOTZ (Newland):** It is with considerable sadness that I record in this place the passing of a member of my community, Mrs Frankie Swansborough. It is with considerable respect that I extend my sympathy to members of Mrs Swansborough's family, to her friends and to those people who worked with her over the years. Mrs Swansborough was a woman in her early 70s, and I refer to her age because the energy and commitment to community service which was such a large part of Mrs Swansborough's life totally belies any suggestion that age restricts the contribution individuals can make to those they care about.

I had the privilege of meeting Mrs Swansborough before becoming a member of this Parliament and I had a closer association over the past 31½ years as Mrs Swansborough held the position of President of Modbury Hospital Auxiliary. I have been pleased to support that same auxiliary as patron. Mrs Swansborough, supported by her efficient committee, worked tirelessly to raise and provide funds to enable all members of our community to enjoy a caring and proficient environment when they

find themselves in need of medical care and hospitalisation.

This effort was by no means a meagre feat. In fact, donations made to Modbury Hospital by the auxiliary for the year ended 30 June 1992 totalled \$130 000 and donations approved since 30 June 1992 amounted to \$84 380. This is an outstanding effort which our community can receive only with a feeling of pride and the recognition that Mrs Swansborough's efforts epitomised the efforts of her committee.

Mrs Swansborough was an English migrant and an Australian citizen. She graduated as a nurse in 1938 from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in England. It was one of Britain's busiest and noted training facilities of its time. Mrs Swansborough achieved the status of sister and, as a sister, worked throughout the war years attending to the sick, the injured and the dying.

After the war, she was appointed deputy matron of a children's home in Woking, in the English county of Surrey. She remarried in 1945 and emigrated to Australia in 1946-47 years ago. South Australia became the beneficiary of the hard working, skilful, caring and humanitarian legacy of Mrs Frankie Swansborough. As a founding member of the Modbury Hospital Auxiliary, Mrs Swansborough would have concluded 20 years of service on 16 March. She attended the hospital every day and was a member of the kiosk and refurbishment committees. Two years ago, she was nominated for the Australian Citizen of the Year award by the Corporation of the City of Tea Tree Gully. Mrs Swansborough received a certificate of recognition as runner up for that award.

The Hon. Ian Gilfillan in another place approached me this morning when he became aware that I wished to use this debate to pay my respects to this remarkable woman and requested that I include on his behalf his praise and respect for Mrs Swansborough and for her lifelong commitment to working for others. I am certainly very pleased to include the respects of the honourable member and to express his wish that his sympathy be extended to the family and friends of Mrs Swansborough.

Mrs Swansborough had been diagnosed 10 years ago as having the illness that finally took her life. She fought valiantly for all those years to maintain her health in order to continue her work with the Modbury Hospital Auxiliary. Frankie Swansborough will be remembered for her unswerving devotion to the community. She will be remembered as a true Australian.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Albert Park.

**Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park):** Today in Question Time I asked a question about increased speed on roads within our electorate of Albert Park. I say 'our' electorate, Mr Speaker, because I understand that you have moved into Albert Park. May I officially welcome you to that district. I raise this question because in the middle of last year I was advised that it was the intention of the Department of Road Transport (I draw attention to the time, Sir, because I do not want to cheat the House) to increase the speed limits within my electorate. That was as a consequence of the Royal Automobile Association's urging the Government to set up a working party.

As indicated in my contribution during Question Time, I distributed 6 000 questionnaires to all of my constituents thus affected. The response was very good indeed and it was recorded in the March/April issue of *South Australian Motor*, which came out yesterday, as follows:

In the meantime, the member for Albert Park, Kevin Hamilton, carried out a survey in his electorate consisting of a letter-drop to 6 000 residents. Of 750 responses, 60 per cent supported an increase in speed limits. Of the remaining 40 per cent not all said 'No' to all speed limits.

I raise this issue because of the many representations I have received in relation to this matter. It would have been easy for me as a local member to ignore that and lay all the blame on the Department of Road Transport, the RAA and whoever else I wished to blame for it, but that is not my wont.

After that questionnaire was distributed I received a great deal of correspondence. As I indicated, I am generally concerned about a number of areas—about access across Military Road, for example. I listed those concerns in correspondence to the Minister. I named the Fort Glanville historical site; access across Military Road for horse trainers who train along the beach at Semaphore Park; Fort Glanville caravan park; access to and from Semaphore Surf Life Saving Club and the adjacent reserve, including the beach ramp; access across Military Road for residents and visitors to Wesley House; access across Military Road for members of the Westport Little Athletics Association, the second largest group of Little Athletics in South Australia; access across Military Road for students attending the Edwin Street Junior Primary and Primary Schools; access across Military Road for parents and kindergarten children attending the Edwin Street Kindergarten; access across Military Road for residents visiting the West Lakes Community Club; ingress and egress out of the Mirani Court Shopping Centre, which includes a very popular access route to the local beach; access to the West Lakes Rowing Club for the numerous rowing and canoeing events on the West Lakes waterway; access across Military Road to the nearby beach for thousands of students under the Education Department's aquatic program which is conducted from the West Lakes Rowing Club premises; access across Military Road for the sailboard championship and events held on the waterway; and access across Military Road for the numerous retired people—one of the highest ratios of elderly people located in my electorate of Albert Park. That does not include the numerous triathlon events which are conducted around the very popular West Lakes waterway. Numerous other events are carried on in that area.

I have volumes of other correspondence here and time does not permit me to read the details into *Hansard*. This correspondence indicates that there is a need to address these particular problems. Anyone who has had a brother or sister killed in a road accident, as I have, would understand the traumas that affect those particular people. People in my electorate have been affected. As the Minister indicated today, I feel for my electorate and I believe the Government has to address these issues. Indeed, I will not rest until these issues have been addressed.

This is a very popular area. I have ignored Football Park. I have ignored a whole range of other access areas in my electorate. It has to be addressed. My constituents are entitled to know. I am pleased that the Minister has said she will keep a watching brief on it, as indeed I will.

**Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee):** The contribution made by the member for Napier a little earlier astonished me. I believe that the point he made was a valid one, that is, that very often there are members who stand in this place and read slabs of information into *Hansard*. It is important to do that. I suppose one of the most significant contributors to the record by this means and using this device is the member who has just sat down, the member for Albert Park. He frequently reads into the record letters from constituents and groups, and does so quite properly to illustrate the point that is being made by his constituents in their own words to ensure that there is no misunderstanding of the way in which he makes such representations. Equally, I have done the same thing, and I know many members on this side have done likewise.

I would say to the member for Napier, however, that the practice that I think most destructive of this Parliament and its ability to act as a forum for the exchange of ideas and views, albeit in an adversary/advocacy context, is to stand in this place and read a speech in the same way as I have noticed members opposite do dozens upon dozens of times.

*Mr Hamilton interjecting:*

**Mr LEWIS:** Members of both sides, sure, but nobody can deny that June Appleby never made a speech in this place but that she read it. Not one word she uttered in here came straight from her mouth as it might have come spontaneously arising from her thoughts. It was always premeditated and prepared, not necessarily by herself. The same thing goes for Di Gayler, and there are a good many others in the same boat. I do not think that adds anything whatever to a better understanding of the issues in this place.

The Government Whip, the member for Walsh, has been guilty of the same thing. He has stood in this place during the time that we were in Government and read into the record at more than 140 words a minute a lot of drivel on occasions without good effect. He is a man capable of great wit but equal spite and very often lacks wisdom.

I turn now to the new telephone book because there is some mischief, malice or incompetence involved in the way in which entries appear. For instance, if we look in the new 085 directory, we find that members of Parliament have their electorate offices listed under the State Government section in the front of the telephone book. That does not occur in the 08 directory; they have banished that for some reason best known to themselves. No mention whatever is made of the member for Kavel. However, the member for Alexandra is included. The member for Kavel is still listed as being E. Roger Goldsworthy. To my mind, that is quite wrong, and I do not know why that oversight could possibly have been made.

The next point I make is that in the case of Mr Peter Arnold, the member for Chaffey, we find that his name,

like that of Mr Venning, the member for Custance, is in bold type in the alphabetical section, yet all other members in the 085 directory who have constituents living in the area covered by this directory have their names in ordinary type, with the exception of the member for Goyder, John Meier. He is not listed at all; they have left him out for reasons I do not understand.

Moreover, I have asked for my name to appear in that directory as 'Lewis, Peter' because that is the name by which I have been known ever since I can remember; that is the name by which I was elected to this place, yet it is listed as 'I. Peter'—not 'P' but 'I' under 'Lewis'. Lewis's are not too common but they are not uncommon. People have complained to me in the past. I have tried to put this right with former Ministers of Housing and Construction and anybody else that has had a say in the matter and they have never taken the trouble to get it right. I think it is about time it was done, because it is embarrassing to us as members of Parliament to have these differences and to have the public commenting upon them and complaining that they cannot find us.

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

**Mr HERON (Peake):** I would not like to count how many meetings I have attended or even how many committees I have been on over the past 20 years or so. That would be exactly the same for all members in this House and, of course, members in another place. We all know how important meetings are, but people who are committee members especially must show a bit of decorum as to why and how that committee is run. As members of Parliament, we all attend meetings, not only in this House but also in our electorates, and most of us would say that, with the number of meetings involved, they get up our nose.

However, they are important not only because of what comes out of them but as to how they are run. All members of Parliament would be aware that the committee system has changed recently in this and the other House and, from my understanding, the committees have been working reasonably well.

Some of the committees—and I am not a member of many—break down because some members, maybe because of other commitments or other committee obligations, do not attend. My grievance is that members who nominate for a committee should make sure that they attend and that they do so on time. We invite people to give evidence to committees and more times than not we lack a quorum. All of us—me included—should have some respect for the witnesses we call, and especially the chairperson because the chairperson always tries to get through the agenda on time. Also, the staff of those committees are put out when we do not have a quorum or when people turn up half an hour or three quarters of an hour late; and the *Hansard* reporters sit around waiting for us to form a quorum.

I ask all members to do their bit and to attend committee meetings on time, and to give some respect to the other members who are involved as well as witnesses and staff. Because we sit only three days of the week, maybe the timing of committee meetings should be looked at. We might have to look at meeting on Mondays and Fridays so that we can fit in our other

commitments as well. Two weeks ago, this House set up another select committee. Although I support the reasons why it is going ahead, I would ask the members of that committee to look at their agendas and at the other committees they are on to see whether the timing of the new committee fits in with their agendas. We all finish up going to meeting after meeting, and it is very hard to fit them all in our diaries. I say to all members in this House and the other place: let us see whether we can do our bit, respect the witnesses and the staff and get our committee system working much better.

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### STAMP DUTIES (FARM MACHINERY) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 November. Page 1682.)

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** I oppose this Bill which seeks to exempt farm machinery from stamp duty associated with registration. I do not think anyone in this House would have a problem with the notion that farm machinery that is used primarily for primary production should be exempt from such duty. Indeed, that is the case at present. Before I expand on my reasons for opposing this Bill, I will outline the existing provisions. At present, farmers are able to use their farm machinery on roads within 40 kilometres of their property without any fees being imposed. Insurance in such cases is covered by the public liability insurance of the farmer concerned.

What that means, as the member for Custance pointed out in his second reading explanation last week, is that, if a farmer has two properties which are up to 80 kilometres apart, his farm machinery can move between those two properties because, at all times, it is within 40 kilometres of either property; and in such situations it is covered by public liability insurance. That is not a problem. There are good reasons for that. Farmers often have paddocks on the other side of the road or down the track, and it is appropriate that they should be able to move their machinery between those properties.

What if a farmer needs to move his farm machinery more than 40 kilometres from his property? Obviously we have to allow for such a situation because it is necessary from time to time for farmers to repair their machinery, and that might necessitate a trip of more than

40 kilometres. If machinery is purchased, it has to be moved, and so on. In such cases a permit system applies for the moving of such machinery. Under the permit system that operates in this State, no stamp duty is applicable; there is a \$17 administration fee; and an insurance charge of \$14 per year. In other words, a permit system does exist for the moving of farm machinery greater than 40 kilometres when that is necessary, and those permits are granted by the Motor Registration Division.

That provision is generous in South Australia because it covers contract work. Even if a piece of farm machinery is used for contract work, a permit can be

granted provided that unrestricted and continuous access to the road network is not required. I should point out that this provision is much more generous than that which exists in other States. In Victoria, there is a scheme for the registration of agricultural implements which involves an annual insurance fee of \$48, an administration fee of \$15 and a once-off plate fee of \$22—significantly more expensive than in South Australia. However, when any contract work is undertaken, normal registration and stamp duty are required.

I guess the philosophy behind the situation in Victoria is that, if a farm implement is being used by a farmer on his property, it is part of his production and it should be exempt from the normal registration and stamp duty requirements; however, if it is being used for contract work, the purpose for which that machinery is used is no longer principally primary production but contract work. In other words, the nature of the work has changed and, therefore, stamp duty and registration should be applicable. As I pointed out, that is not the case in South Australia. In South Australia permits are available, and that includes contract work. I concede that perhaps this system is not always perfect and that possibly a better system could be devised. Indeed, there have been a number of moves at national level (of which I am sure everyone in this House who is interested in this matter would be aware) to look at a better system for the registering of farm machinery.

I think that that explanation provides the reasons why we should oppose this Bill. If there are problems with the issue of permits, the answer is not to make a general blanket removal of stamp duty in the Stamp Duties Act. The correct way to address the problem is to improve the system of permits or develop a system of farm registration that adequately deals with the problem. That would be my suggestion to the member for Custance: if he wants to address this problem, that would be a better way to do it, because putting an exemption in the Stamp Duties Act could well create a loophole.

While addressing the question of the moving of farm machinery, I point to the action that was taken by the Opposition, including the member for Custance, when the Motor Vehicles Act Amendment Bill (No. 5) was introduced in this place in 1990. That Bill was a budget measure which, in itself, is worth pointing out because members of the Opposition defeated it. That Bill sought to remove some of the obvious anomalies that were being used through concessional registration under the Motor Vehicles Act.

*Mr Venning interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** The most particular anomaly that was sought to be addressed by the Motor Vehicles Act Amendment Bill (No. 5) was the removal of the concession that was provided to vehicles used for primary production that are less than two tonnes. It also dealt with other concessions that are abused, such as vehicles that are used in the mining industry and by local government. That measure was opposed by members opposite. Of course, every member in this House is aware of the number of farm vehicles of less than two tonnes, such as four wheel drives, that are driven around in the city under farm registration. Something like

\$14 million of revenue was being missed through concessional registration.

Concessional registration should be available when genuine concessions are needed. However, in a number of cases these vehicles are used on the road nearly the whole time and have very little to do with primary production. They provide a cheap means of avoiding full registration fees. The Motor Vehicles Act Amendment Bill (No. 5) sought to remove that anomaly but, despite its being a budget measure, members opposite blocked it, so the rorting of that concessional registration continues. If the honourable member is genuine about seeking a better way of registering farm vehicles and addressing these problems, he should be prepared to remove the rorting in the system. If we could come to a better system of addressing the problems in that area, we could tidy up the problems involving the movement of farm machinery where a distance of more than 40 kilometres is involved.

In this State, the system that assists farmers in moving their machinery is more generous than in most other States. The fees are not as great and the permit system applies for contract farm machinery. In spite of what the member for Custance said in his second reading explanation, a mechanism is in place by which farm machinery, including that for contract purposes, can be moved. If there are problems, they should be addressed in terms of the permit system, not in terms of removing from the Stamp Duties Act the requirement for stamp duty to be paid because, in doing so, we could easily open up an anomaly. That is why I oppose the Bill. I have some sympathy for the general sentiments of the member for Custance in that a better system could be developed, and that is where the member for Custance would be better directing his attention, that is, towards developing a better permit system rather than through this backdoor method of amending the Stamp Duties Act.

**Mr VENNING (Custance):** In no way am I personally advantaged by this measure. However, words absolutely escape me! I thought this House was interested in a fair go. I put a lot of work into this Bill, and I think it is reasonable and fair. I am not asking the Government to forgo any money. In fact, this measure is revenue positive. This Bill has been withdrawn three times so that I could discuss it with sympathetic members of the Government. I have lobbied them all, I have written to all of them, but one honourable member stood in the way, and that was the Minister, Frank Blevins. The member for Mitchell told the House why that happened, because in 1990 members on this side of the House would not agree to the scrapping of registration concessions on motor vehicles for farmers. That is the only reason.

This is a total payback. Given the member for Stuart's ambitions in the seat of Eyre, she must shudder at the mileage going into this because what we have heard today is ridiculous and unfair. We all know that farm machines are not subject usually to registration, but young farmers in particular, who are on their father's farms, do contracting to try to supplement their income. They go down the road to work for others, and that may be more than 40 kilometres from home.

**The Hon. T.H. Hemmings:** They should get a permit.

**Mr VENNING:** The member for Napier said that the farmers should get a permit. A person owning land may ring up a neighbour to bale his hay. As soon as that person comes down the road, he is a contractor because he is going to do someone else's work. He probably does not have a permit. He has to apply for a permit in writing to the nearest registration office, and that takes at least three days. Let us be rational about it.

**The Hon. T.H. Hemmings:** Let's look at the permit system.

**Mr VENNING:** The honourable member knows, as I do, that contractors do not get a permit, they go down the road without one. The authorities know this goes on but they turn a blind eye. One day there will be an accident and someone will be hurt, and that is when the trouble will begin. All I am trying to do is allow farmers to go about their business, doing work for others, without having to pay this ridiculously high stamp duty. The figures were quoted for Victoria. I understand that no stamp duty is payable on any farm machinery in that State, no matter what is done with it. The figures quoted today are malicious and ridiculously untrue. The stamp duty on a harvester is about \$9 000. Can members understand a battling farmer not wanting to pay that? Can they imagine how much profit that farmer would need to earn to cover that \$9 000? It does not happen.

This Bill is an honest attempt to address a problem, albeit a small one. I did not make any headlines about the issue. I lobbied members opposite for a fair go, but it has not happened. If members of the South Australian community want to know how sympathetic this Government is towards rural people, particularly, this is a good example. What more proof do they need? This measure is revenue positive because the Government would pick up registration fees. The Government would pick up about \$100 for each unit and the farmers would be quite prepared to pay it. How sympathetic will Government members be when there is an accident, someone is hurt and a young farmer loses his farm because he was in breach of the law? We wanted to change the law, but that will not happen. That is despicable. The member for Mitchell does not understand and the Minister could not care less, and he has shown how unsympathetic he is. If you mention the word farmer, you are shut out straight away.

This Government has total disregard for the rural community and has shown its lack of support, understanding and sympathy. There is nothing else for it. This is a simple, straightforward Bill that would not cost the Government anything. However, members opposite could not convince the Minister to change his mind. What sort of Caucus room does the Government have? Does the majority control it or does the Minister have all the say? I am totally disgusted that this is the way Parliament works, that a little Bill like this to help rural people will not get through.

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

The House divided on the second reading:

Ayes (23)—H. Allison, M.H. Armitage, P.B. Arnold, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, H. Becker, P.D. Blacker, M.K. Brindal, D.C. Brown, J.L. Cashmore, B.C. Eastick, S.G. Evans, G.M. Gunn, G.A. Ingerson, D.C. Kotz, I.P. Lewis,

W.A. Matthew, E.J. Meier, J.W. Olsen, J.K.G. Oswald, R.P. Such, I.H. Yenning (teller), D.C. Wotton.

Noes (23)—L.M.F. Arnold, M.J. Atkinson, J.C. Bannon, F.T. Blevins, G.J. Crafter, M.R. De Laine, M.J. Evans, D.M. Ferguson, R.J. Gregory, T.R. Groom, K.C. Hamilton, T.H. Hemmings, Y.S. Heron, P. Holloway (teller), D.J. Hopgood, C.F. Hutchison, J.H.C. Klunder, S.M. Lenehan, C.D.T. McKee, M.K. Mayes, J.A. Quirke, M.D. Rann, J.P. Trainer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There being 23 Ayes and 23 Noes, I cast my vote for the Ayes.

Second reading thus carried.

Bill taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

**Mr VENNING (Custance):** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a third time.*

**Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee):** I am delighted to support the passage of the measure, not only because it is compassionate in the way in which it provides for people who would otherwise be in grave financial difficulty having to pay this high impost on the registration of their essential farm equipment, just to get it across a public road from one paddock to another, but also and more particularly because it is revenue positive for the Government. As the Bill comes through Committee to the third reading, all members can now recognise that we will be able to get those implements and traction implements in particular in rural areas registered, and they will pay a fair share of the third party insurance premiums that will underwrite the risk of injury that might arise from any collision between those vehicles and something else. That will be paid; at present it is very often not paid.

In addition to that, the Government will also get as revenue, which it does not currently get, registration fees and dues, simply because we as a House have chosen to understand that it should not be necessary to pay such a high impost in stamp duty. As the member for Custance has pointed out to us, in many instances that stamp duty runs to thousands of dollars on each implement, and it does nothing whatever to secure the safety of people using the roads. I am pleased to see the House supporting the member for Custance in this very sensible policy shift that will in no way adversely affect the Treasury.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier):** I am disappointed with the form in which the Bill has come out of Committee in that it is a very important measure for people in the rural community—and I do pay tribute to the member for Custance for the passionate way that he argued his case, as obviously he swayed some members in this Chamber—but the point that did not get through to some people was that, in order to alleviate some of the problems that were so eloquently put by the member for Custance, a procedural and a bureaucratic solution is required: it is not necessary to amend the Stamp Duties Act. That is why I am saddened and disappointed that the Bill has come out of Committee in this way.



I do congratulate the member for Custance for the lobbying in which he involved himself, and obviously the Committee has endorsed his Bill. But I would have thought that the member for Custance would look for a bureaucratic way, such as altering the permit system; that would achieve the same results that he is trying to achieve—indeed, it looks as though he has achieved those results, because we are now in the third reading stage. Again, I draw the attention of the member for Custance to the fact that we cannot have it both ways. He cannot vote for a motion which supports his rich farmer mates who are rorting the system by driving around in vehicles that have nothing to do with the running of the farm and who want to look good in their Toyota four wheel drives and in their Land Cruisers, and they are doing it, Mr Deputy Speaker, at the expense of your constituents and my constituents. For that I say to the member for Custance: shame on you!

**The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey):** I must respond to the comments just made by the member for Napier. I believe they were an absolute disgrace and a reflection on the people out there struggling to survive. It is well known that some of the lowest income people in this State are people on the land, and it is recognised statistically that their income is far below the income of those in the western suburbs of Adelaide. The comments just made by the member for Napier are a discredit to him and a reflection on the people who contribute so much to South Australia.

**The Hon. N.T. PETERSON (Semaphore):** I take the unusual step of speaking in this debate, because I understand the impact and the—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I beg your pardon. I have been advised that the honourable member cannot speak on this issue at this stage. The member for Goyder.

**Mr MEIER (Goyder):** I am pleased to support this Bill as it comes out of Committee and to say that only today I had another machinery dealer approach me about the difficulties that exist in moving machines from one property to another. Last week I attended a field day and the dealer reported to me that, of the many machines there, he believed not one of them had arrived there legally because of the problem with permits in moving machines from one place to another. We heard in the second reading debate from the member for Mitchell how the permit system was providing the answers. Unfortunately, that is not correct. I know that the member for Victoria has helped me on occasions in ensuring that permits are provided at short notice when the owners have been told that they would have to wait some days. This Bill certainly helps to correct that anomaly. I am very pleased that the member for Custance has introduced it, and I wish it a speedy passage through the third reading stage.

**Mr HAMILTON:** On a point of order, Sir, can I clarify why the member for Semaphore was not allowed to speak in this debate? I am at a loss to understand the reason why. I do not know all the procedures of the House.

**The SPEAKER:** I will explain. My proper seat at that time was in the Chair. This is the third reading debate. I

came into the Chamber and incorrectly assumed it was the Committee stage, at which stage I could have taken a seat in the Chamber, but it was the third reading debate, at which time I should have been in the Chair. The honourable member for Custance.

**Mr VENNING (Custance):** I want to clear up a couple of anomalies that have come forward in the debate. There is a misunderstanding about permits. Permits can be granted for only a short term, usually six to eight weeks, and that is where the problem lies. If a farmer wants to go down the road to do a job for which he does not have a permit, he must apply for a permit. These days only a few farmers have modern and very expensive hay rollers and, if he wants to call the neighbour to come to roll up the hay, he must have a permit. But permits are usually issued for specific farm operations at set times, such as seeding and harvest periods. The permit must be carried in the farm machine. It is easy for it to be ruined or to be lost. It is a most unsatisfactory method. As the member for Mitchell intimated, it is a totally unsatisfactory situation.

I thank members for their support for this Bill. It is a small token of support for the battling rural community. I just hope that members can understand that permits are the problem, and we want to correct that so that farmers who wish may pay money to the Government to register their machines without the high impost of stamp duty. I hope that members understand my reasons for bringing forward this Bill. I thank them for the support so far and trust that they will help us to finish the job.

The House divided on the third reading:

Ayes (23)—H. Allison, M.H. Armitage, P.B. Arnold, D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, H. Becker, P.D. Blacker, M.K. Brindal, D.C. Brown, J.L. Cashmore, B.C. Eastick, S.G. Evans, G.M. Gunn, G.A. Ingerson, D.C. Kotz, I.P. Lewis, W.A. Matthew, E.J. Meier, J.W. Olsen, J.K.G. Oswald, R.B. Such, I.H. Venning (teller), D.C. Wotton.

Noes (23)—L.M.F. Arnold, M.J. Atkinson, J.C. Bannon, F.T. Blevins, G.J. Crafter, M.R. De Laine, M.J. Evans, D.M. Ferguson, R.J. Gregory, T.R. Groom, K.C. Hamilton, T.H. Hemmings, V.S. Heron, P. Holloway (teller), D.J. Hopgood, C.F. Hutchison, J.H.C. Klunder, S.M. Lenehan, C.D.T. McKee, M.K. Mayes, J.A. Quirke, M.D. Rann, J.P. Trainer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There being 23 Ayes and 23 Noes, I have the casting vote. Before casting that vote, I will make a small statement on this matter. The member for Custance wrote to me on this issue, and I think he makes some very valid points. In his letter, he states that farmers do not normally have to register their farm machinery for their normal duties and, when they are doing contracting work for others further than 40 kilometres from their property, the concession does not apply. He also refers to the amount of stamp duty involved.

He also says that the Minister continually reminds him that there is a permit system in existence. I listened to some of the debate, although I missed part of it, and it seems to me that the answer to this question is not

necessarily contained in the honourable member's proposal but in an extension of that permit system, with a much larger range being available to farmers. I understand the hardship being experienced in the rural area now, and I undertake to support the member for Custance in respect of any representations he may make to the Minister seeking to extend that permit system, because I think that is where the answer to this problem lies, rather than waiving the stamp duty. This being the case, I cast my vote for the Noes.

Third reading thus negatived.

#### ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier)** brought up the third report of the committee on the Procedure for Consideration of Supplementary Development Plans.

Report received.

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS:** I move:

That the report be noted.

In moving this motion, I would like to thank all members for allowing this report to be considered on the day that it was actually finalised by the committee. The reason we have this third report dealing with procedures for consideration of SDPs is that we have now been in operation as a committee for 12 months, and I feel that in that time the committee has demonstrated a great deal of expertise in the impartial assessment of various environmental and development issues. As part of our committee structure and as a routine matter, the committee scrutinises all SDPs which emanate from local government and the ministry and which are referred to us as required under the current Planning Act. In that 12 months, 39 SDPs have been referred or were approved. Seven were sent back to the Minister after expressing some concern or with a recommendation for amendment.

The House will well recall that the Mount Lofty Ranges SDP Comprehensive No. 1 was also considered by the committee separately. This matter was received as a reference from the Legislative Council, in line with the Act under which we operate. In spite of a great deal of community and agency consultation, the committee found that the Mount Lofty Ranges SDP did not reflect the wishes of those involved in the consultation process. The Environment, Resources and Development Committee was able to perform a valuable role in bringing all the parties together in a neutral forum in working towards consensus. The results of this are contained in the committee's second report, which was welcomed by representatives of all groups involved for its constructive and bipartisan approach.

Members may recall that, when that report was debated and released, every organisation (from right across the spectrum) that had expressed some concern and misgivings about the Mount Lofty Ranges supplementary development plan came out then and said that at least we had gone to the core of the matter and that, if the Government picked up those recommendations, everyone would generally be satisfied. I think that shows the strength with which the committee operates and the trust that we have been able to generate out there in the community with regard to our actions.

The SDPs we have been dealing with over the past 12 months have left the committee with some concerns about procedures, and this committee's report deals with those concerns. With the Development Bill set to be introduced and debated this session, we feel that this is a very appropriate time to look at the committee's role in relation to the SDP process. The first concern is with the stage at which the committee receives the SDP. Under the present Planning Act, the committee receives the SDP after the Minister has approved it. This is usually fine with non-controversial issues, but it has caused problems with some SDPs that are controversial. In one instance (and we have put this in our report), one aggrieved developer had been forced to wait from the public consultation in June 1991 until February 1993 to put his concerns before the committee.

We do not know whether our amendment will be accepted by the Minister, but the point I am making and the point that we make in our report is that this aggrieved developer had to wait two whole years before he had a chance to express his concerns to the committee. One cannot even hazard a guess as to how much that has cost that developer in rates and taxes, and it could create a cash flow problem. I do not think anyone in this House would want to see a situation where a developer had to sit on his hands and wait for two years before he had the chance to be heard by a parliamentary committee.

A second concern is in respect of the Development Bill itself. In that Bill, it is proposed that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee receive SDPs at an even later stage, namely, after the Government has approved them. Our third concern deals with interim approval, and the committee appreciates the rationale for interim effects in the interests of orderly and proper development of an area. The practice of giving most run of the mill SDPs interim approval from the public exhibition stage is not an issue.

However, for controversial SDPs interim approval is more vexatious. It may mean that changes to the development plan will well and truly have been started or even completed before the SDP reaches the committee. The committee believes that its recommendations to change the Bill so that the Minister would have the option to refer the SDP to the committee at an earlier stage will help address the problem.

The committee also recommends that the Bill be amended to allow for further liaison between the committee and the Minister before the Governor gives final authorisation. It will also be helpful for the committee's deliberations if it receives notice whether SDPs will be given interim effect and reasons for the Minister's decision.

The committee welcomes one of the reasons for interim effect approval being given, that is, to stop the mad scramble by developers to get in and buy up parcels of land before an SDP can go through its rational discussion stages. The committee is well aware of that and is also aware of its responsibilities, inasmuch as we cannot be put in a position where we have confidential information before it actually goes out to the public. We are talking about the time after Cabinet makes a decision and the matter goes to Executive Council and is gazetted. We believe we should have some involvement so that we

can be aware and, more importantly, know the reasons behind the interim decision being given by the Minister.

Our final concern comes into the category 'What's in a name?' Under the draft Bill circulated by the Minister some time ago for public comment, there is a proposal for an environment, resources and development court. In the past 12 months the committee has established an identity. However, by having a court with basically the same title as the committee, there could be confusion between the parliamentary scrutiny that we give on behalf of all members of both Houses and the activity of the court under its establishing legislation. The committee has recommended that either the court adopts another name or that this Parliament gives the committee another name.

Those are the reasons behind the committee's third report being presented to the Parliament. As an individual member of the committee, and here I do not speak for the committee as a whole, it seems that with some contentious supplementary development plans parliamentary scrutiny carried out by the committee for and on behalf of the Parliament can come to no avail by using the interim effects aspects of the current Planning Act and the future development Bill.

If that is the Government's intention—that parliamentary scrutiny is then really taken away and, therefore, the only recourse is under the existing legislation or by the Act under which we operate—then we are in effect stifled if no consideration is given to the fact that the committee is in a good position to assist the Government of the day, and I emphasise 'Government of the day'.

I urge the Minister responsible for planning and development in this Government to consider seriously utilising the goodwill that the committee, in its short life, has generated out in the community so that we can assist the Government. Otherwise, if that is not the case and if it is not the Minister's attitude, so far as I am concerned as an individual member of the committee—I stress that I do not speak for the whole committee, and other members might wish to say something about this—I would rather see all reference to the Environment, Resources and Development Committee taken out of the Bill and for the committee then to look at the wider implications of environment, resource and development issues in this State.

We would rather see the time allocated to committee work spent on subjects where someone will take notice of us. As I say, we act in a constructive way. If it means that because of the way the legislation is framed all parliamentary scrutiny can be thwarted, I would rather have all reference to environment, resources and development taken out of the Act and the future Bill so that we can look at the wider picture for the benefit of this State.

**The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey):** When the new parliamentary committee system was introduced, I do not believe anyone in this Chamber believed that it would not be necessary somewhere down the track to make some fine tuning and adjustment to it. No-one could foresee exactly how the new committee system would work. As a result of the work and effort that the committee has already undertaken, and the member for Napier referred

particularly to the report on the Mount Lofty Ranges SDP, it has gained the goodwill and a certain amount of respect from members of the community involved in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

The committee still realised that it was coming into play too far down the track, that in many instances decisions had been made, that the Government had already locked itself into a position and, as such, it made it difficult for both the committee and the Government to come up with the right answer. What is proposed in this report in terms of the amendments is to give the Minister an option, if he or she so desires, to refer contentious issues to the committee at a much earlier stage. In other words, the Minister can seek the opinion or advice of the committee before committing the Government fully to a set position.

As a result of the work that the committee has already done since it came into being, I believe it has been proved to the committee beyond any doubt that such changes should be made. We hope that the Government will look favourably at what has been proposed by the committee. I do not intend to run through all the points made by the member for Napier, whose comments I support. Suffice to say that I hope that the report presented to the House will be adopted by the Government.

**Mr De LAINE (Price):** Most points have been covered by the Chairman of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, my colleague the member for Napier, and I shall not go through those points again. As the honourable member said, the first two reports have been widely acclaimed and the committee is working well in a tripartisan way. The Chairman canvassed most points in relation to procedures in dealing with SDPs.

The main point that concerns me is the granting of interim effect, a worthwhile provision which is intended to—and will—give confidence to developers and others in their applications. It will also help the fast track applications through the system for the benefit of the State and the proposed development. A main purpose of interim effect is to prevent land speculation. I feel that interim criteria and guidelines need to be looked at to prevent the possibility of irreversible damage being done before final approval is given or denied to any particular project. This will be dealt with in due course when the development Bill is debated in this House. I will not say any more about it at this stage—I will make no further comment until then. In the meantime, I support the comments made by both the Chairman of the committee and the member for Chaffey. I support the report.

Motion carried.

#### ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Quirke:

That the Fifth Report of the committee (continued Existence of the West Beach Trust) be noted.

(Continued from 17 February. Page 2086.)

**Mr QUIRKE (Playford):** I thank all members who took part in this debate, and I wish to draw the attention

of the House to a few of the contributions that were made. In essence, the member for Mitchell and the member for Stuart got to the nub of the problem and made valuable contributions to the debate. I cannot say that for some of the other members who took part in the debate, although I value the comments that they made because I can use them as a contrast for some of the things that the debate was about. Indeed, in a couple of instances, I think they showed the terrible ignorance of the members concerned. I will deal with the three contributions in the following order: namely, the member for Mitcham, the member for Morphett and, finally, the member for Hayward.

The member for Mitcham approached the issue in his usual oafish way. I think it is appropriate to point out to the House that the report was brought down immediately before Question Time on the day it was presented. Immediately after Question Time the member for Mitcham was out on the steps saying that the board should have been sacked. He had not read the report, but that never got in the way of his comments. He quite foolishly believed that that was the proposal the member for Hayward was putting forward. It was not. The member for Hayward had a variation on a theme that was so sophisticated that I do not know that anybody has really understood it yet. So I am going to explain it to the House for everybody's benefit.

The comments to the media by the member for Mitcham and to everyone else was that the board should be sacked and that several individuals and, in fact, the Chair of the board were nothing more than a hangover from a previous Government which was in this place many years ago. Indeed, he did not read the report. If he did, it did not sink in very far, because the report was never about apportioning blame for the various things that had happened. It was about whether or not, in its present formulation, the trust should continue to exist or whether it should be significantly modified. The committee came down with a serious proposal that the trust be modified and be limited to those functions which we believe it is doing very well. I am yet to see any evidence to suggest that that is not the case.

The suggestion that people should have been sacked without even being given a hearing is just too ludicrous to contemplate. Natural justice demands that if we were to go down that course, and if that was the evidence that was coming before the committee, those people should have been called to appear before the committee and they should have been clearly told that that was what was at issue. The member for Mitcham, of course, never lets that sort of thing get in the way.

The member for Morphett came in and supported his colleague the member for Hayward. He made similar comments. I do not know how much of the report he read, but at the end of the day I hope that the members of the West Beach Trust and many people in the western suburbs have seen exactly what he had to say. He came in here and said that he did not like the report too much, he thought the committee had not done a very good job, and he went on to berate us for not wanting to sack the board, which was never at issue. It was never put up before us. It was not part of the reference to the committee, and it had never been in the reference to the

committee. But, of course, the member for Morphett did not let that get in the way.

I turn now to the member for Hayward. In a funny way, the member for Hayward supported the whole committee proposal. I say 'in a funny way' because, immediately the report came down, he was trying to distance himself from one of the findings in particular, and I think it is very interesting to go into that. A number of members opposite thought that he was calling for the sacking of the board. Of course, he was not doing that. He was calling for the sacking of various individuals—every individual that was on the trust. He was not calling for the dismissal of the trust as such. He wanted a complete replacement of the personnel. So the members opposite who thought that he was calling for the sacking of everyone got that wrong. They were supporting their factional colleague without any necessity.

It is very interesting to note that, when the proposal was put to the committee by the member for Hayward, he could not get a seconder—not one. I am a fair man, so I gave him a week to find one. He came back the next week and I put it on the agenda again, and he still could not find anyone. So if he wants to bring down minority reports, as he said he was going to do on those issues, he is going to be pretty busy as we finish all of the reports between now and the election.

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

Motion carried.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON BUSHFIRE PROTECTION AND SUPPRESSION MEASURES

**The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier):** I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee be extended until Wednesday 21 April.

Motion carried.

#### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Adjourned Debate on motion of Mr Heron:

That the First Report of the committee (Social Implications of Population Change) be noted.

(Continued from 10 February. Page 1883.)

**Mr OSWALD (Morphett):** I was a member of this committee when it was first established. I remained a member of the committee up to 6 August 1992. Initially it was an interesting committee because, when it was feeling its way, it had to design its own charter and it sought to implement certain inquiries that would have some social benefit for the people of the State. The committee cast around for some time trying to get a sense of direction, and that took a long time. A lot of us, particularly those on the Opposition side of the committee, were getting increasingly concerned that the committee had no sense of direction and that in the future it would probably have trouble getting a sense of direction as it went on.

The committee chose to take on as its first project the social implications of population change in South

Australia. It proceeded to put together a report which in fact is a summary of material which is on many computers around the bureaucracy. Indeed, many public servants spent a lot of time putting that report together. They would have spent days in preparation time in collating the report and then coming before the committee. Finally, the committee deliberated and the staff spent time and wrote the report.

I left the committee half way through for a couple of reasons. One was the pressure of work that I had building up in my own shadow portfolios, which made it very difficult to attend meetings, and the other reason was that I was becoming increasingly frustrated with the direction in which the committee was going and I had doubts about how useful the committee would be to this Parliament. I would like the Parliament, as it set up the committee, to really analyse this report in detail and ask how it will benefit the public. It is an extraordinarily expensive committee to operate.

At the end of the day we should look at some of these recommendations and see whether the inquiry warranted the expense. I believe that the Economic and Finance Committee is very useful; its benefit to the people of this State has been demonstrated time and again. I think that the other committee that is involved primarily with planning and environmental matters will have a very meaningful role when the text of the new development Bill is revealed.

I put to members that we should consider the future of the Social Development Committee as a standing committee of this Parliament. The information in this document is interesting, but it is information you could get from any Public Service department if you rang the director and asked for it; they would provide it and also provide briefing staff. The conclusions that have been drawn after 12 months of work are no different from the conclusions that any of us would have drawn after a quick briefing from a Public Service head with a chance to gain further in-depth knowledge on the subject. I cite the first conclusion:

Changes in population growth in South Australia. The committee will examine and further report.

So the committee has not closed that matter. Under 'Fertility Trends' the report states:

The committee recommends that fertility levels in South Australia should be closely monitored by Government. Further:

The committee recommends that women who choose to have children should experience no discrimination in access to employment and promotion.

That is a statement with which we would all agree—there is no question about that.

**Mr S.G. Evans:** It is covered by legislation.

**Mr OSWALD:** Yes, it is covered by legislation. We could look in more depth at the committee's report, but I repeat that every recommendation in it is something we all know about. The committee spent 12 time-consuming months working on this report, but its members could have spent their time on more important matters. Money was spent on salaries, rents, public servants (who were tied up in their departments for a day or two preparing to come before the committee) and transport costs. I put it to the House that the cost of this report is not warranted—the expense to the Parliament in having it

prepared and presented to us—because it will languish on a shelf. Even though it contains certain recommendations, those recommendations will require a follow-up, and there is no way that this committee will reconvene to follow up those recommendations. I cite another one:

The committee recommends that there should be increased resources and attention given to the community's care services for older people.

I agree with that. I have no doubt that the Public Service is working on that: I know that the Government is working on it. Therefore, the Minister of the day does not need to be alerted to it. If the Liberal Party were in government, our Ministers would not need to be alerted to it. It will never come back to this committee to be checked and, that being the case, it is a waste of time. The Economic and Finance Committee (its forerunner being the PAC, on which I served) has a follow-up process, and it is an excellent committee. However, the Social Development Committee is open to criticism.

I would like members to consider some of the costs of producing this report. The committee pays \$55 000 a year to rent premises; administration costs amount to \$25 000; a research officer costs \$36 000; a secretary costs \$41 000; and the half-time clerical officer costs \$13 000. We are up to \$170 000 thus far on this report. The offices at Riverside had to be refurbished, and the committee's share of this was \$21 000 (although I agree that it is a one-off cost). The preparation time involved in public servants appearing before the committee could be estimated at \$4 000. There is also MP's sitting times—the very minor figure that MPs receive to prepare for the committee and research the work over and above their normal heavy duties. That would run out at around \$28 000. If you add it all up, this report, for all the benefit it will bring to this State and for all the benefit it will be to us as MPs—as it is meant to advise us on where we are going—cost in the vicinity of \$223 000. I put to members that there is no public benefit in the report to warrant that expense.

The Economic and Finance Committee brings about savings to this State many times in excess of that figure; and the Environment, Resources and Development Committee does the same. However, I believe that this committee should think very carefully about the public benefit of future inquiries on a range of subjects which it is attempting to hatch up. I use those words carefully, because in the short time I was on that committee it was casting around for direction. It took on this inquiry because it wanted to start with a social atlas of the State, which it did. However, all it did was to get in public servants, at great expense, and create a document based on the information tendered by the public servants.

It has another inquiry running on AIDS, and this inquiry has the capacity to produce a report on information that is already available at the Health Commission and in other areas. No doubt at the end of the day we will be asked to consider that report. I hope that, when that report is brought down, it will be of great benefit—but that benefit will also be related to the cost to the taxpayer of producing it. I say to you, Sir, and to this House that I do not believe that this first report of the Social Development Committee warranted

the expense of well over \$200 000 to produce. It will languish on a shelf. If the State ever gets any benefit out of it, I will be amazed.

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** I would not like to let this opportunity pass without answering some of the comments that have just been made by the member for Morphett about the Social Development Committee. I also was a member of that committee during the time the member for Morphett was on it. At no stage during the time I was on that committee do I ever recall the member for Morphett expressing the concerns that he has now outlined in hindsight. If he was so concerned about the direction of the committee, why did he not make some suggestions at that time about where he thought it should be heading? He could have suggested some other areas to investigate. The honourable member referred to the AIDS inquiry. That reference was given to the Social Development Committee by the Legislative Council. Indeed, one of his colleagues in the Upper House—the Hon. Bernice Pfitzner—moved that reference. I think the member for Morphett—

*Mr Oswald interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** Certainly the first report of the Social Development Committee contains a large amount of general information that may be a collation of what is available elsewhere, but during the time I was on the committee it became clear that there was, in a number of areas of Government, a lack of action in collecting the demographic data that was necessary for proper planning. In areas of education, health and so on it was clear to me, during the time I was on the committee, that demographic data needed to be used more efficiently for the benefit of this State.

One example that comes to mind—in fact, it is in the member for Morphett's electorate—is a school that was closed a couple of years ago, less than 18 years after it was established. I would have thought that that was a fair indication that we need to pay more attention to demographic factors in our planning—and that was one of the recommendations in this first report of the Social Development Committee. I think it would be wrong to dismiss that report out of hand. It is very easy to get the more general factual data that is in that report and try to distort it, but I believe that it contains some important recommendations that we should pay attention to.

The honourable member's comments about the cost of that committee need to be put into perspective. It is hardly the Social Development Committee's fault that renovations were needed to the Riverside Building. They would have been needed regardless of which committee was placed in that location. To put the entire cost of refurbishing Riverside on the Social Development Committee is a little bit rich.

I welcome the report of the Social Development Committee and I hope that its important comments, particularly about the cost implications of the ageing of the population, are taken into account by various Government departments. Anyone who reads the health section of the report about the implications for this State of the ageing population and the cost to the health system should be greatly concerned. It worries me how we will

address these problems in the future. Given the ageing of the population and the greater demand for health services, it will be difficult to provide the services to which people are accustomed. Unless we start planning in advance, we will have great difficulty when the time comes. With those comments, I welcome the first report of the Social Development Committee and I hope that it has many more.

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

## WATER QUALITY

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

That this House condemns the Government for its blatantly irresponsible attitude in condoning the ongoing polluting of our marine and riverine environment resulting from the discharge of effluent and waste water from Engineering and Water Supply Department sewage treatment works.

The purpose of this motion is to show the hypocrisy of this Government in regard to the matter of water management in this State. At present, hypocrisy is rampant within ALP Governments. Premier Arnold and his Ministers have applauded the water quality initiatives announced in Prime Minister Keating's environment statement. That statement released funding details on improved water management in rural and urban areas and went into significant detail. At the outset, I must say that I support the majority of the measures that were announced in that document. In fact, when the Coalition introduced its Federal environment policy last week, the shadow Minister indicated Coalition support for many of the measures that were contained in the Prime Minister's statement, and I will have an opportunity to speak further on that matter at a later stage.

However, let us look at what the Prime Minister had to say in regard to providing a major vehicle, as he called it, for a new environment focus as far as the water industry is concerned. He started off by saying that the water industry is the major focus of his plan to give more attention to the environment. He announced that water quality initiatives would receive a hefty \$72 million over the next four years, nearly half of the \$156 million total pledged in that statement. Of the \$72 million, \$46 million is to be spent on improving water management in rural and urban catchments. I do not think that anyone could disagree with that initiative.

The Prime Minister went on to say that the importance of reviving the Murray-Darling Basin system features heavily in the statement, particularly with regard to reducing the nutrient pollution that has contributed to the disastrous blue-green algal problems in the basin. Some of the water industry initiatives announced in that statement include an extra \$30 million over the next four years to improve catchment management throughout Australia. The point is made that high priority will be given to plans developed by rural and urban communities to improve water quality through better land and water management, including abatement of nutrient pollution, particularly in the Murray-Darling Basin.

The Prime Minister went on to refer to \$2.9 million, which will be allocated to set up a national water watch

program to encourage community involvement in monitoring waterways. Scientific water quality monitoring programs will receive \$10 million over the next four years with particular focus on developing and using biological monitoring tools to indicate the health of rivers. Approximately \$2.3 million will be spent on investigating ground water problem areas in catchments of particular significance or under threat of contamination.

The Prime Minister also announced that a cooperative research centre for fresh water ecology would be one of four new environmentally focused CRCs established at a cost of \$48 million. I strongly support that initiative and, in recent times, I introduced a motion, which was supported by members of the House, calling for the establishment of a research centre, particularly in South Australia. We do not know at this stage where that centre will be established, but I hope that it will be in South Australia.

The Arnold Government, as do I, has commended a number of the initiatives announced in that statement. However, the Arnold Government continues to pollute our State waters with effluent from E&WS sewage treatment works. A number of such works currently have an impact on our marine and riverine environment. They include plants located at Glenelg, Port Adelaide, Bolivar, Christies Beach, Gumeracha, Angaston, Hahndorf, Heathfield, Myponga, Naracoorte, Millicent and Stirling, and there are others. One such example is the discharge of waste water from the Myponga sewage treatment works into the Myponga Creek.

As members of the House would realise, legislative controls make it necessary for the E&WS to seek a licence to discharge waste water into a waterway, and the public has an opportunity to comment on such an application. One to which I refer specifically is that of the Myponga sewage treatment works where notice was recently given that the General Manager of the E&WS (Headworks and Country) has applied for a licence to continue discharging treated waste water from the Myponga sewage treatment works into the Myponga Creek at section 293, hundred of Myponga. That goes against everything that the Government has applauded in the Prime Minister's environment statement.

Nutrient minimisation in our waterways has been recognised nationally as a vitally important goal. I doubt whether any member would disagree with that because it must be a high priority. We have only to consider the problems in this State and throughout Australia in regard to toxic blue algal growth to realise the priority that needs to be given to nutrient minimisation in our waterways. The State Labor Government continues to allow treated waste to be pumped directly into our waterways and into our marine environment, even though it is understood, I hope, that the community is justifiably concerned about the problems of toxic algal growth in this State.

If we are serious about the need to eradicate blue-green algae, we just cannot continue to allow sewage effluent to be discharged into our waterways. The Senate Select Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts has considered, as a major term of reference in an inquiry into water resources, particularly relating to toxic algae, the impact of effluent

on our waterways, including rivers, tributaries, creeks and so on. I do not have the time to refer in detail to that report, but I would hope that members opposite would take the time to look closely at the terms of reference that have been set down in that report.

This State, more than any other State, is particularly conscious of problems associated with the Murray River. I am sure that members on this side of the House would support the excellent work that has been carried out on the whole by the Murray-Darling Commission. I am looking forward, in a couple of weeks, to having the opportunity of travelling to Canberra to discuss a number of issues with that commission. But, generally, the work it is doing would be strongly supported. I know that my colleague the member for Chaffey has had a long association with that commission and the work that is currently being carried out by it. So, we recognise the good work that has been carried out, but our concern rests with the Labor Government in this State, which continues to go against the direction that has been set by that commission in allowing treated effluent to continue to enter our waterways.

Members would be aware that in recent times we have been told about plans by the commission to ensure that all river users would have to follow a set of rules aimed at better managing the Murray River. There is some concern, I would suggest, about those rules that are under consideration at present. The changes are proposed in the Murray River boating management draft, and I have received a considerable amount of representation regarding those plans. As I said earlier, I know there is considerable concern about the implications of those plans. That is one of the matters which I am looking forward to discussing with the Murray-Darling Commission later because, in this case, it has its priorities wrong. There are far more important issues than the recommendations contained in this report, and it should be dealing with those issues.

**Mr Hamilton:** Like what?

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON:** The honourable member opposite asks me which ones would have a higher priority. I suggest that matters relating to the control and management of toxic blue algal growth would be in that category. There are many other issues with which the commission is currently dealing. It is looking for more funding to deal with those issues, and I would suggest that they are of a greater significance than that one.

I have only a short time to refer to the concern that has been expressed by a number of people relating to the catchments of waterways in this State, particularly in the Mount Lofty Ranges. Much concern has been expressed about the management of that area. There is still concern that, whilst some of the areas are being dealt with satisfactorily, many others are not. Finally, it was interesting to listen to the reply to a question about water quality asked by my colleague the member for Coles of the Treasurer. The Treasurer, Mr Blevins, stated:

Unfortunately, we are forced to pay an awful lot of money to bring our water up to an acceptable standard.

The amount of public money that needs to be poured in to improve water quality in this State is a concern for all of us. So, why is it so necessary for this Government to continue to pour treated waste into our waterways and our marine environment as well?

I believe that this is a vitally important issue. It is one that needs to be dealt with the highest priority by this Government, because there is no way that the Government of this State can condone the ongoing polluting of our marine and riverine environment as a result of the discharge of effluent and waste water from the Engineering and Water Supply Department sewage treatment works in particular. It is important that the Government set an example in this area, and it is important that the Government department, the department that is the direct responsibility of the Minister and this Government, get its act together and to make a determination that such ongoing pollution should cease forthwith. I ask members of the House to support this motion.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES** secured the adjournment of the debate.

### PAYROLL TAX

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Leader of the Opposition):** I move:

That this House endorses the commitment of the Federal Coalition in Government to abolish payroll tax through refunds of revenue forgone to the States.

I move this motion because it would bring about the most fundamental reform of taxation in Australia ever seen. It is an essential reform of taxation. Payroll tax is the most iniquitous tax that I know of. I have heard leading politicians throughout Australia and on both sides of this House debate this issue, and that includes the member for Ross Smith when he was Premier for almost 10 years, time after time. I am delighted that the member for Ross Smith is here, because I will quote to him some of the things he said about payroll tax at various stages both when he was Leader of the Opposition and when he was Premier. It is interesting to look at the track record of members opposite on payroll tax, even though they made statements to the contrary.

I signed the agreement, along with other Liberal leaders in Australia, both State and Federal, because the Federal Coalition is currently offering the first real chance for years and years of major tax reform, which will remove this very iniquitous payroll tax. With its removal, we will have the opportunity to create new jobs in South Australia and nationally. We will create new investment, particularly by manufacturing companies—and that is what we should be doing—and we will be making it far more attractive for companies to export.

I throw across to other members of the House this challenge: tell me a better way to stimulate exports from South Australia than the abolition of payroll tax. It is a tax that currently collects about \$500 million in this State. The abolition of that tax will stimulate about 20 000 jobs, based on figures from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Most importantly, I see the need for Australia, particularly for South Australia, where the growth rate is so low, to focus on exports. It is only through the abolition of payroll tax, linked with the GST, that we will give the real incentive to companies to get out and focus on exports. If members

want proof of that, they should just look at New Zealand today.

We have the second highest level of payroll tax of any country in the world. The average level of payroll tax in Australia is about 5.3 per cent across the entire economy. If we look at all other developed countries in the world, we see that only one has a higher level than that. The average for OECD countries is payroll tax of about 1.4 per cent. It is no wonder that we are unable to create jobs in Australia. More importantly, it is no wonder we are unable to be internationally competitive when it comes to exporting.

I will quote to the House what Mr John Bannon, the then Leader of the Opposition, said in December 1979. He called for a national conference to examine alternatives to payroll tax as a major source of State taxation and stated:

It seems absurd that, during a period of high unemployment, the States are forced to apply a payroll tax which makes it more costly for companies to take on workers.

At the time, South Australia had 40 000 unemployed. Today we have over 90 000 unemployed. It will be interesting to see what the member for Ross Smith will do in terms of upholding the principle he laid down in 1979. However, he said more on 21 January 1980. As reported in the *News*, he promised to lead a national campaign against payroll tax. He said that the tax must go, but an alternative revenue had to be found first. In fact, the Federal Coalition has found an alternative revenue, and that is reimbursement to the States for the abolition of payroll tax from the moneys collected from the GST.

Let us consider what then Premier Bannon did in government in about 10 years. Having condemned payroll tax, he actually increased the rate of the tax by

22 per cent in the period that he was Premier. He failed to maintain the exemption level compared with that in other States of Australia, so we find today that the only State which has a lower exemption level is Western Australia. All other States are in a better position than South Australia.

Since 1982 payroll tax receipts collected by the Labor Government have increased by 118 per cent. During that 10 years in which former Premier Bannon said he would work hard to abolish payroll tax, he actually collected \$3 300 million from payroll tax. It is also interesting to see that, during that same period in which he substantially increased the collections of payroll tax by 118 per cent, under his leadership, unemployment in South Australia increased by 97 per cent. What a record! Here we have a man who stood up and said, 'I will revolutionise the tax system for Australia by conducting a national campaign. I will go out as the charger for this reform that is so important.' But what did he do? He collected more revenue; he put more people out of jobs; and he went entirely against what he was saying publicly. It is interesting to read what he had to say when he got to the July 1985 tax summit. On behalf of the South Australian Government, he argued:

The major priority in business taxation reform should be the serious examination of viable options to significantly reduce or phase out payroll tax.

In support of this submission, the then Premier had the following to say during the summit:



From the discussions I have held with employer groups and union representatives in my own State, and from things that have been said today, it is quite clear that of all those areas of State taxation, payroll tax is of most concern. It is important for sustained economic recovery that there should be some consideration of payroll tax at this summit. In our view, the major priority in business taxation reform should be the serious examination of viable options to significantly reduce or phase out payroll tax.

Today we have a measure, introduced by the Liberals, that will allow the abolition of payroll tax. It will be interesting to see whether the member for Ross Smith and the present Premier, as well as all other Labor Party members, are now prepared to stand up and back the words uttered by their Leaders over the past 10 years.

Members should note the priority that employers themselves put on the removal of payroll tax at present. The Australian Institute of Management last year carried out a detailed survey of a large number of companies. As one of its questions with respect to labour, it asked, 'In what order would you recommend the Government remove the oncosts facing companies?' The report lists a whole series of responses that cover WorkCover, the superannuation levy, the training guarantee levy, holiday leave loading, fringe benefits tax, payroll tax and others. But 33 per cent of companies, or one in three, stated that they wanted to see payroll tax removed. That is interesting. It was by far the highest of any single category.

It is also interesting to look at which employee oncost is the greatest hindrance to increasing the work force in small, medium and large companies in South Australia. The first priority listed was WorkCover at 32 per cent, and we know where this Government stands on WorkCover. Our manufacturing industry has the highest premiums of any State in Australia—about four times higher than in New South Wales. That is this Government's incredible record. The second greatest hindrance to increasing employment was payroll tax at

29.6 per cent. Again, I throw out a challenge to members opposite: here is your chance to abolish payroll tax in South Australia. I know that your Premier has come out with bold statements saying that he does not agree with it, but I look forward to him, after the Federal election, having to eat those words as he humbly goes off cap in hand to Prime Minister John Hewson, saying, 'My employers in South Australia now want me to make sure that I abolish payroll tax in South Australia.' It will be very interesting to see—

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members should not interject out of their seats. The honourable Leader.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** It will be interesting to see whether he will stand up to his claim that he would not sign any agreement for the abolition of payroll tax as proposed by John Hewson when John Hewson is Prime Minister. I bet he is at the Premiers Conference one month after the Federal election with his pen out ready to sign on the dotted line because, if he does not, he will be run out of this State by its employers.

Let us be realistic: 60 per cent of all employees in South Australia have this oncost of payroll tax imposed upon them. The Premier tries to make some big deal of the fact that only 8 per cent of employers pay payroll

tax, but the fact is that 60 per cent of all employees in South Australia have payroll tax imposed as an oncost on their salary. That is the sort of impact involved, and the important thing is the flow-on impact of that right throughout the economy. It is not just the employer manufacturing the final product, but it is also all the sub-suppliers, all the service sector and everyone else who is paying payroll tax. That would have a very significant effect in reducing service and manufacturing costs here in South Australia.

I point this out because there is one man who has been a great advocate for the abolition of payroll tax, Mr Bob Ling, now Chairman of Hills Industries. I seek leave to insert in *Hansard* a table of a statistical nature. This table gives figures for Hills Industries and highlights how much payroll tax that company pays.

Leave granted.

**Taxes Generated from Company Activity and Dividends Paid**

	1992 (\$'000)	1991 (\$'000)
Pay-roll Tax	2 319	2 094
Company Tax	4 112	3 644
Fringe Benefits Tax	239	251
Sales Tax	9 391	7 858
Group Tax (deducted from employees' wages)	8 243	8 280
<b>Total:</b>	<b>24 304</b>	<b>22 127</b>
<b>Dividend</b>	<b>3 366</b>	<b>3 407</b>

Year Ending 30.6.92 Additional Costs:

Workers Compensation Licence Fee	90K
FID	115K
Fire Service Levy	40K
Registration and Filing Fee	50K
Stamp Duty on Insurance Premiums	135K
Federal Debits Tax	26K
Training Guarantee Expenditure	390K
Rates and Taxes (Property)	430K

Total: \$1 276K

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I point out that, in the year ended June 1992, Hills Industries paid \$2.3 million in payroll tax. Mr Ling is one of those who are out there crusading day after day, as he did recently at a seminar at the Convention Centre. Only last week, in front of 900 people, he said, 'Oh, to have some politicians who have the courage to stand up and abolish some of these taxes, in particular payroll tax.' It will be interesting to see whether today we have those politicians who have any courage, any regard for the 90 000 unemployed here in South Australia and any regard for the previous statements that their fearless leader made in 1979, 1980 and again in 1985. The truth is that former Premier Bannon was a man of great words and no action whatsoever. We have seen that in relation to the State Bank and I think we are about to see him make a great U-turn today, because I understand he is itching to get to his feet to show how hypocritical he is.

The fact is that Mr Hewson and the Federal Coalition are offering the first chance for Australia to claw its way out of its huge international debt, to claw back into international markets and, once again, to become internationally competitive. We rank sixteenth among the

22 OECD countries on our competitiveness, and one of the key reasons is payroll tax. It is with great pleasure that I advocate that this House support this motion and support the Federal Coalition Government after 13 March in the abolition of payroll tax.

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON (Ross Smith):** I move:

Delete all words after 'endorses' and replace with the following:

'the principle of the Federal Government abolishing payroll tax providing the revenue forgone is fully refunded to the States and is not accompanied by other changes which adversely affect both State revenues and business, in particular small to medium business'.

We are being treated today—

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: can the House accept that motion? It seems to negate the original intention of the motion. It is a fact that the Standing Orders—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I have the general thrust of what the Deputy Leader wishes to pursue. I will look at the amendment and inform him in due course. The honourable member for Ross Smith.

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON:** It does not negative it in any way at all: the thrust of the motion that we are debating is the acceptance of the abolition of payroll tax. While endorsing that, this amendment makes clear that terms and conditions must be associated with the abolition of payroll tax, or the State and business in this State will suffer greatly. The Leader of the Opposition used the word 'hypocrisy'. What an extraordinary word for him to use, in the light of the comments he was making. He likes us and the public of South Australia to forget that for a time—three terrible years—he was the Minister in a Government in South Australia. He was in charge of industrial relations; he was a sort of born again industrial reformer, who created more disruption and problems in that area than this State had had historically, even going back through the Playford era. He was also the Minister for Development who presided over the highest unemployment we have ever had.

In the light of all this, with those key areas of responsibility that he had, he expects us to accept that after seven years out of this place he can stand up and talk as if he were a new cleanskin and discovering these things for the first time. He had an enforced absence from this Chamber at his colleagues' hands; his electors chose another Liberal and rejected him, but he is back again. His laundering is not successful, because some of us do remember. We do remember that for three years in Cabinet in charge of key portfolios he did absolutely nothing about payroll tax—no action, no changes were made. The levels continued and the collection continued. He did and said nothing about it, and he has the outrageous hypocrisy to enter this debate claiming that he has a new deal, and that he is taking action rather than using words. That is the first point.

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.C. BANNON:** The country payroll tax rebate—I am glad he mentioned that. It was the most ineptly targeted and regressive attempt to change the payroll tax regimen in this State, and we certainly abolished it because, far from creating jobs, it was actually preventing the creation of jobs in some key

areas. The targeted replacement of that scheme has done far more than the inept, broad brush attempt of the honourable member to look after a few country businesses that were not going to benefit, anyway.

Let us come back to the point. Yes, indeed: I and my Government have campaigned consistently against payroll tax. In Opposition I spoke about the replacement of payroll tax; in Government I raised it at Premiers' Conferences and at the national tax summit, always on the basis that we cannot abolish a major source of revenue unless we can find an adequate replacement. Was the Opposition assisting in that? Would it have endorsed or supported any of the alternatives suggested—the transaction and other taxes that we raised as possible substitutes? No; it rejected everything. It blathered on about the abolition of payroll tax, but it had no constructive ideas to replace it. At least I had a go; at least I had the issue on the agenda and had it debated at the national level.

Now, with absolutely no action on the part of the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, Dr John Hewson comes up with his proposal, the abolition of payroll tax—very attractive indeed—in return for what? In return for dudding the States and imposing a general goods and services tax on the long suffering public and the small and medium business of this country. That is what the substitution is, and that is what the Leader of the Opposition signed off on. It is outrageous of him to say that he is taking action, not merely uttering words, when he is dudding business on the subject of payroll tax.

Our attitude and our approach have been consistent; we do oppose payroll tax and we have worked for its abolition, but the appropriate substitution of the revenue that this State needs has to be part of any concession. Of course, throughout that period we worked to ensure that maximum relief could be provided we consistently raised the threshold of payroll tax payment above the level of inflation. Indeed, there is something like an 88 per cent real increase in that threshold level over the past 10 years. We took action there, and very positive action indeed.

It means that 92 per cent of businesses in this State do not pay a cent of payroll tax—not one cent. Payroll tax is not levied on the individual worker, as the Leader would have us believe: it is levied on companies with a particular size of payroll. The abolition of payroll tax provides no benefit whatever to 92 per cent of our South Australian businesses. It is a con to imply otherwise—it is of no benefit whatever. Indeed, it creates a positive, competitive disadvantage to them—a competitive disadvantage because, while the big movers and shakers, the big employers and big competitors, are able to get the full benefit of payroll tax relief, small businesses have no change in their cost structure and, therefore, their goods are marginally more expensive in the market place. Is that the way to help small to medium business? Of course it is not and it is an outrageous con to suggest that it is.

As well, we ensured that adjustments were made, that our rates have been kept competitive. In the past two budgets, we have reduced those rates of payroll tax. In fact, our current margin of 6.1 per cent above the threshold represents a reduction in this last budget,

against all the financial difficulties that we have been faced with, because we knew that this area needed to be targeted.

In addition, we have resisted the course that every other State, with the exception of Queensland, has taken to impose a special levy on the larger payrolls and companies. Of course, this is something that the Leader of the Opposition made no mention of whatsoever. Liberal and Labor alike, that surcharge has been applied, yet we have not done so. Similarly, so far as our overall rates are concerned, we have ensured that they have been kept competitive.

A national solution is necessary to this. What has the Leader of the Opposition signed off on? He signed off on a compensation package that duds South Australia. In fact, on the calculations that we have at the moment, it means that something like \$59.2 million in revenue will be lost directly under the compensation package. That is just the exchange as between payroll tax and what compensation Dr Hewson proposes. It is \$59.2 million. It has come in on two bases.

First, they have used a very narrow calculation of its level, and, secondly, they have not looked at the way in which the Grants Commission takes these things into account. In addition to that—and this is the scandal of the deal that the Leader of the Opposition sought to make—all those other burdens, the GST, the tariff removals and everything else that represents a rotten deal for small to medium business in this State are being imposed.

So, the State gets done for about \$60 million and, in addition, small to medium business gets their competitive advantage taken away and gets nothing in return by way of relief. That is outrageous and I commend my amendment to the House. By all means, let us get rid of payroll tax, but let us ensure in doing so that we are helping business and employment and not imposing another big, fat burden on them as the Leader of the Opposition and his Federal counterpart propose to do.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! A point of order was raised on the amendment moved earlier. The Deputy Speaker was in the Chair. I have looked at the amendment and I rule it in order. Is the amendment seconded?

**An honourable member:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr S.G. EVANS:** Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

*A quorum having been formed:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I draw the attention of the Minister of Primary Industries and the member for Victoria to the fact that the centre of the Chamber is not the place to have a discussion.

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

### NATIONAL PARKS

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

That this House condemns this Government for its appalling neglect in the management and resourcing of national parks and reserves and calls on the Minister of Environment and Land Management to inform the House what immediate action the Government intends taking to reverse this totally unacceptable and irresponsible situation.

In recent times considerable publicity has been given to the problems experienced in this State by those who wish to preserve, protect and enhance our environment through the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Recently, on 18 January, an excellent article appeared in the *Advertiser* by Leanne Weir and Jenny Turner. It is a special report on matters relating to national parks and reserves in this State, and I commend the *Advertiser* on this report.

It made clear the concern and problems experienced by under-resourced rangers who are struggling to undertake vital park maintenance and native wildlife battles against an advancing army of weeds and feral animals. It made quite clear that rangers who are responsible, supposedly, for hands on park maintenance and field work now find themselves having to deal with many administrative matters and much paper shuffling.

That has been my concern and the concern of members on this side of the House for a long time. Reference was also made to a leaked State Government letter which clearly shows that budgetary constraints will be enforced during the 1992-93 year, as well as outlining the problems that have been experienced in the past, forcing a drop in funding for weed and animal control, park maintenance, road works and fire breaks. I refer to a letter sent by former Environment Minister, Ms Lenehan, last year to the rangers' union, the Public Service Association, which states:

There are a number of important weed and feral animal control programs and fire protection programs which cannot be fully addressed.

That letter identifies areas likely to be restricted in funding. These include programs for weed, rabbit and goat control, visitor facility maintenance, road works, fencing and general parks patrols. The article goes on to spell out in considerable detail the problems that are being experienced by those rangers and those on the staff of the National Parks and Wildlife Service who are endeavouring to carry out their responsibilities.

While talking about the National Parks and Wildlife Service, I express the concern of a lot of people who have made representations to me regarding the change in circumstances, the change in name, of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. When the new department—the Department of Environment and Land Management—was established it was apparently determined that the National Parks and Wildlife Service should not be recognised within that department. The National Parks and Wildlife Service now exists as a service, but not as an agency. If we look in the telephone book, the National Parks and Wildlife Service is not listed. It is listed under Resource Management. I believe that that is a great pity, because for a very long time the National Parks and Wildlife Service has built up a considerable reputation in this State.

The vast majority of those people in that service have shown a considerable amount of commitment and dedication over a long period, and they have had to work with serious problems in trying to carry out their responsibilities. In 1985 an amount of \$7.9 million was allocated to manage 4.6 million hectares of parks in this State. In 1991 the amount was \$11.8 million to manage 20.2 million hectares. Despite the huge increase in reserves, full time ranger numbers have remained static

at about 90. In fact, I am led to believe today that it is now below 90. These rangers have to try to oversee 20 per cent of the State.

**Mr Lewis:** Manage it.

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON:** Indeed, it is their responsibility to manage it. It is no surprise that these rangers are finding it extremely difficult and almost impossible to carry out that responsibility. In fact, if we look at the two rangers based in Port Augusta, they are expected to manage a group of parks with a combined area bigger than Belgium, yet we wonder why they are not able to do that work satisfactorily. The Adelaide City Council employs 128 outdoor staff just to look after the city's parks and gardens. I think that clearly spells out the problems that are faced by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in this State.

We are all aware that South Australia has a poor record, to put it mildly, for land mammal extinctions, with 40 per cent of the State's mammal species and 14 per cent of bird species either extinct or in danger of extinction. Regrettably, Adelaide is now recognised as the world capital of land mammal extinction. The sad part about it is that that reputation, which we in this State should all be ashamed of, particularly in this House, could be so easily turned around to make us leaders in wildlife restoration. Saving wildlife begins not with who owns the land but how it is managed. The past 10 years has seen an increase in Government owned land for wildlife protection and a significant decrease in management that would save it.

To take advantage of the money coming from the Federal Government for recovery plans, South Australia needs more scientists working for the Department of Environment and Land Management and not bureaucrats—a matter that has been raised on a number of occasions. The task of saving threatened species is not one for Governments alone. It is a task that must be shared with the whole community. A South Australian Liberal Government is prepared to revise current regulations under the National Parks and Wildlife Act to increase public involvement in the breeding and management of native wildlife—It is important that that should happen, and a future Liberal Government is committed to make it happen.

My concern also rests with the many thousands of people who have given their time in a voluntary capacity to help the rangers and to help with the management of the parks throughout South Australia. There are now over 60 Friends of Parks organisations in this State. I played a part in establishing those organisations during my term as Minister, and I am delighted that so many people throughout South Australia have now become involved in them. The work that those people have done over that time has been quite remarkable. That work is vitally important, particularly with the problems that are now being experienced directly as a result of the lack of funding on the part of this Government. It is particularly important that those volunteers be not only retained but encouraged to continue with their work. Unfortunately that is not happening, and it is a very sad fact of life because, since I have been given back responsibility for the portfolio, of natural resources, conservation and environment, I have been inundated with calls and

concerns and representations from people who are part of those Friends of Parks organisations.

*Mr S.G. Evans interjecting:*

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON:** Unfortunately that is a fact of life. As the member for Davenport says, this Government has never been very supportive of volunteers in any shape or form. These people do an excellent job but they are drifting away in droves because of their frustration and because they are not able to gain any support from this Government. I reiterate what I said before: I am not blaming the National Parks and Wildlife Service—the officers, the rangers and the staff—my concern is that because of a lack of funding and support by the Government the rangers are not able to spend time working with these volunteers. They have become frustrated. If the Government and the Minister of Environment and Land Management (who is on the front bench at the present time) do not take immediate action, we will lose the majority of those volunteers. If that were to happen, it would be a very sad state of affairs.

Mr Barry Burley, the President of the Friends of Belair National Park, made the point in the *Advertiser* article to which I referred earlier that park rangers are preoccupied with activities such as collecting park fees and other revenue raising projects, and firefighting and administration, leaving little time for maintenance patrols and weed eradication. Rangers now spend only some 15 per cent of their time out of the office compared with 60 per cent in 1983. The National Parks Association President, Mr John Hunwick, points out in this article that 85 per cent of the \$11.8 million allocated to national parks in 1991 was spent on operating the service, with only about \$2 million left for improving and maintaining 248 parks throughout South Australia.

Mr Hunwick compared the \$11.8 million funding for national parks in 1991 to running one of the State's major high schools on \$8 million. He said:

Here we are, trying to run 20 per cent of the State on little more than it costs to run one metropolitan high school.

If members opposite have not taken the opportunity to read in detail this article in the *Advertiser* of Monday 18 January, I encourage them to do so. I believe it is essential reading for all members of this House who have an interest in preserving the magnificent parks and reserves that we have in this State.

I conclude by referring to the review into the National Parks and Wildlife Service and system in this State which the present Minister announced recently. There is a need for a review, but I point out that there have been at least three reviews in the past 10 years. We do not want rhetoric, and we do not want just another review—we want action. It is imperative that this Government and the Minister of Environment and Land Management indicate very clearly to the House what plans they have to turn around this situation to ensure that the magnificent parks and reserves we have in this State are protected and preserved for our children and grandchildren. That is the purpose of the parks—to conserve these areas to ensure that our children and grandchildren enjoy them in time to come.

**Mr De LAINE** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## NATIONAL OUTLOOK CONFERENCE

**Mr VENNING (Custance):** I move:

That this House notes the findings of the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics recent National Outlook Conference in Canberra and expresses its concern at the effect on the South Australian economy of the crisis facing primary industries.

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that I make an annual pilgrimage to Canberra each year in February to the National Outlook Conference. I take it upon myself to represent this Parliament mainly because I am the only member of State Parliament who usually attends. I hope I am allowed that luxury and honour. After hearing the forecast of ABARE and the views of other speakers at the National Outlook Conference, I am more than ever convinced that, if agriculture in South Australia is to make the contribution to our State economy that it has the potential to do, it deserves far greater backing and encouragement from the Government than it has had so far.

The general outlook for almost all this State's rural industries is not too cheerful, at least in the short term. There are hopeful signs further ahead, and that is why it is important that farmers are helped to keep their operations efficient so that they can be ready to take advantage of opportunities as soon as they arise and as soon as conditions improve. This was the seventh successful National Outlook Conference I have attended. As usual, the hands-on farmers were very thin on the ground. There was no shortage, however, of the industry aristocracy, as I call them—that is, the bankers, accountants, advisers, consultants, authorities, boards and directors. This is hardly surprising when farm incomes have been falling so steadily. Consideration should be given to the fact that conference fees alone amount to \$550, and with accommodation and air fares you do not get there for under \$1 000. That explains why very few farmers attend the conference. No doubt the various industry groups pay for their delegates to attend.

I support the staging of future regional outlook conferences in each State. This will give the average farmer a chance to take part. I understand that in South Australia ABARE and the South Australian Farmers Federation will unite and have a conference in South Australia shortly, as they did last year.

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

**Mr VENNING:** I support the holding of regional outlook conferences in the various States, particularly in South Australia. I understand that ABARE and the South Australian Farmers Federation will be staging one later in the year in this State, and I will be supporting that venture. Sometimes I wonder whether it is worth trying to make long-term predictions, with so many imponderables and variables involved. How did ABARE's predictions at last year's conference turn out? They were not too accurate, as it has turned out. But, as always, the forecasters had plenty of good reasons, natural and man-made. When they do get it right, is it because some of their prophecies are self-fulfilling? That is, do the buyers of our commodities, when they learn of

gloomy predictions (for example, in the wool industry) set their prices accordingly? Are we flagging our price expectations to our buyers and competitors?

The market overview from the conference is not bright, with pessimism the world over. Europe and Japan have revised down earlier forecasts, and we can expect an even tighter situation. Europe is not buying from us as it used to. The Commonwealth of Independent States, that is, the old Soviet Union (the CIS), is not back in the market and cannot pay anyway. The developing countries account for half the world's population increase. Therefore, they spend more than developed countries on food and raw materials, and we should tap into this.

Asia, as we all know and have heard before, is the big plus, and it is very much an expanding market. We must get in there harder. In this respect, the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link would be essential, especially to South Australia's involvement. We hear this from every avenue, from every corner of Australian Government and politics, but we still see that at election time neither major Party is prepared to give a commitment. It is unwise to be too pessimistic, but we must improve our export/import competitiveness. The wool outlook is not bright. We still have far too many sheep in Australia. In the past good seasons, growers with plenty of feed have had no impetus to cut numbers to appropriate levels. It is important they do so as quickly as they can, as numbers need to fall rapidly in the next year or so.

Only 9 per cent of growers showed a profit last season. That is, Australia-wide, nine in every 100—a staggering statistic. Is the stock pile an asset or a liability? That is the question often asked. Again, China is our big hope—and, I am afraid, it is our destiny. It is vital we lift our efforts there. If China lifted its demand by only .5 per cent, it would take all the produce we can make in South Australia, because we are such small fry and China is such a huge importer of raw materials, particularly food. No rapid price rise is anticipated for wool, with the 545' per kilogram clean being the price, and that will be the ongoing forecast in the foreseeable future.

The wheat lookout is much better, but drought in 1991-92 and severe weather damage this season, with over 5 million tonnes of wheat being downgraded, have lowered the returns considerably. Continued subsidised sales by the US and the EEC (and we have heard all that before) are continually eroding our market share and our price. The CIS's cash problems have stopped it from buying. Considering all that, we have done very well. The drop in value of the Australian dollar has helped. We must add value to our raw materials (and we have all heard that before) for example by making noodles for export instead of exporting raw wheat, but we must be careful that we do not increase the price to such an extent that we no longer compete in a very tight and competitive world market. From 1995 to 1998, world wheat consumption will outstrip production. It is a frightening prospect, but it will help us; if we keep our stocks up, in 1995 to 1998 we should be able to clear our stocks and have prices return to normal. It makes one wonder.

Millers price today is about \$180 a tonne, and the estimate is \$165 for next year—a slight decrease. Much depends on the successful outcome of the GATT round.

We have heard that one before *ad nauseam*. If only we could solve these GATT talks, it would solve so many of Australia's problems and we could trade ourselves out so much more quickly. We obviously need a better infrastructure in Asia to handle and store a larger amount of wheat. It takes as much wheat as it can, but it cannot store it when it gets there. So, I think it is up to us and our industries to build up the infrastructure so it can take and handle our wheat. Another problem we have overseas is the criticising of our own product. This would involve such things as the Barley Marketing Bill, which is to come before the House in a few days. Much comment has been made that there are too many Australian marketers competing with each another in overseas countries, and criticising each other's Australian product. That is an absolute no-no. We should never bad mouth any Australian produce, even if it is competing, because buyers in those countries do not differentiate between the States or the boards. I believe we have too many boards selling Australian products overseas.

There is scope for mineral expansion. We have scope for a huge expansion in mineral production and export, again into Asia. China cannot meet its own needs and presents a great export opportunity. However, miners must be able to explore and then mine our vast mineral reserves. We do not need to be leading the world in environmental protection when our economy is the way it is and we have the world's best reserves of minerals. Modern technology has enabled us to explore deeper into the ground, yet, as we know, we restrict many of our explorers from even flying over our territory to work out what we have and have not got. I find that an absolutely ridiculous situation, given our current climate. At least we should enable our explorers to know what we have and then decide whether people can mine.

In conclusion, I believe that grain growers should continue as at present but they should watch the markets closely for variety and type. Wool is not so good, and beef growers should keep on the same track but should watch world market restrictions, particularly those of Japan and the US. The future lies with the Asian countries. It looks as though the best thing for me to do—for all of us—is to learn to speak Chinese and then to tell them how good our product is and how keen we are to sell them our world-class produce. But if we are to be able to do that, our farmers must be in a position to meet the market, because we have a world-class product. It is clean environmentally and chemically—whichever way we look at it. We are being hobbled only by the crazy, upside down, world marketplace. Yet many are operating on less than 80 per cent of their usual income. To keep their farms as healthy production units, they will need concrete encouragement, which this Government can and should give.

The Government could provide for our rural industry carry on finance at minimum interest; 12 month, low interest loans for machinery replacement and for fertiliser; subsidised freight of feed wheat; incentives to employ rural labour—and I emphasise that, because there are so many jobs that are not being picked up because people cannot afford it; and wider access to social security benefits and Austudy for more disadvantaged rural students. The Government should also waive

Government charges such as water rates, levies and registrations. I conclude by saying that there should be greater tax incentives to buy new machinery, to improve productivity and land management, and to carry out further land care and soil conservation works.

The plight of Australian farmers can be readily and simply explained by the following revelation. In 1974, one tonne of wheat would pay for 2 000 litres of fuel or six tonnes of fertiliser. In 1992, one tonne of wheat would pay for only 200 litres of fuel—not 2 000 litres—or .8 of one tonne of fertiliser—not six tonnes. That tells us exactly what is wrong in our rural community. It is quite clear proof of what is happening. These input costs are sinking our farmers and putting them into huge debt.

There is no incentive at the moment for people to continue farming. I have read articles in the past few days about farmers who do not have off-farm incomes. They are really living on borrowed time. There is no incentive to go on. With the way things are, and with the weather and the high costs, many farmers are saying, 'There is no sense being here; at least you young ones should leave the farm and seek employment in the cities.' Every member knows what is happening. Just look around the country towns at the lack of young people. In our own family unit, where there ought to have been four or five young ones taking over, I have only one son left to carry on. Originally there would have been 11 farm units. The writing is on the wall. I ask for the support of the Parliament to help our rural industries through these difficult times. I am confident that the good times will return. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mrs HUTCHISON** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## EXPORTS

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I move:

That this House believes that South Australia must become more export oriented and welcomes the Federal Liberal taxation initiatives which will assist in the achievement of that essential aim.

It is no secret that South Australia is dragging the chain, as is the Australian economy, in terms of international performance. We do not have anything that we can be proud of in terms of the advances that have been made in recent years. If members look at the balance of payments, they will see that it is the first time for some 20 months that we had a surplus generated on the Current Account, but that will be an aberration rather than a trend. All members opposite would recognise that the performance of the Government and the economy of this State and nation have been absolutely abysmal, the principal reason for the abysmal economic performance being the taxation system that operates at both Federal and State levels.

There are many initiatives that have been undertaken, but I will refer to two that will be taken by the Federal Coalition on achieving government to turn around this situation. There is no doubt—and it has been said many times and perhaps done to death in this House—that this

State has to become export oriented. For too long we have relied on our rural cousins to provide the wealth of this South Australian community, and that is not good enough. It is not good enough for the rural people to be our major exporters. It is not good enough for the rest of the South Australian community to rely on their effort. As the member for Custance has pointed out previously, the fact is we have been highly dependent on our export of rural produce for a very long time, in fact perhaps since the first establishment of this State. We have to change that situation, and change it dramatically.

The taxation system does everything possible to retard exports. We have had a number of reports by the IAC on what changes need to be made in specific industries and in the approach of Government to engendering export effort. There is no doubt that, if employers continue to face the taxation regimes brought upon them by the Federal and State Governments, we will never become internationally competitive.

A great deal of rhetoric has been expressed in relation to this proposition, but there is no doubt that, unless we can reduce the taxation burdens faced by employers and allow them to become more internationally competitive, we will see the same problems continuing for the next decade. It horrifies me that the Labor Government could be within whiskers of actually being a chance at the next election on 13 March, although it is perhaps not that close in South Australia. That is as a result of a scare campaign and lies spread by a vast majority of those associated with the trade union movement and members of the Government.

The facts of life are that, unless we get a GST in this country, there will not be the export effort that we so much desire. It works quite simply: the tax goes on through the process of production but, if a person exports, there are full credits in the system. That means that the company that is exporting is tax free in relation to the goods and services tax. Compare that with the current situation. We know that if an exporter wants to survive out in the market, that company has to pay enormous taxes thrust upon it by State and Federal Governments. We know that they have to pay the payroll tax visited upon them by the State Government, and we know that \$500 million is extracted from South Australian businesses each year to prop up a dodgy State budget. That \$500 million will come off the costs of production and enable a number of industries in this State the capacity to export overseas.

We know that the GST will have a wonderful impact on those people who wish to go out and make a living in the international arena. One of the great problems in Australia has been its reliance on rural produce and mining industries. We have never had to live with an international community that demands quality, speed of delivery and guarantees.

**Mr Ferguson:** Doom and gloom!

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Henley Beach says 'Doom and gloom.' I am actually painting a particularly bright picture if we change the Government. I cannot see what doom and gloom has to do with this debate.

*Mr Ferguson interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Henley Beach seems to be quite content to collect his parliamentary salary every month whilst there are tens of thousands of

people in this State who do not have a job. The only way they will get a job is if we increase our production and increase our exports. That is the only way we will feed and house the 92 000 currently on the dole queue; that is the only way we will give students the opportunity for future employment; and that is the only way we will give the over-40 years population a chance. For the member for Henley Beach to prattle on and talk about things of which he has little knowledge—in fact, he has a great deal of inexpertise in them—I believe does him no credit whatsoever, because deep down he realises that there is only one way for this nation to go if it ever wants to become internationally competitive.

It is not good enough that we are sixteenth on the list of 22 OECD rated countries. It is not good enough that we have a balance of payments overrun every month. The last month was a good month—it was only \$500 million—but the average is well over \$1 000 million over the past three years. During that period, the Government has built up net debts of some \$160 billion, and somehow that has to be repaid. So, it is no good members of the Government saying that we want to keep the ship afloat with the same old policies that have seen this State and nation deteriorate so dramatically. There is no doubt that, when the OECD assesses our performance, it looks at the impediments, and they are easy to find. Our industrial relations system is crook; our taxation system is crook; and we simply do not have the direction needed to put this nation on a new track. So, let me not hear again from the member for Henley Beach, and let us return to the debate on taxation.

Unless we change the taxation regime of this country and actively encourage export effort through such mechanisms as the GST, we do not have a hope. All the kids out there do not have a job and will never have one; they will not have the opportunity for employment; the same old problems involving our hospital queues will accumulate—every member of this House understands that principle—unless we change this nation in a big hurry. The GST would take off costs and make us more internationally competitive than we have ever been previously. It is the hope of the nation, because it gives credit to those people who are generating wealth for this country—not production that is consumed, not production that is wasted but production that goes into the international market place and earns us export dollars. We have to turn around that abysmal overseas debt of \$160 billion, which happens to be mounting at a rate of \$12 billion a year. We have to turn that around, and nothing that we have seen in the range of policies introduced by the Hawke and Keating Governments has assisted that effort whatsoever.

**Mr Holloway:** What garbage!

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Mitchell says, 'What garbage.' Let the honourable member tell us what his plan is: what will turn this country around? There is no hope as long as these South Australian and Federal Governments stay in power. Deep down, he knows that, just as a number of members opposite do. To go back to the GST, if we look at the export effort that has to be undertaken, we would realise that, throughout the system of taxation that operates, there must be breaks. We must remove that taxation and make it cheaper for our goods to be exported overseas. We have to clean up the

wharves and the industrial relations system of this country, and we have to give taxation incentives to allow our people to export.

We have many examples in South Australia of people making an effort. We went down to the local foundry recently, which produces some wonderful kitchenware, and that manufacturer is trying to get into the British market. If we did have a GST and that manufacturer did get credit for the taxation he pays through the system, did not have to pay petrol tax and had a clean run through the wharves (which does not happen at the moment), he would be able to double his employment overnight. That is just one example of the changes that can take place. There are many other examples. I suggest that members go down to Arrowcrest or to a number of the others making an effort, and ask those manufacturers what it means to be in the international market place and having to survive with a taxation regime that impedes natural growth in this country.

There are a number of other initiatives, of which the Government is aware. Six taxes will be removed, and that will actively assist the export effort in this country. Every member on the other side knows that, unless those changes are made, we will continue to wallow in the depression that we have had visited upon us by the policies of the Federal and State Labor Governments. So, the taxation system is absolutely vital to the future of this country. We have to give incentives and provide the capacity for our domestic producers to become more cost competitive. It does not end there. Not only are we taking off the six taxes in question which have received considerable publicity but also, if we get the other changes in the Fightback package, I believe this country and State do have a chance.

Can you imagine, Sir, the impact of not having to pay those taxes on the way through the production process and trying to pass them on overseas? Can you imagine not having to pay payroll tax, which is impeding employment? Can you imagine the impact if we did not have petrol tax? We have one of the highest costs of transport in the world, as members on the other side would appreciate. So, we will make our manufacturing exporters internationally competitive, and that will be the start of the revival of this country and this State. I hope members opposite will not continue to hang onto their old ways but that they will open their eyes to the opportunities that will be created in this country if we change our way of thinking, our taxation system and our industrial relations system, if we stop the rubbish that we have on the wharves, if we concentrate on the quality of produce and the quality of merchandise that we should achieve, and if we ensure that we deliver on time and that our markets are serviced well.

It is absolutely vital that we embrace the changes encompassed under Fightback, and I welcome the vision that has been shown by the Federal Liberal Party and the Federal Coalition in trying in an honest fashion to change the state of this nation, and of this State as a result. I find it quite unpalatable that, despite the absolute misery that has been caused by the policies of the Government over the past 10 years—the huge accumulation of debt and the huge increase in unemployment—we can still hear the same old stories coming from the other side. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr HOLLOWAY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## DEBT ACCUMULATION

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I move:

That this House condemns the debt accumulation of the Federal and South Australian Governments which have placed the nation and this State in such difficult financial circumstances and which will act as millstones around the necks of our citizens for at least the next decade.

I will address this motion very briefly, because members are aware of the problems that are being created right at this moment. I put this motion forward in the belief that eventually the people concerned who simply cannot think for themselves will be convinced that, unless we get the debt under control, we will continue to pay an enormous price. Members here would appreciate that, for example, \$695 million is the predicted net cost of servicing the debt in South Australia, and that is based on an estimated debt of \$7.3 billion. That is not the full story, and I will go into that in a minute. At the Federal level, we have a budget with a \$16 billion deficit, which has been admitted to and which is more likely to be an \$18 billion deficit being run this financial year. In this State alone we have a budget with a net financing requirement of \$317 million, which will be about \$400 million, due to the erosion of the revenue base and the inability of the Government to contain costs.

That \$400 million overrun understates the problems facing this State. The \$7.3 billion understates the State's real debt. Unless we get it under control and unless we grapple with it, there is no hope that the quality of services that every member of this House desires to be provided to our citizens will ever be met. There is no doubt that we will not be able to grapple with the hospital queues; we will not be able to grapple with the need for quality in teaching and get those literacy skills up into our school system; we will not be able to provide the level of public transport that people desire; and we will not be able to get our crime situation under control unless we can bring back that debt and the cost that it imposes year by year on the State budget. We have revenue of about \$1 540 million coming from State taxation, and \$695 million of that is going out on debt servicing. We get absolutely nothing for it.

What would happen if we could get that debt under control and draw back on it? We would then create some surpluses in the system and they could be used to provide taxation breaks for the business community, because it certainly needs it. It could be used to reinforce the quality or level of service that we get from the public sector.

*Mr S. G. Evans interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Davenport asks: What about the water and sewerage system? Yes, it certainly is creaking and it certainly has many hundreds of millions of dollars of repairs to be carried out on it. That is one of the hidden costs that have not been dealt with in the financial figures. I will deal with the financial figures because, as the Leader outlined, we are facing liabilities this year of \$14 000 million. In the last



financial year alone the Government allowed those liabilities to blow out by \$2 000 million. Part of it was due to the State Bank and part due to the financial management of the Government—

**Mr S.G. Evans:** Mismanagement!

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** Mismanagement, as the member for Davenport says. Unless we can drag back that debt and provide increased capacity in the system we will continue to try to survive when survival is not enough. I do not need to tell members that we have so many challenges in front of us concerning the management of that debt. There has been no action by this Government whatsoever to address the problem. It appears to be quite happy, or is the problem too large for the Government to tackle and actually say, 'We are going to reduce that debt servicing cost by \$100 million a year so that we can release another \$100 million for better purposes'?

Whether it be for taxation breaks, to assist the crumbling business community or for the maintenance of the services that I previously referred to, it is important that action be taken. We have the \$2 000 million blow-out last financial year and another \$1 000 million this financial year as the legacy of the State Labor Government. Its accounting methods are crook. Whilst the State debt was \$7.3 billion, the Government did not take into account the \$850 million indemnity. That has been bankcarded and forms part of the liabilities. The Government has said, 'We will owe you that money. We will not pay interest on it. We will pay it some time down the track and then of course it will have to be met through borrowings and that will increase the debt servicing cost.'

As members would recognise, at the current public sector rate applied by SAFA of about 11.5 or 11.7 per cent, we know that the cost of servicing \$7.3 billion, which is really over \$8 billion and which will be as high as \$8.8 billion in real terms by the end of the financial year, is horrendous. What happens if interest rates increase again? The cost of servicing the debt rises and it puts the squeeze on the whole system and there is an incapacity to meet that. At the Federal level the same problem will prevail.

We have \$160 billion of debt and, if we look at the current account and balance of payments figures, we find that even when we get close to matching exports with imports it is our invisibles that destroy us. It is the cost of servicing the debt and the extras that we have to pay because we are not internationally competitive that are the basis of our problem. We do not have the international position, which means that capital feeds back into this country and, over a long period, we have accepted capital from overseas and have not attempted somehow to reverse that trend. I said that I was not going to speak for long and I will not spend much longer on this matter, because it is slowly getting through those thick heads on the other side of the Chamber—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** It is slowly getting through the thick heads of members on the other side of the Chamber that we have to make the effort for our children, for the people who do not have jobs or who want jobs, for the people who would like a decent standard of living and cannot achieve it at the moment. We must do it for the people who want to get into the housing market and for

the people who want safety and security in their lives. Without these changes, without addressing the debt, the servicing costs will continue to eat into the taxation base of this State. With taxation increases, businesses go bankrupt and we get into an ever increasing vicious circle.

*Mr Ferguson interjecting:*

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Henley Beach says—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** The member for Mount Gambier makes a relevant point: we might be able to afford a lobotomy for the member for Henley Beach when we are in Government, and we might even let him jump the queue. There is no doubt that this nation and State are in strife and that, unless we change the manner in which we operate our finances, unless we take a good hold on Government and cut out the rubbish and unless we change the way we operate from the public sector in this country, then we are going to have to continue to pay exceptionally high bills for running public sector services and increasingly we are going to have the pressure applied by the servicing costs of our debt.

It is a priority that we have to reduce that State debt. So, it has to come by the sale of assets. We have to get the current account into surplus. Other parts of the strategy must be that we have to get greater returns on our assets than we are getting now. There are some great challenges before this State, but one of the most imperative of those challenges is the need to address the debt faced by this State and nation and change both Governments as soon as it is humanly possible.

**Mr HOLLOWAY** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## WINE TRADE EXPO

**Mr McKEE (Gilles):** I move:

That this House expresses its support for the concept of hosting an international wine trade expo in South Australia involving all the key wine growing regions of the State as a boost to wine exports and to tourism and encourages the wine industry to fully support such an expo.

As background to the motion, I was prompted to consider this matter when last year we were unsuccessful in our bid for the Commonwealth Games. No-one in this House or State could doubt that South Australia's bid for the games was the best bid in the history of the Commonwealth Games. It was a political decision to hold the Commonwealth Games in a developing country that beat South Australia, and it had nothing to do with the bid mounted by the State.

Therefore, it prompted me to consider that the expertise involved in that bid for the Commonwealth Games and the experience gained in dealing at an international level, after having lost the games bid, would be lost to this State. It appeared to me that that experience from the Commonwealth Games and the experience gained at an international level through the Grand Prix Office and other successes such as the Submarine Corporation and the MFP that have been

attracted to this State, together with the expertise that is here to deal at an international level with attracting events and industries to this State, should not be lost and should be put to use.

An international wine trade fair and expo is the ideal vehicle for the use of that expertise that will bring together both Government expertise and the expertise of the wine industry itself. We could mount a truly prestigious international wine event in this State. During my research into the matter I learned that such events were being conducted in England, France, Italy and Japan and on the North American continent.

I envisage that the sort of event that we could host in South Australia would be based along the lines of the biennial Vin Expo in France, which has been held for the past 10 years. Two years ago the expo, held over a five-day period, attracted 55 000 tourists and people involved in the wine industry. The Japanese event was held in 1991. I might point out that Japan does not have a wine industry; if it does it is fairly minute. Japan is obviously keen on the wine industry and in using it to attract tourists. In 1991 Japan attracted over 12 000 visitors to its Vin Expo.

I believe that we can conduct an event of international status and prestige and entice to South Australia international wine writers, international winemakers, wine wholesalers and wine buyers for hotel chains throughout Europe, throughout the North American continent and throughout the Asian region. South Australia, which produces 65 per cent of Australia's wine, is ideally suited as the site for such an expo.

Last year the Arthur D. Little economic report commissioned by the State Government gave great emphasis to the wine industry in South Australia and highlighted its involvement in the economic structure of this State. The event which I am proposing to the House tonight can only improve on that and enhance the status of the wine industry in terms of the economy of this State. Last year Arthur Andersen put out a report on tourism on a State by State basis in Australia. It pointed out that Western Australia attracts more overseas visitors despite the fact that South Australia has a Grand Prix—it is an international event and a number of people are attracted to it from overseas, but Western Australia seems to attract more overseas visitors. The recommendation from Arthur Andersen was that South Australia needs another event. I believe that an international wine trade fair and expo is just such an event—

**An honourable member:** Or a gay mardigras.

**Mr McKEE:** That might interest members on the other side; it certainly does not interest me. The wine industry itself has embarked on a very well planned and professional export drive. In fact, it has set itself a target to expand Australian wine exports to \$750 million by 1996-97, with a strong intention to reach a target of \$1 billion by the year 2000. Again, such an event as an international wine trade fair in Adelaide will enhance that export drive.

During my research into this event I contacted a number of people in the wine industry, and I wrote to winemakers such as Angoves, Orlando, Yalumba, Wolf Blass, Penfolds and BRL Hardy. Several of them have replied to me in the affirmative, indicating their support

for the concept. I have also personally contacted Mr Ian Hollick in the South-East who represents the Coonawarra winemakers, Mr Andrew Garrett who represents the McLaren Vale winegrowers, Mr Bob McLean who represents the Barossa winegrowers and the Watervale Winery which represents the winemakers in the Clare region. So not only have the larger wine producers in South Australia been contacted and reacted in the affirmative but I have also contacted the people who represent the smaller wineries out in the different wine producing regions of the State, and they are also very supportive of such a concept.

The other aspect that lends itself to such an event is the tourism industry, and I consider South Australia to be a great State—I enjoy it. As far as the metropolitan beaches are concerned, I think we are probably second only to Sydney in New South Wales. We have the wonderful Flinders Ranges. But they are the sorts of attractions that require people to move out into the State to see them. We do not have a Great Barrier Reef, and we do not have the snowfields of Victoria or Ayers Rock.

The main thing that South Australians and the South Australian Government must do to boost tourism in South Australia is to create events. We must stage international events to bring overseas visitors to South Australia for different professional promotions, and an international wine trade fair is one such event. A further spin-off from such an event would be felt in the hospitality industry. Over the past few years the subject of value adding has also been much spoken about in the manufacturing industry. According to the wine industry annual report, the value added worth of the wine industry in terms of taxation is \$85 million; finance \$100 million; capital items \$55 million; marketing \$87 million; transport \$33 million; packaging \$207 million; labour \$175 million; and grapes \$300 million.

I suggest that an event of this nature which attracts tourism to South Australia is another area of value adding to the wine industry itself. Whilst I cannot put a precise figure on it, I think that the first such event would attract spending of \$10 million to \$15 million in the community of Adelaide and South Australia. I believe that this type of event could go on and on, unlike the Commonwealth Games, which would have been a one-off event. I believe that an international wine trade fair and expo can be run like the Vin Expo in France. It can be run every two years and it can be run on a continual basis.

I believe that this is something positive. I believe it is positive for the State for three reasons: first, it will enhance the wine industry's own export drive, which I mentioned earlier in terms of the targets that it hopes to achieve; secondly, I think it is positive in relation to the areas of tourism and hospitality in South Australia; and, thirdly, I believe that it is positive in relation to employment prospects for this State. I urge all members of the House to support the motion.

**Mr VENNING** secured the adjournment of the debate.

## PUBLIC SECTOR SALARIES

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Holloway:

That this House notes the Government's decision to request the State Bank, SGIC and other statutory authorities to more fully disclose details of salary packages in excess of \$100 000 in their annual reports and calls on the Federal Government to consider amending schedule 5 of the corporations law to ensure that a more complete disclosure of remuneration is included in the financial reports of Australian companies.

(Continued from 10 February. Page 1893.)

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** I thank the members for Hanson and Henley Beach for their support for this motion. I agree with the views that both of those members have expressed about the cancerous effect of the explosion in executive pay salaries right across the community. The Economic and Finance Committee in this State has revealed how executive salaries in statutory authorities have been kept secret by a number of devices. As a result of those revelations, of course, the State Government has taken steps to correct that and ensure that there is full and proper disclosure of all salaries within the State's public sector. But that is only the tip of the iceberg.

We need to ensure that such disclosure is extended right across the private sector so that much of the rotting that is going on at present is exposed, and hopefully as a result of that exposure some reasonable limits can be put on what has been happening out in the private sector. I thank members for their support, and I hope that as a consequence of the passage of this motion the Federal Government will soon taken action to ensure that there is full and proper disclosure of all executive salaries in this country, including those in the biggest private companies.

Motion carried.

## RETIRED PERSONS

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

That this House commends the Federal Coalition for the sympathetic assistance it will provide in Government to self-funded retirees under the Fightback package in recognising the unsympathetic taxation discrimination that has been of major concern to those who have prepared for their own retirement.

(Continued from 17 February. Page 2094.)

**Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell):** I oppose the motion. The member for Heysen has real cheek in trying to congratulate the Federal Liberal Coalition for doing something about self-funded retirees. Under the Fightback One policy Dr Hewson totally overlooked self-funded retirees. Those people were faced with additional costs as a result of the imposition of the GST, and without any compensation whatsoever. Under Fightback Two Dr Hewson was forced to bring in a small level of compensation for such people. It is not as though Dr Hewson is really doing anything about the problems of such people, he his simply trying to patch up the damaging effects that self-funded retirees would face from the imposition of the goods and services tax.

I believe members opposite have some cheek in moving this motion because if ever there has been a Government that has done a lot for pensioners it is the current Federal Labor Government. The present Federal Labor Government has done more for retirees—both pensioners and those receiving other income—than any other Government in this country's history. I think I should place on the record some of the achievements of the Federal Labor Government. First, let us take the basic pension, which has now reached its highest level since the 1940s. It has risen by \$78 a week, an increase in real terms of over 15 per cent during the life of the current Federal Labor Government. In fact, there have been three real increases in the pension rate. Let us compare that with the record of the Fraser Government during its seven years in office. During that time pensions fell by 2 per cent in real terms. So, on the one hand, we have had a 15 per cent increase in real terms under the present Federal Labor Government and, on the other hand, there was a 2 per cent fall under the Federal Coalition.

I point out to the House that the level of the pension affects the level of assistance that is provided to self-funded retirees because, as the pension rises, the threshold for part pensioners increases. In other words, as there has been an increase in the level of pensions in this country those who receive other incomes have been able to receive a part pension. Indeed, the statistics in that respect are very interesting. As a result of these initiatives pensioners paid at the maximum rate have fallen from 71 per cent of all pensioners in 1985 to 66 per cent in June 1992, and they are continuing to fall. The reason for that is that, as the pension has risen under the income test, more and more self-funded retirees are eligible to receive at least a part pension. The cut-off point for retirees who can receive some form of age pension is now \$18 736 a year for single pensioners and \$31 294 for couples. In other words, pensioner couples who receive below \$31 294 in private income are eligible for some pension.

In fact, under the present Federal Labor Government the coverage for self-funded retirees has grown dramatically. Not only that, from April this year retirees who receive as little as \$1 per week as a pension—in other words, the couple who earn as much as \$31 000 a year—will be able to receive the full range of Commonwealth and State fringe benefits for services such as hearing aids, electricity rates, transport and so on. What is the Opposition's policy in this area? It is being very ambivalent about its attitude towards extending such assistance, and I would be interested to hear from members opposite whether such policies would continue under a Hewson Government. Also, under the present Federal Labor Government there have been great changes to the level at which pensioners pay tax. Since July 1990 pensioners with income that is within the pension free zone have paid no income tax. The current value of the full pensioner tax rebate is \$972 for a single pensioner and \$650 for a married couple. So there has been a great increase in the effective tax threshold for retired people.

One of the most important commitments that was made by the present Federal Labor Government—and it has been made for some years now—was the removal of all

age and service pensioners from the tax system by 1995. In other words, married couples earning less than \$31 294 will pay no income tax after 1995. The implementation of that initiative has been worked on over the past few years. What could be a greater contribution to the welfare of self-funded retirees than that?

It should be pointed out that the present Federal Labor Government has done far more about the self provision of retirement income than any other Government in this country's history. One could spend a considerable amount of time detailing the initiatives that the present Federal Labor Government has made in the superannuation area. There is no doubt that the extent of superannuation coverage in the Australian community over the past 10 years has been enormous. Prior to 1983, when the Federal Labor Government was first elected, superannuation was the prerogative of very few people—a few public servants and the very wealthy in the private sector. But now superannuation is available to the vast majority of Australian workers. Under the policies of the present Federal Labor Government that coverage will continue to grow, and self provision for retirement will become more and more important.

Contrast that with the policies of the Federal Coalition. The Federal Coalition will change the superannuation system, remove the superannuation guarantee levee and return us to what the system was prior to 1983 when superannuation was the prerogative of the wealthy only. What a disaster that will be for this country with the ageing of the population. I should also point out that many couples have benefited under the present Federal Labor Government through the increase in indexation of the dependent spouse rebate which is now worth \$1 177 a year. There has been a very large increase in that since 1983.

In addition, the pharmaceutical benefits scheme safety net and the universal health care provided through Medicare protect non-pensioner retirees from high health costs. What will happen to self-funded retirees under the Federal Coalition's health policies? They will not be protected through Medicare; they will have to pay for private health insurance. What will happen to the pharmaceutical benefits scheme safety net that was provided by the Federal Labor Government? I refer also to the many changes that the present Federal Labor Government has made with respect to aged accommodation and how that has benefited self-funded retirees. There have been a number of changes over the years to make retirement incomes more flexible, enabling retired people to use their money more flexibly in the provision of housing and other needs. There is no doubt that over the past 10 years there has been a major change under the Federal Labor Government to benefit not just those on low incomes but also those who are self-funded retirees. There has been greater self provision for retirement and also great increases in the pension level, and this has assisted those with their own income and those without their own income.

This present Federal Labor Government has, as I said earlier, done far more than any other Government in the history of this country to benefit retired people. I think members opposite have a cheek in trying to congratulate the Federal Coalition for assisting self funded retirees. As I said at the start of this speech, the only proposal

that has been put forward by Dr Hewson for self-funded retirees is a belated recognition of the damaging effect that the GST would have on their savings and their income. Because those retirees would have their wealth, savings and income reduced by anything up to 15 per cent as a result of the GST, the Hewson policies would be quite disastrous for them. Hence, Dr Hewson was forced in Fightback Two to make some compensation for such people.

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

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

### PRESS GALLERY

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. Jennifer Cashmore:

That, recognising the power and influence of the media, this House—

(a) supports the principle that journalists who report parliamentary proceedings are an integral part of the democratic process; and

(b) requests the Standing Orders Committee to consider establishing a formal procedure for accreditation of journalists and to consider whether those holding permanent passes as press, radio or television journalists, accredited by the Speaker to cover the proceedings of the Parliament, should be required to complete returns for a register of interest in a similar form to that prescribed for members of Parliament, such register to be held by the Clerk of the House for inspection by members of Parliament only and not by any other person.

(Continued from 25 November. Page 1697.)

**Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport):** This motion raises an important matter; it attempts to make the media responsible for their actions, as we Parliamentarians are responsible for our decisions. There is no doubt that many of the media have vested interests and they can write about those interests or about the activities of others associated with those interests without having to declare their interests, and that can have an effect upon the organisation or the group they are writing about, either a beneficial effect on a particular journalist or, more particularly, an adverse effect on those with whom they might be competing. The member for Coles has moved this motion so that the House and the community have the opportunity to make representations on the issue. I support the motion.

**Mr GUNN (Eyre):** I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate, because for a considerable number of years we have spent a fair bit of our time addressing the actions of members of Parliament and other people in relation to their being fully accountable, but the media in this State and in this country are narrowly based and, therefore, they should also be accountable. The people of this State should be fully aware whether they have any conflicts of interest or what their pecuniary interests are.

Other Parliaments have looked closely at this matter, and the proposition put forward by the member for

Coles, in my judgment, is an important first step, which this Parliament should not allow to pass by. The Standing Orders Committee should, as a matter of high priority, examine this proposition and, as far as I am concerned, recommend a procedure similar to that which applies in the House of Commons. It was fortunate that today I received a letter from a friend of mine in the House of Commons who provided me with the amendments in respect of the disclosure of interests which apply in the House of Commons.

**An honourable member:** What is his name?

**Mr GUNN:** His name is Richard Alexander—a long-standing Conservative member of Parliament. It states:

1. Those holding permanent passes as lobby journalists accredited to parliamentary press gallery or to parliamentary broadcasting be required to register not only the employment for which they receive their pass but also any other paid occupation or employment where their privileged access to Parliament is relevant.

2. Holders of permanent passes as members' secretaries or members' research assistants be required to register any relevant gainful occupation which they may pursue other than for which the pass is issued.

It goes on with a number of other criteria. This Parliament would, in my view, not be facing up to its responsibilities if we did not proceed down this path. It is not saying that this procedure is to be permanent, but the Standing Orders Committee is in a unique situation to take a positive position on behalf of the people of this State. Recently, this matter was addressed in the CPA newsletter which, hopefully, most members of Parliament read, and I quote from that document, which states:

Of particular interest was the call made by noted correspondent, Mr Pierre Salinger, for an international conference of senior journalists—

**An honourable member:** Wasn't he press secretary to President Kennedy?

**Mr GUNN:** He was closely associated with the Kennedy era—

to consider and adopt a code of ethics for the media.

He received much support for his view and received a considerable amount of press coverage. I am one of those people who believe in fair play and a fair go for everyone. Not only do I support the disclosure of interests of journalists: I also support people's privacy being protected.

Debate adjourned.

### MUTUAL RECOGNITION (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) BILL

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY for the Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Premier)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to adopt the Mutual Recognition Act 1992 of the Commonwealth (and any amendments made to it before this Act commences), and to refer power to the Parliament of the Commonwealth to amend that Act, so as to enable the enactment of legislation applying uniformly throughout Australia for the recognition of regulatory standards adopted in Australia regarding goods and occupations. Read a first time.

**The Hon. R.J. GREGORY:** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

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

Leave granted.

### Explanation of Bill

The purpose of the *Mutual Recognition (South Australia) Bill* is to enable South Australia to enter into a scheme for the mutual recognition of regulatory standards for goods and occupations adopted in Australia. Mutual recognition is an initiative arising out of the series of Special Premiers Conferences which have been conducted over the past 18 months with the objective of achieving an historic reconstruction of intergovernmental relations. The principal aim of mutual recognition is to remove the needless artificial barriers to interstate trade in goods and the mobility of labour caused by regulatory differences among Australian States and Territories. Mutual recognition is expected to greatly enhance the international competitiveness of the Australian economy and is a major step forward in the achievement of micro-economic reform. It involves a recognition by heads of Government that the time has come for Australia to create a truly national market—a policy embodied in the Constitution but not made possible for almost 100 years.

At the Special Premiers Conference in Brisbane in October 1990, heads of Government agreed to apply mutual recognition of standards in all areas where uniformity was not considered essential to national economic efficiency. Heads of Government gave their in-principle support to models of mutual recognition for goods and occupations at the Special Premiers Conference held in Sydney in July 1991, subject to the outcome of a national community consultation process.

National consultation between July and November 1991 involved the release of a discussion paper entitled 'The Mutual Recognition of Standards and Regulations in Australia' and a series of seminars in each capital city led by the Honourable Neville Wran, AC, QC. Input was sought from business, industry, trade unions, the professions, standards-setting bodies and consumer and community representatives on any necessary refinements to the mutual recognition models. Some 200 written submissions were received. Results of the consultation process were considered by Premiers and Chief Ministers at their meeting in Adelaide on 21 and 22 November 1991.

While there was a range of views expressed at the seminars and in the submissions, the concept of mutual recognition was widely embraced as a means to overcome regulatory impediments to a national market in goods and services. The majority of submissions did not call for substantial changes to the models, although some expressed a preference for uniformity. On that point, it is important to note that mutual recognition is intended to complement the efforts of regulatory authorities in achieving nationally uniform standards. It will not impede those effects where it is agreed that uniform national standards are necessary. On the contrary, recent experience with the medical profession, for instance, suggests that mutual recognition will hasten the successful resolution of such endeavours. The mutual recognition proposals were subject to public scrutiny after Premiers and Chief Ministers agreed to release the draft *Mutual Recognition Bill* in November 1991. Changes which have been made to the draft legislation as a result of submissions received are generally of a minor drafting nature only. Again, overwhelming support for the concept of mutual recognition was evident, with a few notable exceptions, which continued to favour national uniformity. It is an indication of the common sense which underlies the concept of mutual recognition that these proposals have had the clear support of Governments of all different political persuasions from the outset.

All heads of Government agreed, when they met on 11 May 1992, to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement on Mutual Recognition. The Agreement actively promotes the development of national standards in cases where the operation of mutual recognition raised questions about the need for such standards to protect the health and safety of citizens, or to prevent or minimise environmental pollution.

The legislation is based on two simple principles.

The first is that goods which can be sold lawfully in one State or Territory may be sold freely in any other State or Territory, even though the goods may not fully comply with all the details of regulatory standards in the place where they are sold. If goods are acceptable for sale in one State or Territory, then there is no reason why they should not be sold anywhere in Australia.

It was not so long ago that it was virtually impossible to market cooking margarine nationally in one package. Western Australia required margarine to be packed in cube tubs whereas the familiar round tub was acceptable everywhere else. Mutual recognition will mean producers in Australia will only have to ensure that their products comply with the laws in the place of production. If they do so, then they will be free to distribute and sell their products throughout Australia without being subjected to further testing or assessment of their product. This ensures a national market for those products. Similarly, goods manufactured or produced overseas which comply with the relevant standards in the jurisdiction through which they are imported will be able to be sold in any jurisdiction.

The second principle is that if a person is registered to carry out an occupation in one State or Territory, then he or she should be able to be registered and carry on the equivalent occupation in any other State or Territory. If someone is assessed to be good enough to practise a profession or an occupation in one State or Territory, then they should be able to do so anywhere in Australia. A person who is registered in one jurisdiction will only need to give notice, including evidence of their home registration, to the relevant registration authority in another jurisdiction to be entitled immediately to commence practice in an equivalent occupation in that second State or Territory. No additional assessment will be undertaken by the local registration or licensing body to assess the person's capabilities or expertise. Local registration authorities will be required to accept the judgment of their interstate counterparts of a person's educational qualifications, experience, character or fitness to practise. I stress that the occupations a person seeks to move between from one State to another have to be substantially equivalent and have to be subject to statutory registration arrangements. I am sure that everyone would agree that in Australia the existing regulatory arrangements of each State or Territory generally provide a satisfactory set of standards.

Thus, on implementation of mutual recognition, no jurisdiction will suddenly be flooded with products that are inherently dangerous, unsafe or unhealthy; nor will there be an influx of inadequately qualified practitioners in registered occupations.

In an innovative move, the States and Territories have agreed to empower the Commonwealth to pass a single Act which will override any State or Territory Acts or regulations that are inconsistent with the mutual recognition principles as defined in the Commonwealth Act. The States and Territories will effectively cede power to one another through the mechanism of Commonwealth legislation.

Let me stress that the additional powers of the Commonwealth will be extremely limited. States and Territories are not granting extensive new powers to regulate goods and occupations. The Commonwealth has been empowered to pass a single piece of legislation, namely the Mutual Recognition Act 1992. Amendments to this legislation will require unanimous agreement among all participating jurisdictions. There will be no new powers for the Commonwealth to unilaterally establish new standards or controls. Under the terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Mutual Recognition, which all heads of Government signed in May 1992, Commonwealth Ministers, like their State and Territory counterparts on ministerial councils, will be subject to the same controls and limits. A two-thirds majority vote of Ministers in support of a new standard will bind all the parties.

I will now explain the provisions of the *Mutual Recognition (South Australia) Bill* in greater detail. As I have already explained, the South Australian Bill will adopt the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* of the Commonwealth, which is set out in the Schedule to the *Mutual Recognition (South Australia) Bill 1992*. Amendment of the Commonwealth Act will require approval by a designated person from each jurisdiction - for South Australia, this person is the Governor. The mutual recognition scheme is to last initially for five years, after which time the Governor has the power to terminate the adoption by

proclamation. The mutual recognition principles in relation to goods and occupations are set down in clauses 9 to 11, for goods, and clause 17, for occupations, of the Schedule to the State legislation.

The legislation will not encroach on the ability of jurisdictions to impose standards for locally produced or imported goods nor for local people wishing to enter into an occupation.

Mutual recognition will not affect the ability of jurisdictions to regulate the operation of businesses or the conduct of persons registered in an occupation, nor is it intended to affect the registration of bodies corporate. Its focus is on the regulation of goods at the point of sale and regulation of the entry by registered persons into equivalent occupations in another State or Territory.

Laws that regulate the manner in which goods are sold - such as laws restricting the sale of certain goods to minors - or the manner in which sellers conduct their businesses are explicitly exempted from mutual recognition. For occupations, the legislation is expressed to apply to individuals and occupations carried on by them. As I indicated earlier, mutual recognition is intended to encourage the development of appropriate uniform standards where these are considered necessary for reasons of protecting health and safety or preventing or minimising environmental pollution. Thus, provision is made for States and Territories to enact or declare certain goods or laws relating to goods to be exempt from mutual recognition on these grounds on a temporary basis, that is, up to 12 months. During that time, the intergovernmental agreement provides for the relevant ministerial council to consider the issue and make a determination on whether to develop and apply a uniform standard in the area under examination. Wherever possible, ministerial councils are to apply those standards commonly accepted in international trade.

In respect of occupations the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal will hear appeals against decisions of local registration authorities and will have the power to declare an occupation to be non-equivalent. This would occur in instances where there is no technical equivalence - in the sense that the activities that a practitioner is authorised to carry out under registration in two different jurisdictions are not substantially the same.

Declarations of non-equivalence may also be made by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal where there is technical equivalence but there are health, safety or pollution grounds for preventing practitioners from one State from carrying on that occupation in other States and Territories. Such declarations are to have effect for 12 months, during which time relevant State and Commonwealth Ministers have to agree on whether or not to develop and apply a uniform standard. If not, mutual recognition will apply.

The intergovernmental agreement also provides for a concerned State or Territory to refer a matter relating to a particular good or occupation to the appropriate ministerial council for a decision on whether or not to develop and apply a uniform standard. It is expected that where a ministerial council decides that a uniform standard is required in respect of a particular occupation. It will apply a national competency standard if such a standard is available. Heads of Government asked that the process of developing such standards be accelerated. It is hoped that national competency standards will be developed in the near future for all regulated occupations and professions. The legislation also provides for certain permanent exemptions in relation to goods. Heads of Government have agreed that the scheduled exemptions should be extremely limited, focusing on those products for which a national market is undesirable. Examples include pornography, firearms and other offensive weapons, gaming machines, and South Australia's container deposit legislation. Amendment of the exemptions schedules will require the unanimous agreement of all jurisdictions.

The mutual recognition principle in relation to goods is intended to operate by way of a defence. That is, it will be a defence to a prosecution for an offence against a law of a jurisdiction in relation to the sale of goods if the defendant expressly claims that the mutual recognition principle applies and establishes that the goods offered for sale had labels saying the goods were produced in or imported into another jurisdiction and he or she had no reasonable grounds for suspecting the goods were not produced in or imported into that other

jurisdiction. It would then be up to the prosecution to rebut this or to say that the mutual recognition principle does not apply, because, for example, the goods did not comply with the requirements imposed by the law of the other jurisdiction.

The mutual recognition principle in relation to occupations will mean that a registered practitioner wishing to practise in another State can notify the local registration authority of his or her intention to seek registration in an equivalent occupation there. The local registration authority then has one month to process the application and to make a decision on whether or not to grant registration. Pending registration, the practitioner is entitled, once the notice is made and all necessary information provided, to commence practice immediately in that occupation, subject to the payment of fees and compliance with the various indemnity or insurance requirements in relation to that occupation. No other preconditions can be imposed on the entitlement to commence practice. Conditions can be placed on the practitioner's registration in order to achieve equivalence with the condition of registration applying in the first jurisdiction. In addition, the interstate practitioner is immediately subject to the disciplinary requirements and other rules of conduct in the new jurisdiction applicable to local practitioners.

The Government is confident that participation in this legislative scheme will provide major long-term benefits for South Australia. The unnecessary costs for producers in accommodating minor differences in regulatory requirements of States and Territories in relation to goods will be removed. Genuine competition across State and Territories borders will be encouraged as a result of procedures having more ready access to the Australian market as a whole. Labour mobility will be enhanced with the removal of artificial barriers linked to registration and licensing laws. As a result, we will be able to make better use of our labour force skills.

Australia's international competitiveness will rise as producers capitalise on the economies of scale made possible by mutual recognition. This is a process that will occur over the medium to long term. More efficient standards brought about by competition among jurisdictions should result in community requirements being met at a lower overall cost to both producers and consumers. Wider consumer choice and a greater responsiveness to the needs and demands of consumers among producers and regulators should result.

At the same time, as I pointed out earlier, the mutual recognition scheme is designed to ensure that there is no compromise on standards in the important areas of health and safety and environmental protection.

This legislative scheme is an historic initiative aimed at overcoming the regulatory impediments to the creation of a truly national market in goods and services in this country. I am pleased to acknowledge the substantial contribution made by all heads of Government in fostering and promoting this important development. It is a fine example of what can be achieved when all Governments co-operate and work together in the national interest.

I commend the Bill to the House.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows:

**Clause 1 — Short title**

The clause provides for the proposed Act to be cited as the *Mutual Recognition (South Australia) Act 1993*.

**Clause 2 — Commencement**

The proposed Act is to commence on a proclaimed day.

**Clause 3 — Interpretation**

The clause defines 'the Commonwealth Act' to mean the *Mutual Recognition Act* enacted by the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

**Clause 4 — Adoption of Commonwealth Act**

The clause provides for the adoption of the Commonwealth Act under section 51(xxxvii) of the Commonwealth Constitution. The adoption will have effect for a period commencing on the day on which the State Act commences and ending on a day fixed by proclamation. The proclaimed day must be no earlier than the end of five years commencing on the date of commencement of the Commonwealth Act.

**Clause 5 — Reference of power to amend the Commonwealth Act**

The clause refers certain matters to the Parliament of the Commonwealth, being the amendment of the Commonwealth Act (other than the Schedules to that Act), but only in terms which are approved by the designated person for each of the

then participating jurisdictions. The designated person for a State is defined as the Governor, for the Australian Capital Territory is defined as the Chief Minister and for the Northern Territory is defined as the Administrator.

In a manner consistent with clause 4, the referral of those matters has effect from the commencement of the State Act until a day (occurring at least five years after the commencement of the Commonwealth Act) fixed by proclamation.

**Clause 6 — Approval of amendments**

The clause enables the Governor to approve the terms of amendments of the Commonwealth Act.

**Clause 7 — Regulations for temporary exemptions for goods**

The clause enables the Governor to make regulations for the purposes of section 15 of the Commonwealth Act (temporary exemptions).

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

**RACING (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

**The Hon G.J. CRAFTER (Minister of Recreation and Sport)** obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Racing Act 1976. Read a first time.

**The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER:** I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

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

Leave granted.

**Explanation of Bill**

This Bill proposes amendments to the Racing Act 1976, relating to a number of disparate matters.

Firstly, it proposes to allow an authorised racing club with the specific approval of the Minister, to conduct betting on its racecourse whereby both the bookmakers and the on-course totalisator are permitted to accept bets on various race meetings both local and interstate, without the club conducting a race meeting.

Secondly, the Bill proposes amendments to the composition of the Board of the TAB, alterations to the powers of control and direction of the Board by the Minister and to clarify the application of the Government Management and Employment Act to the Board.

Thirdly, the Bill proposes to allow on-course bookmakers to accept bets by telephone and facsimile transmission from persons off the course. In addition all reference to live hare coursing has been deleted.

The SAJC sought approval to operate an auditorium type betting facility when there is no race meeting in progress at the proposed location. The facility would not open on the majority of Sundays or Mondays, or days when a metropolitan greyhound or harness racing meeting (except Friday night) is scheduled. Telephone betting access will be available on days when a metropolitan galloping meeting is in progress.

The South Australian Jockey Club has held discussions with all sections of the galloping industry and those associations have given their support for the auditorium type betting facility.

Both the Harness Racing and Bookmakers Licensing Boards support the establishment of a betting auditorium type facility. The TAB and Greyhound Racing Board, however, are opposed to the proposal, primarily on the basis of their belief that all off-course betting should be conducted by the TAB.

The SAJC is currently negotiating with the Greyhound Racing Board to reimburse them for relinquishing their Tuesday and Thursday afternoon non-TAB meetings.

Taxation on bookmakers turnover is proposed to remain at the current rate. Totalisator turnover generated at the betting auditorium type facility will be combined with that from on-course, where applicable, to give a total amount invested. The total totalisator turnover will then be taxed at current rates. This measure prevents totalisator turnover being divided, on certain

occasions, between the racecourse location and the auditorium facility, which would attract a lower tax liability.

It is proposed that the TAB Board comprise six members, three on the recommendation of the Minister and one from each controlling authority. This will achieve a better balance of interests represented on the Board. It is also proposed to enable the Minister to issue specific directions to the Board, to replace the current general powers of control and direction which are ambiguous and therefore open to legal interpretation and dispute. Any such direction given to the Board will be referred to in the TAB's Annual Report so as to enhance accountability to the Parliament and be a safeguard against inappropriate interference in the management of TAB.

In addition, it is proposed to update the reference to the Public Service Act in section 54 by substituting a reference to Part III of the Government Management and Employment Act. These proposed amendments emanate from the Government Management Board's investigation into TAB. All reference to live hare coursing has been deleted due to that type of activity being banned in 1985.

Telephone betting for bookmakers operating both on the racecourse and in an auditorium style betting facility is expected to generate additional turnover and reduce the incidence of SP betting.

The Bookmakers Licensing Board will issue permits for bookmakers to accept bets by telephone or facsimile transmission, whilst at the racecourse when a race meeting is in progress.

The Bookmakers Licensing Board will also have the power to issue permits, endorsed to accept telephone or facsimile bets, to an individual bookmaker or a group of licensed bookmakers to operate in an auditorium style betting facility. It is felt by issuing a permit to a group of licensed bookmakers, who have entered into an agreement approved by the Bookmakers Licensing Board to operate as one, that group, through their combined resources will be able to accept bigger bets than now is the case.

The operating parameters and guidelines will be established under the Bookmakers Licensing Board's Rules which are subject to Subordinate Legislation. These Rules will incorporate various control aspects which will address the technical requirements necessary to automatically record bets and ensure security for taxation purposes. In addition, the Rules will provide for a minimum bet level of \$250.00 or a minimum risk to the bookmaker of \$2 000 per bet.

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 41—Rules of Board

Strikes out a provision dealing with the National Coursing Association of South Australia Inc. Coursing was made illegal by the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985*. This Bill removes all references to coursing from the principal Act.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 44—Constitution of Board

Increases the number of members of the Totalisator Agency Board from five to six.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 47—Quorum, etc.

Makes a consequential amendment to the number of members required for a quorum of the TAB.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 52—Board subject to control and direction of Minister

Removes the work 'general' from the provision that gives the Minister control and direction of the TAB. The effect is that the Minister will be able to give the Board specific directions but new subsection (2) requires that the text of all directions by the Minister must be published in the Board's annual report.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 54—Terms and conditions of employment by the Board

Makes it clear that it is Part III of the *Government Management and Employment Act 1985* that does not apply to staff of the Board.

Clause 8: Substitution of ss. 63, 63a and 64

Replaces sections 63, 63a and 64 of the principal Act. The word 'auditorium' has been coined to refer to betting at a racecourse when a race meeting is not in progress. New section 64 provides for betting in these circumstances. Section 63, 63a and 64 have been rewritten as the best way of fitting in the new auditorium provision and in an attempt to simplify these provisions.

Clause 9: Repeal of s. 69a

Repeals section 69a which is redundant.

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 70—Application of percentage deductions

Requires the pooling of section 68 deductions where one of the racing clubs is conducting totalisator betting at an 'auditorium'. The amount remaining after paying the amount required under section 70 must be divided between the clubs involved so that a club that held a race meeting is not penalised by the fact of pooling.

Clause 11: Repeal of s. 81

Repeals section 81 of the principal Act. This section has been incorporated into new section 65 inserted by clause 8.

Clause 12: Amendment of s. 85—Interpretation

Makes amendments to the interpretation provision of Part IV. The term 'cash bet' is used in new section 115 inserted by clause 19. All the other amendments remove references to coursing.

Clause 13: Amendment of s. 100—Licences

Removes subsection (2) of section 100. This provision is contrary to section 117 of the Constitution. The new subsection inserted by this clause provides that a licence cannot be granted to a body corporate.

Clause 14: Amendment of s. 111—Permit required to accept bets

Makes an amendment that is consequential of section 112a (inserted by clause 16) which allows a permit to be granted to a group of bookmakers in certain circumstances.

Clause 15: Amendment of s. 112—Permits for licensed bookmakers to bet on racecourses

Amends section 112 of the principal Act. Paragraph (a) makes it clear that the only circumstances in which a permit can be granted to a group of bookmakers are those referred to in section 112a. Paragraphs (b) and (c) make amendments consequential on the fact that betting may be conducted at a racecourse when a race meeting is not in progress.

Paragraph (d) provides for the acceptance of bets by telephone or facsimile transmission.

Clause 16: Repeal of s. 112a and substitution of ss. 112a and 112b

Inserts new section 112a which provides for betting with bookmakers at an 'auditorium'.

Clause 17: Amendment of s. 113—Operation of bookmakers on racecourses

Makes consequential changes to section 113 of the principal Act.

Clause 18: Amendment of s. 114—Payment to Board of percentage of money bet with bookmakers

Amends section 114 of the principal Act. New subsection (4a) makes it clear that bets made with a group of bookmakers will be taxed under section 114 as though they had been made with a single bookmaker. Paragraph (b) is consequential.

Clause 19: Substitution of s. 115

Replaces section 115 of the principal Act.

Clause 20: Amendment of s. 116—Recovery of amounts payable by bookmakers

Makes a consequential change.

Clause 21: Amendment of s. 117—Unlawful bookmaking

Amends section 117 of the principal Act. New subsection (1a) makes it an offence to accept bets without holding a permit. This is a logical corollary of an offence against subsection (1) of acting as a bookmaker without being licensed. Paragraph (b) and (c) are consequential.

Clause 22: Amendment of s. 120—Board may give or authorise information as to betting

Amends section 120 of the principal Act to make it clear that a person who has an authority under section 120 is protected from prosecution for the offence against section 119.

Clause 23: Amendment of s. 124—Rules of Board

Increase the fine that can be imposed by rules made by the Board under section 124. A division 6 fine is \$4 000.

**Mr OSWALD** secured the adjournment of the debate.



**DOG CONTROL (DANGEROUS BREEDS)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

Returned from the Legislative Council with the following amendment:

Page 2, line 37 (clause 9)—Leave out 'on' and insert 'confined to'.

Consideration in Committee.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

**Mr OSWALD:** The Opposition intends to support this amendment. It is only a relatively minor amendment, but it can have some import to the owners of those restricted breeds. As I understand it, under the former wording of the Bill, if a prescribed breed were held on premises, a person would be responsible for the dog whilst it is on the premises and, under those circumstances, it did not need to have a muzzle. The fencing around the property in which the prescribed breed is being housed could be faulty, the paling could come loose, a gate could be pushed open, and the dog could get out; there is a responsibility on the owner of that dog to make sure that it does not get out.

I understand that in another place an amendment was passed to the effect that the owner should provide suitable fencing. I agree with the Government that it is not necessary to go quite to that stage. The form of words that the Government has chosen in effect puts the onus on the owner to confine the dog; in other words, if he can confine the dog to his premises, the dog can roam those premises without a muzzle. However, if there is any chance that the dog cannot be confined to those premises, the owner has an obligation to put a muzzle on the dog whilst it is on that private property. If that is the intention of the motion—namely, to ensure that dogs are confined to their owner's property so that those outside the property are safe from these prescribed breeds—I have no difficulty in supporting the amendment.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I thank the Opposition and the member for Morphett for their support. I agree; it is a sensible amendment. As the member for Morphett said, the indication from the other place was that some form of suitable fencing would be required, perhaps involving a definition under the fencing Act. This is a much more practical application and certainly achieves the required safety, which the community expects. I am pleased to be able to accept the amendment.

Motion carried.

**FIREARMS (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT  
BILL**

Returned from the Legislative Council with the following amendment:

Page 2, lines 5 to 6 (clause 3)—Leave out all words in these lines and insert the following:—'pistol' means a firearm the barrel of which is less than 400 millimetres in length and that is designed or adapted for aiming and firing from the hand and is reasonably capable of being carried concealed about the person:;'

Consideration in Committee.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

The amendment basically provides a definition of 'pistol'. Previously the Bill contained no specification in terms of length. It did not have a clear definition: it contained a definition involving one hand. This is a fairly sensible amendment. I have no problem in accepting this amendment, because those who are much more experienced than I in this area and with whom I have consulted have intimated that this will add more meaning to the legislation.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** Does this amendment mean that a cut down shotgun, .22 rifle or 303 falls within the definition of 'pistol'? We then depart from common usage in our understanding of the use of firearms. Whilst I do appreciate that an effort has been made to define 'pistol', I have some difficulty with the definition, and I would like the Minister to give an explanation.

**The Hon. M.K. MAYES:** There are classes under the Act which identify a rifle, a shotgun and a multi-fire weapon. For example, we have a class A licence, which includes air rifles, paint ball guns and also .22 rim-fire rifles. So, a class is designated; for example, a high-powered, rapid-fire gun would fall into a class E, which is another class again, and pistols fall into their own class under the legislation. So, it clearly defines what a pistol is, but this adds a further qualification to the definition of 'pistol' so there can be no confusion, particularly in the minds of the public, which is important. We must be as clear as possible about what this Parliament is determining in passing this Act, and also from the point of view of the application of the registrar, that is, the Commissioner of Police, in the administration of this Act.

I understand that this was unanimously agreed to as an amendment which further clarifies the interpretation of the Act. I find that quite acceptable, and from my discussions with my advisers I believe that it adds clarity, which perhaps we should have considered in this place initially. However, from earlier advice I believe that the Act makes clear the difference between a rifle, a shotgun, a pistol, an air rifle or, for example, a .22 rim fire.

**The Hon. E.C. EASTICK:** The Opposition has always adopted an attitude in relation to firearms legislation of responsible ownership and of a clear recognition that the public ought to be protected from the untoward use of firearms, whilst not denying any individual the right to use firearms. I do not believe that this measure in any way detracts from the ability of people to be responsible firearm owners if it brings about an element of clarity which was not there previously. It will obviously be much easier for interpretation purposes out in the field.

On that basis, I am pleased that the Government has accepted the recommendations from another place because it does lead to that clarity. The Minister would be aware that education of the public in so very many ways of the handling of guns will be an essential part, and this minor change will not derogate from that greater responsibility. I therefore support the amendment.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC FINANCE AND AUDIT  
(MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendments.

No. 1. Page 2, lines 33 and 34 (clause 5)—Leave out all words in these lines and insert the following:

5. Section 9 of the principal Act is amended by inserting after 'appropriated' in subsection 4 'or set aside'.

No. 2. Page 5 (clause 11)—after line 33 insert new paragraph as follows:

(c) by striking out subsection (5) and substituting the following subsection—

(5) This section—

(a) applies in addition to the provisions of any other Act relating to guarantees and indemnities for the benefit of a body corporate that is a semi-government authority;

(b) does not operate to exclude or diminish obligations of the Treasurer under any other Act or law.'

No. 3 Page 6, line 35 (clause 15)—After 'the Treasurer' insert 'or by resolution of either House of Parliament'.

No. 4 Page 7, lines 34 and 35 (clause 16)—Leave out 'the prescribed percentage' and insert '40 per cent'.

No. 5 Page 8, lines 4 and 5 (clause 16)—Leave out all words in these lines.

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

That the Legislative Council's amendments Nos 1 and 2 be agreed to; No. 3 be disagreed to; and Nos 4 and 5 be agreed to.

As to amendments Nos 1 and 2, our agreement to these amendments results from discussions that took place between myself and the Opposition spokesperson in this area, the Deputy Leader, through our intermediaries, and I think the results are satisfactory to all.

I cannot agree with amendment No. 3 and would urge the Committee to disagree with it also. The argument on this has been run before, but I will go through it again very briefly. The amendment proposed by the Upper House whereby the Auditor-General can be requested by the Treasurer or by a resolution of either House of Parliament, whilst at the same time not negating any of the amendments proposed by the Auditor-General, cannot be supported. If members could imagine the circumstances where either House of Parliament was debating whether the Auditor-General ought or ought not to investigate a particular body, that would take place in a blaze of publicity to say the least. The results of that publicity could clearly have the effect of causing credit facilities, for example, to be withdrawn by apprehensive lenders when the body that was under discussion in a House of Parliament could have been going about its business in a perfectly proper way.

Either House of Parliament, possibly even for political reasons, could be having a go at it in a very public and high profile way. It would be unfortunate if credit facilities were withdrawn in those circumstances, but that is a very real fear. Also, people who supply goods to such a body could get the impression that something was wrong with that body. I am not suggesting here that either House of Parliament would be particularly malicious, but even without their being malicious, the mere fact that they were debating whether the Auditor-General ought or ought not to investigate a particular body would, I am sure, make some suppliers of goods very nervous indeed.

Also, that organisation may have been going about its business in a perfectly proper way, but the staff of that organisation would be under some scrutiny and suspicion in a way that inevitably would occur if such a resolution was put to either House, and that would do nothing at all for staff morale. More importantly in the case of fraud, for example, rather than the Auditor-General quietly and quickly moving of his own volition or at the request of the Treasurer, the publicity arising out of a debate in either House of Parliament could see that fraud covered up or an attempt made to cover it up very swiftly, including the destruction of records or other evidence. I see no merit in this amendment that was carried in the other place.

The record of the Auditor-General is impeccable. Some discussions have been held with the Auditor-General's office, and it certainly does not support the amendment of the Legislative Council. The Auditor-General believes that the powers available for the Auditor-General to intervene at the request of the Treasurer or of his own volition are appropriate. I could not imagine any Treasurer refusing the Auditor-General's request, since the Auditor-General reports to Parliament. It is not as if he would keep it a secret; nor would he want to. The power and protection are there for the Auditor-General without going to this extreme, which could see in an inappropriate way—let us be honest—political intervention in the activities of bodies that receive public funds, with the inclusion of the Auditor-General's office in that political process. I would expect that that would happen very rarely, but the temptation would be there.

I do not believe that it is proper to entertain the idea of the Auditor-General's office being involved, or even the possibility of its being involved. For those reasons, I urge the Committee to disagree with that amendment. As to amendments Nos 4 and 5, I understand what the other place is about. It just seems to me that it is being over cautious, but nevertheless I am not prepared to argue the toss about it.

**Mr S.J. BAKER:** I will agree on this occasion with the Treasurer's argument, which is fairly constructive. As the Treasurer has mentioned, amendments Nos 1 and 2 coincide with matters that were debated, and the amendments resolve potential areas of difficulty. As to amendment No. 3, the Treasurer has outlined a very cogent case for allowing the Auditor-General, at his or her own discretion, to investigate whatever is required, and I do not want the Auditor-General hijacked by the Parliament, quite frankly. There is the capacity to do a great deal of harm, merely by the resolution of one House. There is no absolute majority in the other place, and it may befit Oppositions on occasions to cause chaos in the system by joining together if there is an Independent or some Democrats remaining in this place to cause a great deal of damage. That is not the wish of this Parliament.

I believe that over a long period the Auditor-General has discharged his duties (and it may be her duties in the future) with a great deal of vigour and discretion, and I do not believe that it should behove a House of Parliament, if it is being used for political purposes, to be able to cause the damage that I believe can be caused for the reasons that the Treasurer has outlined here. So, I

would urge upon the Upper House to reject the proposition.

Other means are available to the other place and to this Parliament to examine that. It has wide-ranging powers under the Committee system seriously to examine the performance of a wide range of entities through the Economic and Finance Committee, as everybody in this House would appreciate. There are mechanisms in place; we do not need to have the Auditor-General's time tied up with what in many cases could be some wild goose chases being pursued for political reasons. We do not need the Auditor-General's time tied up in areas that may or may not need attention, because I am sure that if there is a cogent case—if there is an imperative that the Auditor-General intervene and look at the books of an organisation, company or whatever—the Auditor-General would be remiss in his duties if he did not take up that challenge. However, if this amendment were carried, the Auditor-General would be forced to pursue that matter by the Parliament, and we do not necessarily wish that to happen. Other mechanisms are available.

When I look at these amendments sometimes I fail to understand how the tail keeps wagging the dog. I do note that we have some very funny legislation as a result of this intervention by the Democrats (I guess some people support them, although we should perhaps question some of the support that is given on certain occasions), but here again we have a compromise. I do not happen to like that compromise; I do not believe that 40 per cent is appropriate. I said in my contribution to the second reading debate and during the Committee stage that the point at which an Auditor-General can intervene in the affairs of the company should be prescribed in the legislation; it should not be left to regulation. For whatever reason, the Democrats said they would not allow our amendment to proceed unless they got their 40 per cent. So, rather than leaving the matter indeterminate and providing discretion for the Government of the day, we have ended up with a very strange amendment, providing this 40 per cent.

I express my dissatisfaction with two changes that were not implemented here. Basically, I do not believe that the surplus in special deposit accounts should be utilised by the Treasurer. I made that point in my contribution to the second reading debate, but my remarks were not heeded in another place. In addition, I do not believe we should be altering the overdraft limits with the Supply Bill. Having said that, I concur generally in the Treasurer's remarks.

Motion carried.

### SUPPLY BILL (No. 1)

Adjourned debate on the question:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of the Bill.

(Continued from 2 March. Page 2215).

**Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** In the 10 minutes allocated to me for the grievance on the Supply Bill I raise the question of accountability within the State Bank and specifically

relate it to the role of the senior management staff of the bank and the subsequent action taken by the State Bank to remove such officers from their positions. All members of this House would remember when Marcus Clark, the Managing Director of the State Bank, left in unusual circumstances, with a figure of \$960 000 being mentioned as the payout by the State Bank for relinquishing the services of Marcus Clark. I know the Opposition at the time reflected on the wisdom of paying a person who had caused so much damage to this State \$960 000 for the pleasure and privilege of his contribution to the \$3 150 million loss. I found it quite outrageous at the time that any person who had by his own hand caused such detriment to this State, to the State Bank, to the people who had businesses in this State and to the taxpayers of this State, should be rewarded for his efforts by such a payout. Obviously, that payout was made through the intervention or direction of the Government to get that person out of the limelight and hidden away so that he would not be around to face the music and reflect badly on the Government.

That was the start of a number of removals from the State Bank. We saw that Mr John Baker was reputed to have a payout of \$460 000. Again, Beneficial Finance was a major contributor to the losses of the State Bank, and I think that conservatively we could suggest that well over \$1 billion of the State Bank losses can be directly attributed to Beneficial Finance, although it is very difficult to have a proper accounting of where the major loss centres were. We know where they were, but we do not know the relative contributions of each of those loss centres. Mr Baker departed Beneficial Finance, again under a cloud, and was paid for the privilege of causing tremendous damage to this State.

We have seen a succession of senior executive members of the State Bank who have left the bank with very large payouts, and I would like to know exactly how much money is being paid out to these executives—people who participated in the debacle and the problems that were created as a result of their mismanagement. We have yet to see those individuals brought to account; we have certainly seen them rewarded. I have an opinion that if people do damage to somebody in the way that some of these individuals did damage to the State's reputation, to the State Bank—one of the great institutions of South Australia—to the taxpayers of South Australia and to the budget (and I have already addressed that earlier tonight), I believe that damage should be done in return and that the people responsible should be brought to account. There should be no payouts; there should be quite the opposite, in fact.

I believe that these people should be pursued for the damage they caused, but that has not happened. What we have seen is a progression of people who are in decision-making positions, who were major contributors to the problems that arose and who continued to hide the mistakes being made, who told lies at various stages of the bank's massive expansion, who misled the Parliament through the Premier on a number of occasions (although he was a willing partner to the whole demise) and who at some stage must be brought to account. It concerns me greatly. In fact, I am absolutely appalled that these people still escaped the judgment that I believe they

deserve. There was Mr Reichert, and again I do not know what the payout was for his contribution, but I can imagine it was a very large sum of money.

In more recent times, I know that three senior management members of the bank in the form of Mr Malouf, formerly of Beneficial Finance; Mr Paddison, who was 21C to Mr Marcus Clark; and Mr Des Hammond, who managed the New Zealand operations and who is now manager of the GAMD Bank, have all been put on voluntary separation packages. What really gets under my skin, and I hope it gets under the skin of every South Australian, is the fact that these people have contracts with the bank. Once those contracts end there is no further payment for their services, yet the bank has decided to pay these people out early before their contracts have expired.

The bank has now made up redundancy packages for these people because they have not fulfilled their contracts. It is totally and absolutely bizarre that the State Bank, with the massive losses that have been visited on the people of South Australia, should further use taxpayers' funds to pay out individuals who were in the bank at the time of the great disaster, who were major decision makers at the time of the great disaster and who contributed to the great disaster. In respect of the three people just mentioned, I would estimate that a minimum of \$1.5 million is being paid out for the early retirement of those individuals.

If we held a referendum tomorrow, I wonder how many people would support that proposition. How many people could sit idly by and allow them to be rewarded for their efforts? They are three executives at the end of a long line, and at least 20 or 30 individuals associated with the decision making of the bank and its subsidiaries have received similar payouts. They are not the only ones—they just happen to be the last of those executives who contributed to the damage caused by the State Bank disaster. More importantly, if this was private enterprise, those individuals would not receive a payout. In fact, they may have been charged for the privilege and had their superannuation payments suspended if they had broken the law and been the major contributor to the damage of a private sector organisation.

I believe that the Government has instructed the bank to get rid of the people who were at the forefront of the decision making process, who were part and parcel of the damage caused. I believe the Government sent instructions to the State Bank to get these people out of the way, saying, 'We do not want them around when the Auditor-General's Report is finally provided to the Parliament.' I believe that the Government is being totally dishonest and is again abusing taxpayers in the way that it has undertaken this exercise.

Everyone would know that at least one or two of those individuals will be up in lights when the Auditor-General reports to this Parliament. What we see now is a Government that will do anything whatsoever to try to set aside, cover up and somehow diffuse the damage done in order to walk away saying, 'We now have a clean bank.' The bank will never be clean, so long as we have a Government in this State that allows such disreputable practices to occur.

This bank will never be clean until those responsible have been named and pursued in the appropriate arenas

for the damage that they have caused. I am absolutely appalled that we have had this clean-out process. I am appalled at the way it has been managed and I am appalled at the rewards that have been provided to those people who are responsible at least in part for the massive damage done by the State Bank. The Government stands condemned, and there will be a further opportunity when the people who issued those instructions are also brought to account.

**Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park):** I welcome the opportunity to speak in this Supply grievance, because it is one of those debates where it is important for all members to avail themselves of the opportunity. I listened with a great deal of attention to what the Premier said yesterday about what a Coalition win in the Federal election would mean to South Australia and the impact it would have on this State. There is no doubt in my mind that the policies of the Coalition will impact severely upon South Australia, particularly in respect of employment. I am one of those people who read newspapers, and I read with a great deal of interest an article on page 15 of today's *Financial Review* about the Coalition's unemployment policy.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr HAMILTON:** Members opposite often quote from the *Financial Review*. Perhaps they are like Paddy's dog: they can dish it out but cannot cop it back. They will cop it whether they like it or not. Let me read from the article by Steve Burrell, who says:

No Party is innocent of gilding the employment lily. But the statement released last week by the shadow Treasurer, Peter Reith, on the employment benefits of Fightback boldly stretches credibility to where few have dared to go before.

There is no doubt that people are hurting, people who are unemployed. False promises have been made. It is indeed cruel to make false promises, and any Party that claims it will provide two million jobs by the year 2000 stretches the imagination of any person who has half a brain. We are looking at a position seven years down the track. The Coalition claims, 'We will create all these jobs.' I do not believe that. It is cloud cuckoo land stuff.

If the Coalition were prepared to say, 'We are going to do our best, and we will attempt to create employment at every opportunity for those people out in the community', people would accept that. Steve Burrell's article in the *Financial Review* states:

The statement repeats the original Fightback claim that a 'bare minimum' of two million new jobs will be created by the year 2000 by the Coalition's package. This is an increase of around 3 per cent a year for the next eight years, twice as fast as the average employment growth of 1.5 per cent a year over the last eight [years].

The statement provides no hard economic evidence to back up this claim. It conveniently glosses over the fact that some of the reforms and spending cuts on which the two million estimate is based are not in Fightback. And it ignores the reality that many of Fightback's necessary reforms to lift productivity mean slower employment growth or job losses in the short term.

But it is the forecasts for individual industries which most stretch credulity, particularly for the finance and tourism sectors which provide nearly half of the alleged two million job increase. These sectors enjoyed strong employment growth in the 1980s. But many of the special factors which sparked this

growth no longer exist. Indeed, some of the policy changes being proposed by the Coalition could hinder employment in those sectors. The Reith statement claims that 381 000 new jobs will be created in the financial, property and business services sector by [the year] 2000. This is a growth of over 43 per cent on average employment in 1991-92, or about 4.6 per cent a year for eight years.

That is the cruel part about it. We heard the Coalition Leader, Dr Hewson, saying that he will provide honesty to the community at large and that he will let the people know what the truth is. That is outrageous.

As I said yesterday, this is political lying. He is lying to the community. This sort of nonsense brings politicians into disrepute. John Laws confronted him on this issue in Sydney and nailed him to the cross. He also nailed him on the question of the GST benefits. He jumped all over the place trying to get away from John Laws' questions. It is very sad that this expectation is being built up in the community, be it a member of my family or anyone else who is looking for a job. This is the sort of garbage that brings members of Parliament into disrepute. I believe, as naive as I may be, that people do want the truth.

*The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:*

**Mr HAMILTON:** The Deputy Premier may well be right, and I may be naive in some areas, but I believe the community at large wants the truth. When people come into my office I have said, 'I would rather tell you the truth than have you walk out of my office angry as hell, having been told a lie, and you think you have got somewhere'. I do not operate that way and I think most of my colleagues are aware of that.

I could talk a great deal about the articles from the *Financial Review*, but I refer members to pages 4 and 15 of the *Financial Review*. Let us look at one of the most inane statements that we have heard from Dr Hewson in this campaign in relation to unemployment. This is the quotation of the year in relation to the GST:

You might find people shifting from wine to whisky. People who do not drink at all may take up drinking.

How stupid; what an idiot to talk about those sorts of issues. I believe it is very cruel indeed. One of the other issues which we have heard a lot about from members opposite is the petrol tax. Let us have a look at what the Liberals are not saying in relation to reduced petrol prices. The Liberal Opposition is not saying what will happen under a Coalition Government. Under a Coalition Government motor registration will increase dramatically. For example, the cost of registering a Ford Laser will rise from \$61 to \$158. If a person drives a Commodore or a Falcon they can expect to pay \$306, an increase of \$188.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr HAMILTON:** They do not like it. Paddy's dogs are rampant again. On top of this Dr Hewson will add his 15 per cent GST to the cost of car repairs, tyres and spare parts, car radios and tapes, drivers licences, insurance, RAA membership and a lot more. Dr Hewson's new tax on motorists and his 15 per cent GST on just about everything will wipe out those gains from his petrol prices. Nothing has been said by the Opposition in relation to car registration. Let Dr Hewson deny that his policies will not increase the registration

fees on cars. Our people have done the research to know that people out there in the community are going to get hit and hit hard.

I remind the House that the cost of registering a Ford Laser will increase from \$61 to \$158. Just think of the effect on working class people out there in the community. People with a Commodore can expect to pay \$306, an increase of \$188. The dishonesty! Where is this honesty that the Liberal Party brags and brays about to try to convince the working class of this country? I do not believe the Liberal Party will succeed—

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

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE (Coles):** I listened with considerable interest and amazement to the member for Albert Park attacking the Federal Leader of the Opposition on the GST. I did not detect at any stage in his speech, and I may not have been listening closely enough, any defence whatsoever of Mr Keating, the Prime Minister of Australia. I suspect that the member for Albert Park may have found it rather difficult to defend the indefensible. Mr Speaker, I want to use my

10 minutes for another purpose, but I will just say this: I have every confidence that the decision that Australians make on 13 March will be to elect John Hewson as Prime Minister and the Coalition as the Government. I cannot believe that a country as intelligent as this one can look at a Party that has brought it to its knees and say, 'Come back; we want more of the same'. I simply cannot believe it.

I want to address not Federal issues but the conduct of the State Government, particularly as its attitude has been demonstrated during Question Time yesterday and today. The two issues I want to address are ethical issues raised by the answers to questions given by both the Premier and the Minister of Environment and Land Management. I refer particularly to the personal explanation given by the Minister of Environment and Land Management this afternoon attempting to defend his actions in referring constituents and others to the General Manager of the TAB for employment.

It is very important that members distinguish between their roles as private members and the role of a Minister—the two are distinctly different. They have a constitutional difference and it is impossible to establish proper ethical standards for a Cabinet unless one understands the constitutional difference. In his personal explanation today, the Minister of Environment and Land Management said:

At no time did I request the General Manager of the TAB or any other staff member of the TAB that employment be given to any person.

He goes on:

...I did refer constituents or their family members to the TAB for consideration for casual positions.

He goes on:

Nor did I apply any pressure of any sort for the TAB to go beyond the normal procedures in relation to these referrals.

He adds that his records show that he personally referred 16 people to the TAB, three of whom received employment and three others may have—I do not know why the Minister was so vague—received casual employment. In other words, six out of 15 received or

probably received employment as a result of the Minister's representations.

He says he did not apply any pressure. One would have to be a public servant to understand fully the pressure that a reference by a Minister imposes upon a public servant making a decision about employment or any other matter. It is my opinion that a reference by a Minister, a personal reference for someone seeking employment within a department or authority administered by the Minister, represents pressure of a kind which it would be very difficult to resist if one were the employing authority.

I think members have to understand that it is one thing for a private member to give a personal reference to someone seeking employment in any area whatsoever, be it Government or outside Government; it is quite another for a Minister to give a reference to someone seeking employment in an organisation which is under his or her administration. I personally believe that it is inappropriate. The Minister could simply say to the person seeking a reference: 'This for me would represent a conflict of interest; I will refer you to a colleague'. One of the reasons we have a House of review, an Upper House, is so that its members can represent the whole State and can act on behalf of members in the lower House when matters such as this arise.

For the Minister of Environment and Land Management to confuse the issue by saying he is sure that all members regularly and quite properly provide referrals for constituents or others seeking employment is to ignore the principal issue—that the Minister has control of the TAB and that he used his position, whether it was as the member for Unley, as a private citizen or as Minister. It is impossible to distinguish between those three positions when one is a Minister, and that is why the position of Minister, which carries such authority, power and responsibility, has to be used with such extraordinary care in the exercise of that power and responsibility.

It is simply irrelevant to give the analogy, as the Minister did, of the member for Bragg making representations to him on behalf of someone. What kind of muddled moral thinking is that? The Minister apparently does not see the difference between his exercising his own power in advancement of his causes and receiving representations from some other person. That was serious enough, but what preceded it was even more serious, because it was the Premier embarking on what amounted to an apologia for patronage in his defence of the Minister. It was a long and rambling defence in answer to the question by the member for Light asking whether there were two standards, one for public servants who are governed by the Government Management and Employment Act and another for Ministers who are governed by the selfsame Act.

The Premier himself, who I would have thought had a very clear understanding of the difference between the role of a private member and the role of that same member acting as a Minister, said, 'What we have here is a member of Parliament who has acted as a local member.' He then went on to equate that situation with his former position of Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology when he had assisted companies based in his

electorate to advise them about funds that were available from the Government.

The two situations are entirely different. It was the function of the Minister and of that department to advise everyone in the State, irrespective of the electorate in which they were located, of the sources of help that might be available from the Government. I see no conflict of interest there whatsoever, whether an industry is located in Salisbury, in the electorate of the then Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, or in any other place. It was not a personal preference: it was a Minister acting on behalf of anyone in the State.

The fact that the Premier cannot see the difference casts considerable doubt in my mind about the ethical standards of this Government. Further doubt was cast yesterday when the Premier defended his appointment of the Hon. Chris Burford, who has just established a national consultancy on Government and investor relations to offer specialist advice on politics, economics, industrial relations and related issues. Mr Burford, has been appointed to the Economic Development Board.

**Mr Atkinson:** An excellent choice.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** It may be an excellent choice in terms of Mr Hurford's personal capacities, but anyone who reads that Act and looks at the role of Mr Hurford's consultancy has to understand that the conflict of interest is pervasive, that it runs solidly through every responsibility and function that he has as a member of the board, and that it conflicts or coincides at virtually every point with the consultancy that he has established. Let us look at section 16 of that Act, which requires the board to negotiate for the expansion of industries in this State or the establishment of new industries, and to encourage and oversee economic planning and development in sectors of the State's economy. Let us look at the objects of the Act—to encourage and facilitate investment and industrial and commercial development.

Of course Mr Hurford will gain insider knowledge. Talk about insider trading! He will have it every time he goes to a meeting. The fault is with the Premier for even considering that such an appointment was appropriate and for failing to see that there is a perpetual opportunity for conflict of interest.

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

**Mr INGERSON (Bragg):** About four or five weeks ago, Barry Smith, a constituent of mine, came to see me about a matter of natural justice as an Australian citizen. He told me that he had been persecuted by the former Minister of Recreation and Sport and the Government over the past 12 months, that the investigations that were set up by the former Minister as a result of the Estimates Committee of September 1993 was abhorrent, and that his side of the story needed to be made public.

There has been a long running problem regarding the personal relationships of Mr Barry Smith, the General Manager of TAB, and the former Minister previously and publicly. That has been very unfortunate. The Minister, privately and publicly, as anybody in the racing industry will know, has been critical of the role that the General Manager has played, yet has done absolutely nothing about fixing the problem.

I have for a long time believed that the former Minister of Recreation and Sport was incompetent, but it was not until I read these documents that I believed he was prepared to persecute an individual without fair and natural justice. When we look at the documentation of the investigation into the role of the General Manager of the TAB, we can come to no other conclusion than that the former Minister of Recreation and Sport, the Hon. Kym Mayes, set out with one thing in mind—and that was to deliberately and personally denigrate the role of Barry Smith as General Manager of the TAB.

If we go back to the Estimates Committee of September, we find that a report had been given to the former Minister by the Chairman of the TAB some few hours prior to that Estimates Committee. That report was the result of two policemen from the Anti-Corruption Branch investigating the claims of impropriety against Mr Smith as General Manager. The first point in relation to natural justice comes from a solicitor's letter that was sent to Mr Schilling, on Mr Smith's behalf. I quote:

It is most disappointing to note that notwithstanding this agreement the Crown Solicitor's report was in the hands of the Chairman of the TAB on Monday 21 September 1992, two days prior to receipt by the Government investigations officer of the amended and signed transcript.

Here we have a position where the Minister had placed before him a document that had not been checked by the person whom it was about. That is the first point in relation to natural justice. It goes on:

It is further noted with regret that a 'file note' signed by TAB employees O'Connell and Glennon, which was referred to in...the transcript of the interview with Mr Smith and which the Government investigations officer agreed to show to us has at the direction of the Crown Solicitor not been made available to us.

So we had the Minister standing up in this House denigrating the role of the General Manager of the TAB but the General Manager had not had the opportunity to correct and send back that transcript to the two investigating officers. The Minister stood in this House and made statements, particularly in relation to outstanding accounts, which later, on inquiry, were found not to be substantiated. The Minister stood up in this House and made statements about the General Manager who had not been given the right to reply.

I think most of us here believe that anybody, whether or not they have been accused of any wrongdoing, ought to get a fair go. We also need to look at a letter, again written to Mr Schilling, on behalf of Mr Smith by his solicitors, in which this statement was made:

I was amazed to receive your phone call on 3 December asking when my final submission would be received. We note that the record of conversation was received at this office on 2 December 1992 some 22 days after the interview took place.

The second interview transcript was received 28 days after the interview. Neither of those interviews were tape recorded, yet the third and final one, for some mysterious reason, was suddenly tape recorded. The whole question of natural justice needs to be looked at in this case, because this man was required by Mr Schilling to have the final report ready within three days after he had received that final interview. There was a 28 day

delay in getting the first transcript and 22 days in getting the second.

The other point I would like to make in relation to natural justice is that Mr Smith, through his solicitors, answered every single question asked of him by the management board, yet none of those answers was recognised in the final report. It is interesting to note that, in fact, the Government was quite prepared to table the report put out by Mr Schilling from the Government Management Board, and for the last two days the Minister of Recreation and Sport (Hon. G. Crafter) and the Premier have, in Question Time, stood in this House and said, 'Forget about that report; this is really what happened'. What I believe really happened is that the Crown Solicitor stepped in and said, 'If you continue to pursue this action, you will be up for big money in terms of liability in relation to this matter.'

What has happened here is that a gentleman who has been accused, and not proven guilty by any of the investigations, has been denied natural justice. He has had six interviews over the one issue that was investigated by the TAB Board back in January 1992. What has the Anti-Corruption Branch said—not guilty on any of those issues; not substantiated. It took six months to carry out this inquiry in which less than \$2 000 of work was carried out by the General Manager on his home, and every cent of that \$2 000 was recovered from him through accounts rendered by the TAB. Every single cent of it.

There were four inquiries. The inquiry by Mr Schilling of the Government Management Board was an absolute set-up. The Minister and the Government—everybody—have come together to put this report before Parliament, and in the past two days in answering questions the Minister and the Premier have said, 'Really, Mr Smith was not guilty of nepotism and patronage, because the Crown Solicitor has said that.' Why did they not say that right from the start? Why did that report not say that the previous Minister (Mr Mayes) was involved in nepotism and patronage? The current Minister (Crafter) knew that, because a letter was written to him by the solicitors informing him. Why was that not in the report of Schilling? Why did we have to question the Minister of Recreation and Sport (Crafter) in this House to find that out when the previous Minister (Mayes) knew?

The Minister (Crafter) also knew that board members were involved. Why was that not in the report? It was funny that Mr Schilling also knew of the previous Minister's involvement, because when he was asked by Mr Smith and his solicitors, he was told, 'The letters were written on behalf of the member for Unley.' The Minister was in charge of the TAB; it was his responsibility to look after the TAB; it seems to me the Government says it was all right for him as the member for Unley to write it. I cannot do it, but it is okay for the Minister and it was not okay for the General Manager. There are two sets of standards and that, I think, is disgraceful.

What concerns me is that I saw Barry Smith some six to eight months ago and he was a reasonably healthy man. In the past six months he has become a broken-down man, and this Government is responsible for the bad health of that man. Fortunately, I believe he

will recover and he will go on to be able to show clearly that all this nonsense has come up because of the personal denigration of Mr Smith and the personal involvement of the former Minister of Recreation and Sport (Mayes).

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

**Mr MATTHEW (Bright):** During the debate this evening and over the past couple of weeks we have heard much from Government members about performance and policies. It is appropriate tonight to reflect on some of the statements made by Government members after the last decade, and I start with the ALP's 1982 election slogan, one which I am sure members opposite will remember well and which was, 'We want South Australia to win.' Then we go to an interesting extract from the 1985 ALP policy speech: 'South Australia is up and running. With the people behind us, our recovery is a reality. It is all coming together.' Then we go to the 1989 election policy speech: 'Now is the time to move forward. We have the experience, the conviction and we have the opportunity to make South Australia the most exciting State in our nation in the 1990s.'

How different things are in 1993. How many ALP members stand up in this Parliament and try to tell us that this State is moving forward, for indeed what we have seen in the past 10 years under this Labor Government is a decade of disgraceful disasters. During those 10 years we have seen record State debt and Government liabilities build to the extent that State debt has exploded out to \$14 billion, and that equates to just over \$9 700 for every man, woman and child in South Australia.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr MATTHEW:** I look forward to the honourable member who interjects explaining that to her constituents. I look forward to hearing the Minister explain that debt, that liability, to the electors of Reynell. I assure the House that they will be reminded that it is \$9 700 for every man, woman and child in South Australia.

Aside from that, while the rise has been occurring, we have seen record rises in State taxes and charges; we have seen increases in the cost of petrol, electricity, water plus train and tram fares and other essentials; and we have also seen record unemployment, which rose to a level of more than 10 per cent in July 1991 and has consistently risen. We have seen a monthly average of more than 60 000 out of work in this State for the 10 Labor years. That is a disgraceful indictment on this Government, a disgraceful track record, and one which I do not think any Labor member would be able to stand and defend in this House.

The jobs argument is an interesting one. I go again back to the 1982 ALP election policy speech: 'Our major goal will be to get South Australians back to work in a productive way.' The performance certainly has not reflected that promise over the past 10 years. We have also seen other interesting promises such as the 1982 election promise, as follows: 'We need a Government willing to work directly with the private sector, to take the lead to unlock investment funds and to recreate real jobs.' We certainly have not seen that occur. I refer by

way of evidence to the 1992 Arthur D. Little report which states, in part: 'The policy of the Government has been one of shooting any bird that flies past rather than planning for the future economic wellbeing of the State.'

We can go into education and look to the 1985 ALP election policy speech and the following promise: 'Teacher numbers will be maintained.' Since 1985 the number of teachers in Government schools in this State has not been maintained but has been reduced by 1 200 teachers, and we have also seen more than 50 schools close during that period. That is far from a situation of honouring that promise and maintaining teacher numbers. We can turn to the area of health and I refer to the—

*The Hon. S.M. Lenehan interjecting:*

**Mr MATTHEW:** It is interesting that the Minister of Education is here in this House and takes exception to these facts. The Minister has a challenging job ahead in trying to turn around the mess that we have in education in this State, and that is a mess that has been followed by a myriad of untruths in this Parliament.

*The Hon. S.M. Lenehan interjecting:*

**Mr MATTHEW:** The same Minister who interjects has tried to tell this Parliament that a Liberal Government would slash education spending by 25 per cent. That is totally untrue, as untrue and as wrong as the 1985 ALP election policy speech. For we have been quite categorical in stating in this House individually and through Liberal Leader Dean Brown that these claims are untrue. What is the truth is the fact that this Government, since 1985, contrary to its election policy speech, has slashed teacher numbers by 1 200, and what hypocrisy it is to suggest that a Liberal Government would do something of that nature. It does not end there. With regard to the health sector, in the 1982 election policy speech we heard:

We will halt funding cuts to our public hospitals.

As my colleague the member for Adelaide has continually pointed out in this Parliament, far from that promise being honoured we now have record waiting lists—more than 9 000 people—on the waiting list in this State for surgery; in fact, more than 9 400 people, and that list continues to grow in number.

I turn now to the area of public safety, and the promise in the 1989 ALP policy speech is indeed an interesting one. It stated in part:

South Australia is widely regarded as a safe place in which to live and work. Our new crime policies reflect community concern about violence, drug trafficking, organised crime, house breaking and vandalism.

But when we look at what actually has occurred we find that it is in conflict again with that speech. Since 1982, we have seen violent crime in South Australia increase by 207 per cent, property crime by 44 per cent, serious assaults by 147 per cent, rapes by 293 per cent, drug offences by 106 per cent and motor vehicle theft by 128 per cent. That is a sad reflection of 10 years of Labor. But it does not end there; I can turn to another essential area in transport. The 1982 election policy speech stated, in part:

Our priority will be to keep fares down to attract and retain passengers.

That promise has well and truly failed because since 1982 the Labor Government has increased transport fares by nearly three times the rate of inflation, patronage is



down to its lowest level for 60 years and the Government subsidy to cover STA losses has gone from \$55.3 million in 1982 to a massive \$136 million in 1992. Only today in this Parliament the Leader of the Opposition revealed yet another public transport sham with a press release that was to be issued by the Minister of Transport Development but pulled at the last minute. It was to announce increased public transport for the south but that, too, has gone down the drain with the ALP's election promises. This breaking of promises goes right across our State because, as my colleagues from the rural areas are well aware, the policies with respect to rural areas are meeting with the same fate. The 1982 election speech, in part, stated:

We will work with our farmers to reduce costs and expand markets.

The reality is that the value of rural production in South Australia has decreased in real terms by 35 per cent since 1982, and there are now 977 fewer farmers in our State since 1987 when comparable statistics were first accumulated, and we have also seen farming income in real terms decrease by \$924 million since 1980-81. In this Parliament the rural sector is well and truly represented by both the Liberal and National Parties, and the sad fact is that the Labor Party has neither the contact with the rural area nor the understanding of the overall ramifications. The figures I have released here today are a terrible indictment of 10 years of Labor, and the Minister of Education, Employment and Training can continue to interject, but it will not change the fact that this Government has failed.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN (Minister of Education, Employment and Training):** I move:

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

Motion carried.

**Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide):** On Saturday morning, when I woke up, I thought—

*Members interjecting:*

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Not at all; I was bright and bouncy, and I went into the kitchen to have my fruit, muesli and yoghurt; in fact, it was fruit of the forest yoghurt, which I find particularly interesting. Even more enjoyable than my healthy breakfast was the *Advertiser*. As we all know, the *Advertiser* is our sole newspaper, other than the *Australian*. I saw on the front page of the *Advertiser* something which gladdened my heart. I will not take the cheap political trick and look at the box which says, 'Labor to lose five key SA seats in poll'; I will not look at that at all. The one I will look at and the story which I wish to tell the House that gladdened my heart was the story about what the goods and services tax package actually means to an average Australian family. This average Australian family, to clarify, was asked for by the paper of the Labor Party, not a Liberal Party plant, not members of the Liberal Party, absolutely no. The *Advertiser* states:

In the interests of fairness we, the *Advertiser*, asked the Labor Party to nominate the family.

So, there we go—a Labor nominated family to say how dastardly the goods and services tax will be. And low and behold, would you not predict that the Labor Party

nominated a family with a lot of the shibboleths that were supposedly going to be upheld inherent in their lifestyle. For instance, they have children who need medical care, and I will deal with medical care later. They have an income of modest proportions, because the father is a student doing a BA in labour studies, and his income comes from Austudy and family payments. So, there are lots of things that would have made this a typical Australian family, and I can just imagine the boffins in the Labor Party thinking to themselves, 'Whacko! We can't wait to see what's going to be in the paper on Saturday morning.' Well, what was in the paper? What happened was that the income and expenditure details of this family, nominated by the Labor Party, were analysed by an independent Adelaide tax consultant—not the Liberal Party; the Liberal Party had nothing to do with it.

*Mr Holloway interjecting:*

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Ah! Now the member for Mitchell interjects. Presumably he indicates that the independent tax consultant, Mr Michael Fox, from the Adelaide firm Hall Chadwick, is biased. I will be very pleased to send that copy of *Hansard* to Mr Fox who will be most irate, because he is a totally independent tax consultant. However, the totally independent tax consultant analysed these figures, and he took what he loosely called the worst case scenario. By that, he specifically excluded a whole lot of predicted flow-ons, such as possible savings from removing sales tax, removing petrol excise—and this is a family that drives to work and takes their children to scouts, ballet and footy (and as parents of children, we would know that we spend three quarters of our life in the car being a taxi service). They use a lot of petrol—or in their case diesel.

The independent tax consultant did not take into account savings from sales tax, petrol excise and payroll tax. We all know what effect the removal of payroll tax will have in South Australia. It is a pity the Premier does not agree with us. Anyway, those savings were not passed on. Let us see what happened to this, I repeat, Labor nominated family. This family owns a four-door diesel Gemini sedan, which Mrs Williams drives to work. Their daughter, Bonnie, aged six years, has a cystic hygroma and visits one of the denizens of evil, according to the Labor Party: she visits a specialist, a craniofacial expert.

Can you not just see the joy in the Labor Party? Here we have someone who sees a specialist once a month. This will be fantastic tomorrow morning! Not only that, but her brother Ben sees a speech pathologist. Whacko! Think of the health costs. This will be sensational. But unfortunately, no.

Independent tax consultant Mr Michael Fox then analysed their total outgoings. I repeat: he gave a worst case scenario to exclude some of the Liberal Party's predicted flow-on savings. So what happened? The total income of the Williams family in fact rose under the goods and services tax from \$678.10 a week to \$735.91. That is a rise of approximate \$60. There is a 100 per cent increase in family allowance for those under \$30 000 a year, and a 6 per cent increase in other allowance areas. Mrs Williams, who is a 27-year old checkout operator, will have an increase in her salary by 5.3 per cent as well.

There is a change in the tax threshold under the Fightback Fairness and Jobs policy. Then what happens? Remember that this is a Labor nominated family—it has nothing to do with the Liberal Party; the ALP people out at Trades Hall found this family who would say how dastardly the goods and services tax is. These people visit the doctor often and drive a car a lot. These people will make the case that the goods and services tax will destroy Australia. But far from it, because what happens? After you look at the package for this average Australian family, the Williams' weekly surplus went up from \$3.70 to \$28.25. It goes up, Mr Deputy Speaker, by about \$25 per week.

All I can say, as did the Director of the State Liberal Party (Mr Nick Minchin), and I quote from that article:

Fightback has been deliberately designed to help lower incomes and therefore it is in the personal interest of families to support this.

Here we have the living proof, because the Labor Party blundered, and it is blundering with its ill-founded attempts to try to point out the failings of the goods and services tax. It had its chance but it fluffed it. It had its chance independently to show South Australia how ghastly the goods and services tax would be, but what happened? This family would be \$25 a week better off.

I put it to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that this Labor Party-selected family must have been a great embarrassment to the Labor Party, and I would suggest that the people in Trades Hall did not enjoy their breakfast on Saturday morning as much as I did because we in the Liberal Party, on this side of the Parliament, know that if you take the goods and services tax Fightback II package and look at everything, people will benefit.

*Members interjecting:*

**Dr ARMITAGE:** The Minister says what about something or other? The facts are—

*Mr Hamilton interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Dr ARMITAGE:** The member for Albert Park prattles on. I would have thought that the member for Albert Park would have been proselytising the goods and services tax around his electorate, because families of the type of people he represents are \$28 a week better off under the Coalition.

The ALP made a mess of it. Not only has it made a mess of this opportunity to show how dreadful it would be, by selecting a family that in fact proves that the goods and services tax is excellent, what it has done here is just what it has done to South Australia in the past 10 years. It has missed opportunity after opportunity. When the State organisation of the Labor Party gets this so wrong, is it any wonder that the State is in its present condition?

**Mr GUNN (Eyre):** I am pleased to participate in this Supply Bill debate. The first matter I want to raise is in relation to the drastic downturn in the income which the grain industry in this State received due to the unseasonable weather experienced by the farming community over the recent harvest. One of the things which has been clearly highlighted as a result of the massive downgrading in the quality of grain delivered to the bulk handling system in South Australia is the great

benefits which have accrued to the grain industry through the continuation of a system of orderly marketing or primary produce, and that is the Australian Wheat Board, being the sole exporter of wheat from this country.

I put it to this House and to anyone else who wants to listen that, if we did not have the Australian Wheat Board, the wheatgrowers of this State would have been at the mercy of the international grain traders, people who would turn their mothers out into the street, because these people have a reputation of devious dealings in my judgment. They would have bankrupted most of the wheatgrowers in South Australia because they would have given them a mere pittance for that crop. Therefore, I put on the public record that I believe the ability of the grain industry to be able to sell its grain to the wheat board has been one of the things that has helped keep many farmers on their properties, not only this year but ever since it was instituted in 1948.

I would issue a warning to this House that those people who talk about deregulating, doing away with and downgrading the Australian Wheat Board ought to think again because it would not only be unwise and most foolish in my view, but it would certainly not be in the interests of the people of this country as a whole. If there has ever been a period when the benefits of the wheat board have been clearly shown, it has been in the last harvest. I would hate to think what would have happened to all that rain-damaged wheat if we did not have the Australian Wheat Board. I believe that most of it would have been rotting on farms because it would not have been worth it to the farmers putting their headers into the paddock. It is a matter that members of this House should not forget.

I sincerely hope that, no matter who is the Minister of Agriculture or Minister of Primary Industries in this State in the future, they never succumb to those people who put forward the illogical suggestions that we should deregulate, downgrade or get rid of the Australian Wheat Board, because it has been one of the success stories in this country. May I say a similar thing in relation to our grain handling authority which has been in a position to store, handle and separate the grain.

The next matter I want to raise, and I will follow on briefly from what the member for Adelaide had to say, is in respect of the Federal Liberal Party's policies. As members of Parliament we are told that politicians should be more honest. They should come clean with the community. We want honest Governments. We want to know where they stand. For the first time in the history of this country, the Federal Liberal Opposition has clearly and precisely told the people of Australia what policies it intends to put into effect after the next election. It has produced the most detailed policy documents that have ever been produced, yet it has received nothing but criticism from ill-informed minorities egged on by political activists and fellow travellers in the Labor Party, and spokesmen who are on the gravy train and will benefit from having a Government with the Father Christmas mentality that believes you can continue to give away what you do not have.

Let us not have any more of these crocodile tears that have emanated from members of the Opposition; let us

have some honesty because, whether or not one agrees with the GST, no-one can say that the Opposition has not been full, frank and honest with the electors of this country. I am prepared to say that it is unlikely ever again that any political Party will go to such effort and in such detail to produce policy documents that have been so explicit as the Fightback program. One could expect so-called political journalists and commentators to welcome the honesty and forthrightness in which that policy was put to the people.

*The Hon. S.M. Lenehan interjecting:*

**Mr GUNN:** I do not know; the Minister appears to be sitting on a prickle or something. The Minister has been most agitated when members on this side have been speaking tonight.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr GUNN:** I thought she was getting herself geared up for what will happen on Saturday week, because in my time in politics (and I have been around for a day or two) I have taken an interest in a lot of Federal elections, and I have never seen as much material put to the people, not just at election time but 15 months beforehand. People have had every opportunity and I have every confidence that commonsense will prevail and that they will elect a Coalition Government on 13 March. I look forward to the second time in my voting career of being able to vote for a Federal candidate who will win, because I have every confidence that Mr Wakelin will be the next member for Grey.

The next matter I want to refer to is the ongoing saga of school buses in my electorate. Today I received a copy of a letter from Hallett Primary School, which is currently in my district but which will be represented by Mr Rob Kerin, who will be the member for Frome after the next election. The letter states:

We would like to bring to your attention a matter that gravely concerns the Hallett Primary School and school council. We have been told, by a letter dated 15 February 1993 (our first and only notification), that our bus service will be withdrawn in six weeks' time at the end of term 1 ... By the end of term 3...there will be nine children travelling on the school bus. In 1994 projections indicate that this number will increase in excess of the recommended quota.

The letter continues:

For the last 15 years we have been serviced by an Education Department school bus. During this time we have altered the route to best cater for the educational needs of children in our scattered community. Consequently the community and its students have become reliant on this essential service. Over the years school enrolments have fluctuated in relation to community numbers as would be expected in a rural community. Presently we are in the process of increasing numbers which will continue over the coming years.

The Education Department has a focus on social justice. We feel that the removal of the bus would be a major social injustice inflicted on already isolated struggling rural families, with serious educational implications. Due to the short time line imposed on us, we feel that the only way to truly resolve this situation would be for a delegation of councillors... to meet with you urgently.

That was addressed to the Minister, and all members of the school council have signed it. I sincerely hope that some action can be taken to remedy the situation. I understand that there are ongoing reviews of all the

school bus routes in South Australia, and in my time as a member of Parliament I have found that if we want to stir up communities we interfere with school buses. I suppose it is like shifting a bus stop in a city electorate; it has the potential to upset more people quicker than anything else I know. Those we think we will help end up falling out with those who have been their friends for years and it becomes a difficult situation, but I do urge the Minister to review this matter.

I have another matter in another part of my electorate that I will be raising with the Minister in a private capacity, but I do share the concerns of the Hallett school council and I sincerely hope that its difficulties can be overcome as soon as possible, because I believe that the time factors are quite unreasonable and unfair and that the people should have been given far greater notice, rather than what appears to be a relatively curt note.

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

**Mr BRINDAL (Hayward):** Before commencing my contribution to the debate, I would like to sincerely commend the member for Eyre and the member for Adelaide on their contributions. I listened with interest to the member for Adelaide in my room, and to the member for Eyre both in my room and down here, and I think that their contributions are particularly pertinent and contain a lot of wisdom in the light of the forthcoming election. I would like to stress briefly what I consider to be the main point of the member for Adelaide's speech, namely, that a family which was chosen by the Labor Party and which supposedly would be better off was independently assessed to be better off under the proposals of the Coalition. The member for Eyre said that perhaps this may well prove to be the last outbreak of honesty to be seen in Australian politics. Sometimes there are things (and I would have thought that the member for Albert Park would concur in this) that are more important than me or him; there are things that are more important than Labor or Liberal, and for some of us those things may be the future of this country and the right direction to go.

As much as I will acknowledge that members on the other side of the House have a real commitment to what they believe in, I cannot criticise them; neither do I criticise any member on this side of the House for pursuing a policy in which they believe the best future direction of this country lies. That is what politics is about; it is what democracy is about, and long may it be so. However, there are signs in this election that really worry me, and the member for Eyre touched on them. It is of great concern to me that an Opposition can go to the time and effort to which this Opposition has gone to mount a series of policies. If the Prime Minister got one thing right, it is that it does represent a fundamental and radical change in Australian society. He is right on that, but we know that, if that fundamental and radical change in Australian society is to the betterment of Australian society, what is wrong with it? The point is that fundamental and radical change is wrong only if it is a bad change; if it is a good change it is to be applauded.

It is fundamental and radical, but it is extraordinary that we should be faced in this country not with a

measure of the Government's performance but with a referendum on the Opposition's policies. What sort of Government believes it has a right to continue governing this country because it can somehow say that the Opposition's policies are not any good? It has completely mucked up this economy for 10 years, and its only claim to staying there is to say, 'Look, do not elect that other mob; they might get it more wrong than we did.' With a million or more unemployed in this country, how much more wrong can it get? What worries me is that, if the scare and fear mongers—the liars—in the political campaign get their way, it could well be the last time any Party has the courage to go to the people with any vision or any commitment. We will get the very thing the members on the Government benches accuse the Premier of Victoria of doing: we will get people saying nothing before the election for fear of being criticised, and bringing out all their policies afterwards. If that is the sort of Australia—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr BRINDAL:** —that Mr Keating wants, if that is the sort of Australia the Government opposite wants, I want none of it. I would rather an Australia where both Parties were honest and stood up to espouse legitimate policies than a situation that we see today, where the teachers union in particular is waging a scurrilous and absolutely unprincipled campaign against the Coalition which has very little to do with the provision of education in this State.

The Minister sitting opposite is responsible for education in this State—squarely and rightly responsible. It is her budget and her responsibility. The Institute of Teachers is scaring every teacher in this State on the grounds that somehow Dr Hewson will dismiss them from office, when the only power to dismiss a teacher under the Education Act lies with the Minister at the table. How is he going to come in? I have not seen anyone pull the Minister's strings, let alone Dr Hewson, and I defy him, elected or not, Prime Minister or not, to come in here and tell the Minister what she is going to do. Sometimes the Minister does not even listen to you, Mr Speaker, in your directions, so how is she going to listen to Dr Hewson?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is a point of order. The honourable member will resume his seat.

**The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Hayward is reflecting on my behaviour in this Chamber. I suggest that it is totally inappropriate that he do that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has found the comment offensive and I ask the member for Hayward to withdraw.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Of course, Sir, if my reference to the Minister's strength of character offends her, I withdraw. The point is this: what the Institute of Teachers is on about quite rightly is that it fears that a Coalition, which believes in freedom of association, might not allow it to garnish union dues from its members' pay packets. I believe that in Victoria it lost 80 per cent of its membership overnight. If that is the problem, let the institute go to its members and say, 'What we are on about is the retention of our own power and privileged

position, which we have enjoyed with this Government for the past decade.' That is a legitimate thing to be aggrieved about, but let the institute go to the people it represents and say, 'What we are on about is retaining our power, authority and our huge membership so that we can put thousands and thousands of dollars into political campaigns.'

Let it not come out and say, 'Dr Hewson is going to get rid of all the teachers and is going to do this and that.' Let it not send brochures to every elector in the district of Adelaide and in several other marginal electorates without even saying that the brochures are from the institute. The brochures were carefully authorised by the General Secretary, giving the institute's address, but they did not bother to say where they were from.

Let the institute run a legitimate and honest campaign, and it might be a pleasant change. If teachers in South Australia suffer any diminution of the respect they once enjoyed, perhaps the reason is the type of leadership that is currently coming from the institute. I probably shock the member for Albert Park by saying that I was a proud member of that institute all my teaching career, and I would never have been otherwise. But I have not been proud of the leadership of that institute in the past decade or so.

It is an insult to the teaching profession that it has been hijacked to a little clique of power hungry, self-seeking, self-serving and greedy people, and the sooner that the teachers in South Australia wake up and get rid of the sorts of people they have got leading them, not for the good of the profession but for their own good, the better off South Australia will be. They are not the only people guilty in this election. We witnessed Mitsubishi making all sorts of threats and statements. When it comes down to the wire, what was Mitsubishi trying to achieve? It was Mitsubishi trying to manipulate the situation for the best it could get.

One can hardly blame Mitsubishi, but one wonders whether the maximum profit for Mitsubishi is of benefit to Australians or of benefit to the parent company. That organisation is quite right to do that, but I note that the attempt at manipulation on both sides—and it did not exactly help Mr Keating when he came—was to no benefit but for the company concerned. As an Australian, I for one am more interested in the good of this country than the manipulation of the voters for reasons of profit to a multinational corporation. I sincerely hope that the Coalition wins—not for Party political reasons but for the good of this country.

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen):** I want to raise a number of issues in the few moments that I have available tonight. I briefly referred to the first matter in a contribution that I made to this House last evening. I want to refer to correspondence that I have received from a family at Port Germein who have written to me with a general concern for the welfare of children and, because of particular concerns that they have and matters that have been brought to their attention, they have found it necessary to make representation to me on this matter.

It goes back to September of last year, when the person who has contacted me notified the police that he and his wife had witnessed what they believed to be the ill treatment of a child of about four years of age.

The office of the Department for Family and Community Services at Port Pirie was notified of this concern, but the problem at that time was that a considerable amount of time passed without any contact from the department and, being unsure what the procedure was in such a case, these people wrote to the department at Port Pirie on 17 November 1992 to ascertain what action had been taken. The department in turn contacted the writer on 16 December asking for details of the child and family—16 December, when contact was first made back in September. So three months had passed after the incident had occurred before the matter was actually taken up by the department. Since that time the writer has heard absolutely nothing.

The obvious concern of the writer with this rather belated interest or inaction was forwarded to the Minister of Health, Family and Community Services on 16 December in the hope that the system based on that experience could be updated to ensure that similar incidents received the department's attention as a matter of urgency.

The writer is most upset that the department chose to ignore their complaint, for the reason that they believe the child would have needed special consideration in regard to the complaint that had been made. As a result of the letter that was written to the Minister, a response was received on 15 February and the writer has contacted me again. The reply is most unsatisfactory, to put it mildly. The Minister has answered four particular points. First, the Minister has indicated that he has taken up the matter with the Department for Family and Community Services and has been advised that attempts were made to contact the writer by phone on 23 September 1992.

The writer has informed me since that, at the time of giving his report of the incident to the Port Germein police on 23 September 1992, he was advised that a visit could be expected from investigating officers of FACS, and as a result he and his wife stayed at home during the day. If they had been outside, they made it perfectly clear that they would have been informed because they have an outside bell on their telephone. On the following day (the Thursday) it was normal for the couple to go to Port Pirie to do their shopping. They figured that if contact had been made it could be expected that the department would ring back—and that did not happen.

The second point that the Minister makes is:

Unfortunately, due to other priority work the office was unable to follow the matter through further at that time.

This is the crux of it all, because in his letter the Minister says 'due to other priority work'. One needs to ask just what priority would be greater than the matter of the reporting of ill-treatment of a child. For there to be a three month gap from the original contact to the first contact made by the department regarding such an incident is shameful. The Minister went on to say:

Subsequent inquiries have revealed that the family has moved away from the area and their current whereabouts are unknown. Again, this is an incredible situation because the writer has informed me that the lass who contacted him by telephone on 16 December was advised by the writer that the family had moved. She gave no indication at that time that the department was aware of this fact. Again, as the writer states, with respect, the Minister's letter states that the family had moved away yet follows up with the statement that the Pirie office does not have a definite identification of the family. One wonders when and where the subsequent inquiries were made at that time.

With regard to definite identification, the writer has been given to understand that the Port Germein police provided the Port Pirie office with the surnames of the adults involved. If the incident had been followed up in an efficient manner, as was the case with the police, surely the child's welfare would now be in good hands. I believe that this is a matter of considerable concern. The writer has written again to the Minister requesting more information, and it is my intention to speak personally with the Minister about this issue.

I have found as shadow Minister responsible for this portfolio that the majority of officers in the department who deal with these cases are very efficient indeed, but obviously there has been a considerable slip-up in this case. It is a matter of grave concern, and I will await with interest the reply that the Minister will provide yet again to the writer who has made contact with me. I can only hope that the matter is treated with some urgency, because I would hate to think that there would be other situations where children at risk were not able to receive urgently the treatment that they should receive. I hope that the Minister of Health, Family and Community Services will take up this matter urgently.

**Mr BLACKER** secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10.35 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 4 March at 10.30 a.m.