

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 27 October 1994

The **SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn)** took the Chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MOUNT GAMBIER POLICE HEALTH SERVICE

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I move:

That the report of the Public Works Committee on the Mount Gambier Regional Health Service be noted.

I would like to indicate that the investigation which the committee undertook was in relation to the proposal by the South Australian Health Commission to construct a new regional health service in Mount Gambier to replace a number of existing facilities. The new complex is to be constructed on land owned by the Minister for Health at an estimated cost of \$29.815 million. The committee, after examination of the proposal and inspecting both the proposed site and the existing facilities, and having taken evidence on a number of occasions, found the proposal to be more than justified and that it reasonably satisfied the requirements of commercial practice and public accountability.

The members of my committee recommend very strongly that the construction of the proposed new facility should be expedited so that an adequate service can be provided to the region and to bring on-line the savings that an amalgamated health service in an efficient building will provide. The committee noted with extreme alarm the very poor conditions and the very bad existing facilities as well as the extraordinary level of capital funds that were being expended within the health portfolio and consumed by the existing complex and the very high maintenance costs that had been involved. Additionally, because of the layout, the hospital is required to be staffed at something like double what should be required.

The existing hospital complex was constructed in 1960, with a new nurses' quarters added in 1970. Both of these structures were entirely inappropriate for their intended purpose: occurring in one case in less than 30 years and in the other, outstandingly, in less than 20 years. The fact that in such a short period after construction those facilities were totally unsuitable is a very strong argument for the reintroduction of this committee. As improbable as it sounds, despite the millions of dollars that were spent on the nurses' quarters in Mount Gambier they could only be utilised for 10 years and this was because of the absolute lack of forward planning. The nurses' quarters were in fact extremely dangerous, and for any Government to ever have allowed those quarters to be built is just beyond comprehension. There was no fire protection and that was the reason that nurses were no longer allowed to occupy those quarters. So, from 1970 to 1980 the quarters were occupied and for the rest of the time those millions of dollars have been absolutely lying in waste.

Despite changes in developments and standards for occupational health and safety, and changes in work practices in personnel management, in medical technology and construction techniques, the waste of public funds on the maintenance of Mount Gambier Hospital, portions of which were redundant, as I said, shortly after construction, is an

absolute indictment of the lack of scrutiny and forward planning that was applied to the spending of those funds.

The committee has therefore paid particular attention to the flexibility and adaptability and the future use of the proposed new complex and is confident that the design will provide a functional and long lasting facility, and therefore recommends that no further investigations of the proposal is required at this time, but obviously if there are changes down the track the committee will need to investigate them. We will also be looking with considerable interest at ensuring that the cost of the project is maintained within budget. The fact that this hospital can be built brings absolute credit on number of groups of people. I want to mention first of all the union, because what has happened there is that there has been very close cooperation between the union and the nurses that the union represents and the Health Commission, with the net result that, because of the gesture made by the union indicating that they would be prepared to have a substantial reduction in the number of staff operating in a new complex, the reduction of staff is in fact so great that there will be savings of over \$2 million a year, which in the long term will more than pay for the new hospital.

It goes to show what can happen when there is cooperation between the Government, between the Health Commission and between the union. I stand here and give absolute credit to the nursing union for the way in which it has worked with and cooperated with management and the Government in ensuring that a new complex can be made available for the residents of Mount Gambier, a complex which, although it will result in lesser employment for the members of the union, will provide much better working conditions than presently exist. I commend the nurses and the medical staff of the present facility, as well as those working in the health services buildings within Mount Gambier, for the duty that they have shown and for the way in which they have undertaken their duties. They are working in appalling conditions and yet they do it with cheer, they are providing an excellent service to the residents of Mount Gambier and I for one am looking forward very much indeed to being able to join with them at the opening of the new facilities, facilities that all the staff most certainly deserve.

The options in relation to the development at Mount Gambier included looking at the question: would the hospital be privatised? But when the figures came in, because of the gesture made by the nursing union and the offer in relation to staffing matters, it was found that the Government could build a public hospital which will in the end be cheaper than even private enterprise would have been able to run in Mount Gambier. Again, and I know I am repeating myself, I commend the union and the nursing staff for the way in which they have worked to make sure that public hospital facilities are available to the residents of Mount Gambier, and which, as I said, will impinge on their employment opportunities but certainly provide much better facilities for them to work in and much better facilities for the residents who will need to use those facilities to be treated in. I think that is basically all I need to state. I could go into the absolutely horrendous description, which I am sure my colleague the member for Gordon would—

The Hon. H. Allison: Twenty years of promises.

Mr ASHENDEN: Yes. There has been twenty years of waiting for this. I think we are the third public works committee to investigate it, if I remember rightly. But it is this Government—and I commend the Government wholeheartedly—which is putting the dollars down there and

building that new facility, which is so desperately needed. As I said, I could go into the background, I could describe the buildings—

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: I can assure the member for Hart that I am not going to. But I hope he has got the message concerning the facilities down there. Finally, I want to pay credit to my staff, particularly the research officer, who now has prepared for the committee two outstanding reports for presentation to this Parliament, and it is a reflection on his ability and capability that we have had to make so few changes. I also very much appreciate the assistance of the Secretary to the committee who I know has worked closely with the research officer, and between them they have been able to provide a report to the committee which, as I said, required very little change, very little alteration, and it is one which, when members read it, I am certain will show only too clearly what it is that this committee is recommending. So, to my staff, I thank them very much indeed for the work they are doing, and it is obvious that we are going to be able to provide this Parliament with some excellent reports over the coming years.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Gordon): It is with some pleasure that I thank the Chairman and the members of his committee for their recommendation that construction of the new Mount Gambier Hospital should proceed. The present Mount Gambier Hospital replaced the very old and somewhat gothic style of architecture building which was previously on the hill and which served the district for over 100 years. The present hospital is of pre-Second World War design. It was constructed as a post war venture in Mount Gambier and, therefore, by comparison with contemporary hospitals of today it suffers considerable drawbacks simply because of that old design factor. However, the present Mount Gambier Hospital and the nursing quarters have served the district well over the past few decades. I am extremely delighted that the present Government has seen fit at last to approve the construction of a new building.

The promise of a new hospital for Mount Gambier has been going on for almost two decades, since I became the member of Parliament for the district in 1975. I made representations to the then Minister of Health (Hon. Don Banfield); and subsequently in the late 1970s the Hon. John Cornwall as Minister of Health in the then Labor Government also promised that Mount Gambier would have a new hospital built to teaching standards and that it would be second to none as a hospital in rural South Australia. That commitment was made repeatedly before the 1979 election and subsequent elections. I became somewhat cynical about promises being made to build a new hospital at Mount Gambier.

The question was raised with me by the Hon. Don Hopgood, again a Labor Minister of Health, as to whether it may not be better to build a new hospital than to carry out the substantial plans put to the Minister and to the then Mount Gambier Hospital Board that the existing hospital should be refurbished at a cost roughly equivalent to the cost of building a new building today. Don Hopgood suggested that it may be better to build a new hospital because the refurbishment of the old Mount Gambier Hospital would present a number of problems, not the least of which would be that, if the refurbishment were staged over five, 10, or 12 years, it would literally mean 12 years of inconvenience to the staff and patients with the associated noise, dust and discomfort which

hardly are acceptable to people attending patients and the patients themselves.

I was pleased to agree quickly to Don Hopgood's suggestion that we consider rebuilding a new hospital as a first option. After some 20 years of steady representation to a succession of Health Ministers, I am pleased that the new hospital has been approved by the Chairman and his committee. I know the Minister is anxious that construction proceed as soon as possible, and some funds have been made available in the current budget estimates. I join the Chairman in his thanks to the present staff, the medical staff, the administrators, the nursing staff and others at the hospital for their cooperation in the new hospital project. That cooperation extends to the degree that, with the new hospital being built on one level instead of the current five floors, administration, management and working conditions will be much more acceptable. One of the results of constructing a new hospital will be that less staff will be needed—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Well, less is a good old Anglo-Saxon word which, in this context, means less rather than more staff. It is the opposite of 'more'—it is the antonym of 'more'. One of the results will be that the interest payments can be amortised by the annual staff savings. I offer my personal thanks to the staff, the unions and ministerial staff who together worked through to the present position where we have a new hospital on the way, a new hospital which will be run by the Government and need not be privatised in order to save money and which should set a good example to the rest of Australia on how things can be managed effectively by a Government health system. I thank the Chairman and members of the committee and look forward to the time when the Mount Gambier community will have a hospital which can serve the region, including the upper and lower South-East, effectively into the next century.

Mr KERIN (Frome): I also support the words of the member for Wright, the Chairman of the Public Works Committee, in respect of the Mount Gambier Hospital. As a regional facility it is extremely inappropriate and inadequate compared with the Port Pirie regional health service, with which I am familiar. It is not up to standard. Mount Gambier has good specialists, which Port Pirie has not, but certainly the building is far from adequate. It is amazing how much building regulations have changed to the point where something built in 1960 is so useless today that it must be knocked over. We could not come up with any ideas on what other use could be made of the building. The nurses home was built in 1970 and could be used for only 10 years, so it makes you wonder what they were thinking about at the time. The design of these buildings certainly precludes any opportunity to upgrade them to an acceptable standard. I certainly commend the decision to start again rather than trying to redevelop what is a hard building to work on. The inefficiency of the design at the moment makes it a credit to the nursing staff who have cut back their numbers. They hope that, by saving on staff numbers, the hospital will be paid for within a short time.

The member for Gordon seems delighted that it is going ahead, but I am sure he will not believe it until he sees it. The only option is to build a new hospital. The member for Elizabeth, who is also on the committee, has asked me to express her appreciation to everyone involved in the Mount Gambier Hospital, the CEO (Jenny Norman), all the nursing staff and everyone who appeared before us for their hospitali-

ty and the honest and thorough fashion in which they gave evidence to the committee. They are dedicated to their profession, and to them it is more than a job: they are very much part of the community and provide a great service. Hopefully without much delay they will have a facility that is appropriate for the job that they do. I can only commend the decision of the committee to approve the work and hope that it proceeds with due haste.

Motion carried.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): I move:

That the annual report of the committee be noted.

I have pleasure in moving this motion. I will deal with those matters of reasonable importance that have come before the committee. I refer, first, to the issue of proposals for reform. One matter that has come to the attention of the committee is that it has no power to amend regulations, and in some cases it is extremely time consuming to refer matters back for certain procedures in council because of some technical difficulty. The issue is whether or not the Legislative Review Committee should be given power to amend regulations.

The second issue is that the Parliament itself has no power to amend regulations. It seems silly that, as a Parliament, we can pass primary legislation but we do not have the right to amend regulations, although we can disallow them. It seems to me that there should be legislation to ensure that that problem does not continue. Members may remember that sometime ago a problem arose in relation to regulations coming into force when Parliament was not sitting, thus members could not comment on or disallow them.

Section 10AA of the Subordinate Legislation Act was enacted to overcome that problem, but we still perceive a problem in that regard. Section 10AA(2)(a) provides that regulations can be laid before the House and come into operation within four months, and there is no problem with that. The point is that members of the House and the House itself can do something about the regulations if they are not happy with them. The difficulty we see is that provision exists under section 10AA(2)(a) for Ministers to decrease the time period. We see that as a major problem and we hope that, in the future, it will be used only in genuinely urgent cases.

I also want to deal with some of the issues considered by the Legislative Review Committee, one being the use of section 107(2) of the Education Act. This matter arose in relation to the Alberton Primary School Council. Under the provision, the Minister dissolved the council and reconstituted another council. There is certainly power in the Act to do that, but one of the problems is that, if members of a school vote on a council, then, presumably, they want to be involved in the conduct of matters concerning the school. A major conflict occurred between different groupings of parents at the school and the principal in relation to the use of the Montessori theory of learning.

The Legislative Review Committee decided, albeit reluctantly, that it probably had to approve the provision because of the situation, but we put on notice our belief that that provision of the Education Act should be used sparingly because, as we perceive it, it is anti-democratic. We have raised the matter with the Minister and requested that he restore the parent majority on the school council at the

earliest opportunity; the Minister, fortunately, has responded in a positive way.

Another issue before the committee involved the problem of cats. Obviously, many people in South Australia and Australia are concerned about the prevalence of both domestic and feral cats killing native species. Thebarton council passed a by-law requiring cats to wear an identification collar, to be de-sexed and to be restrained during hours of darkness. It also provided that there could not be more than two cats in a house. The difficulty with that by-law is obvious: if a person is to be charged with having a cat out late at night, and if the offending cat is to be apprehended, how do you know whether the cat came from a household of more than one cat; how do you know whether or not the cat strayed from a neighbouring area; and how do you differentiate a cat from a single cat household and a cat from a household where there is more than one cat. The situation is almost fatuous and the committee was, in a sense, reluctant to allow that by-law to go through. In the end, the committee decided no action would be taken and the by-law has obviously come into operation.

It seems to me that that highlights that this Parliament is not facing up to its responsibility. I think one could also say that the members of the committee hold the same view. It is about time that Parliament faced the issue of feral and domestic cats and their destruction of native wildlife and did not put the Legislative Review Committee in the position of having to approve a by-law which, for all practical purposes, will be impossible to enforce. It puts people in the silly position of trying to ascertain whether a cat which has been wandering around at night is from a two cat or a single cat household before the owner can be charged. That is a pretty silly position to be in. Despite that position and despite the fact that the Legislative Review Committee might appear to be silly in approving it, it decided because of the concerns about native wildlife that it should approve that by-law.

I do not wish to mention anything else other than the fact that the committee has been investigating the issue of resident magistrates. It has had the pleasure of having the Speaker appear before it, and it has been to the Iron Triangle and the South-East. That investigation as to whether or not resident magistrates should be reinstated in country areas to suit the interests of country people is ongoing. I commend the report to the House.

Mr De LAINE (Price): I would like to touch on one aspect of the report, and that relates to the Alberton Primary School situation. The member for Lee also has an interest in this matter because his electorate is fairly close to the border of my electorate and some of his constituents are involved in the school and are concerned about what is happening there. To put this matter into context, the member for Norwood said that the process was fairly undemocratic, that school councils should be elected under a democratic process by parents and the school community. I agree with that, as no doubt would the member for Lee. However, the situation at the school deteriorated to such an extent that, over a period of nearly 12 months, the position became untenable.

The school has three elements: the mainstream part of the education system; the Montessori part, as mentioned by the member for Norwood; and the Aboriginal component. The situation was untenable. The previous Labor Government was in the process of stepping in to do what was eventually done by the Liberal Minister for Education (Hon. Rob Lucas) in another place. The Minister and I had several discussions

about this issue and, because of the ongoing deteriorating situation at the school, I agreed with what the Government has done in appointing an interim council. In fact, I asked a question during the recent Estimates Committees in that regard.

I agree with the measures taken by the Minister, and I think the member for Lee may agree also, but it is up to him to say. What has been done had to be done for the sake of the school. It has provided some breathing space to allow the interim council to pacify the situation at the school. I was invited to one meeting of the interim council, and I was very impressed with the way in which it conducted its business. I fully support what the Minister for Education has done in this regard.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ORGANS FOR TRANSPLANTATION

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

That the time for bringing up the report of the committee be extended until Thursday 6 April 1995.

Motion carried.

DENTISTS (CLINICAL DENTAL TECHNICIANS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 20 October. Page 736.)

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I note that many members have already spoken in this debate. I will not dwell on it for long, but I have spoken to quite a few people in my electorate and, as this House knows, members have been lobbied almost *ad nauseam* by both dental technicians and the Australian Dentists' Association. Frankly, one thing that really surprised me when I saw this Bill introduced was that we sit in this House day in day out and hear the Opposition screaming out about the lack of health care, about where the funding is coming from for this and that, and about why funding cuts are being made here, there and everywhere.

I feel that members opposite are contradicting themselves in the way in which this private member's Bill has been introduced in this place. I should have thought it was of paramount importance, particularly given the massive debt that we have incurred and that we are now seeing an escalating interest rate that is having even more of an impact on a State such as ours, that we be more careful than ever before and far more proactive in the area of prevention with respect to health care.

Yet, I see an amendment here that does not talk at all about the qualifications required to get into the health arena, and indeed a delicate area thereof—that is, a person's mouth. There is nothing in the legislation addressing qualifications, standards of professionalism, the ability to assess correctly and so on.

I have talked to many dentists over many years, and I know just how involved and specialised the training is before one can get one's degree and then get into private practice as a dentist. I am also well aware of how much post-graduate work dentists do on an ongoing basis. I refer in particular to the amount of work that dentists have done in post-graduate studies on AIDS and other associated diseases.

One of the concerns I have with this Bill is that, without those academic qualifications, professionalism and ongoing

post-graduate studies, I believe that this could subject people to an unfortunate lack of professionalism, perhaps even a lack of sophisticated equipment that practitioners need today, or a compromise of the general standards of practice required to ensure that these diseases are not passed from one person to another.

I would also like it recorded that I, probably as much as anyone, am very proactive in the area of saving the community money wherever possible. However, sometimes we may be penny wise and pound foolish, so to speak. I know the trouble that people in my own family have had with partial dentures and getting them bedded in so that they are comfortable. It requires a great deal of expertise and work to ensure that the assessment and checking of those partial dentures is done to eliminate those problems.

In this case I think it would be counterproductive, for the potential saving of a few dollars, to risk the transfer of diseases such as AIDS and also causing patients undue stress and discomfort. There is also the potential situation where, ultimately, patients may have to pay more money to get these partial dentures sorted out by a professional such as a dentist. I cannot support this Bill and I therefore oppose it.

Mr De LAINE secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (NOTICE OF CLOSURE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 13 October. Page 611.)

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): The Government opposes this Bill and is somewhat nonplussed at the temerity of an Opposition which promulgates such a Bill in the Upper House and then seeks to waste valuable private members' time by bringing it in here.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: If the member for Spence wants to interject with his gratuitous advice on dictionary meanings, I suggest he occupy his time more profitably. He never bothers to come into the Chamber in Question Time; perhaps he should amuse himself by reading his dictionary outside while we are contributing to serious debate in the Chamber.

This Bill was prepared in another place by Parliamentary Counsel on the instructions of the Hon. C.J. Sumner, and it will be perhaps his only contribution as shadow Minister for Education; he had a very brief and less than spectacular career as shadow Minister for Education and has fled. However, his legacy lives after him in the form of this ridiculous Bill. In a true parliamentary sense it is an arrant piece of hypocrisy on the part of the Opposition.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner was Attorney-General, and those very few of his band of brothers and sisters who sit on the Opposition benches were, in fact, in charge of the Treasury benches prior to December; and they had 11 years in which to decide that it might be good to give schools and other institutions 18 months notice of closure. But not once in 11 years did they have this bright idea. They closed 70 schools, and never once did it occur to them that their actions might be precipitate, ill-considered or against the public interest. Never once did they consider that 18 months might be the magical appropriate time for consultation, so that everyone could be informed that, at the end of 18 months, the schools would close.

However, there has been a flash of divine inspiration similar to that which we see daily coming to the Leader of the Opposition, and I have never seen anyone so instantaneously converted to good causes—causes which have been espoused for years by the Speaker and by the member for Bright; and causes of law and order. I can remember many questions being asked in this place which were fended by the then Ministers but which are now embraced by those members—especially by the Leader of the Opposition—rather too fulsomely and obviously for my liking.

As I said, the previous Labor record was clear: the closure of more than 70 schools, some through outright closure and some through amalgamation and rationalisation. It is arrant stupidity to propose that we can sit in this Chamber in air-conditioned comfort and say that this is the exact time in which to effect a school closure: we will give them 18 months. What happens if, in a case such as Cook, the enrolments drop below seven? You, Sir, will know from your visits to Cook that the school can double in size with the advent of two families. The small schools are very affected by the size of—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The Deputy Leader interjects and says 'or halves in size depending on the principal'. I point out to the Deputy Leader that Cook was never larger than when I was principal; it had its maximum enrolment for all time.

Mr Clarke: And it's never recovered.

Mr BRINDAL: They went from R to 11; it truly has not. They have a swimming pool, a community centre and various other things, given by the good grace of the Federal Government—there has not been much given from our Government, I might add—and with the good offices of the Speaker, who has long been a very competent member for that area. I am sure that the Speaker will back this up, but it is remarkable that Cook is the only town in Australia that votes 100 per cent Labor at Federal elections—or did—and 100 per cent Liberal at State elections. That says very strong things about the candidates that the Opposition has fielded there.

The Hon. M.D. Rann: So you voted Labor in the Federal election?

Mr BRINDAL: I was never there for a Federal election, so members opposite will not catch me quite that easily. Members opposite have made me digress, and I must get on with my comments. In the case of a country school where the enrolment might fall to five, would it not be ridiculous to turn around and say to the school, 'The enrolment has fallen to five, so we will now wait 18 months before we close the school'? What do we do with the teachers and five students for 18 months before other arrangements can be made for bus routes and the like?

I point out that Holden Hill Primary School will close at the end of 1994. This came about through a strong determination by the school council to influence its future. The council was able to recognise that, with the declining enrolments projected for 1995 and beyond, the capacity of the school to offer a broad curriculum and to provide supportive programs for the students was under threat. Therefore, as a council they spent a weekend in retreat at Victor Harbor where a comprehensive plan for the closure of the school and the provision of sound education for its students was developed with the assistance of the staff and the District Superintendent of Education.

Here is a clear example of local communities determining the benefits for students, and it was best determined by that

community that there be a sharp process leading to the school's closure—not death by degree, such as the last Government foisted on Morphett Vale Park Primary School. It so consistently denied the rumours of closure that when the Government finally announced that it would be closed there was no-one left to object. Year after year they said, 'No, the rumours of closure are not true.' Year after year the enrolments declined and when they decided that the rumours would come true there was no-one at the school to object. We are for good education and for the benefit of students and, therefore, we think this Bill is stupid.

In recent weeks there has been an examination of primary education along what has been called the Marion Road project corridor. The member for Mitchell has a deep and abiding interest in that area. In part, this project came into being because of the rapid decline in enrolments in schools in the district. In particular, Tonsley Park is one of the member for Mitchell's schools. The school found itself in a situation similar to that facing Holden Hill, because the declining enrolments were due to a new redevelopment by the Housing Trust in which mixed mode development meant a different style of accommodation and therefore fewer students in the area.

The Tonsley Park Primary School community also preferred a short and decisive approach to its future. As a consequence, the Minister has approved the amalgamation of Tonsley Park Primary School on the Mitchell Park Primary School site from the beginning of 1995. Once again this is a clear instance where the drawn out process of eventual closure was certainly not in the preferred interest of the school community. Again, with small rural schools we point to the decision to close Marananga Primary School and Cook-Corny Point Rural School at the end of 1994. These decisions have recently been taken because there has been only a handful of students enrolled in each school in 1995. Any Bill proposing that we have to wait 18 months before we can close schools at which there are not students is indeed stupid.

Finally, let us look at examples of more complex restructuring exercises leading to amalgamation such as that which has occurred between Port Pirie High School and Risdon High School in the electorate of the very able member for Frome. I am sure he has been deeply involved and that there has been a long consultation process with the community. Complex issues are involved and it has taken much longer than 18 months. As the Government we say that there are times when 18 months is ridiculously long because it is to the educational benefit of students that the school should close earlier. There are other times when 18 months is far too short. For the Hon. C.J. Sumner to do nothing as shadow Minister for Education rather than promulgate this rubbish is a sad epitaph for someone who did make a contribution to this Parliament as Attorney-General. I suggest it would have been better to leave this place without this Bill.

Mr BASS (Florey): This Bill is about an Opposition and two Democrats not accepting at the last election that the Liberals were given a mandate to govern South Australia. This Bill reeks of a team which was soundly beaten at its last game and which is now trying to introduce a new rule that will obviously inhibit the other team. On Thursday 5 May, when introducing this Bill, the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition, now Leader of the Opposition, said:

This Bill would require the Brown Government to give 18 months' notice of any school or TAFE campus closure in this State. It will require the Government to give formal notice in the

Government Gazette of any closure and written notice to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

The Minister for Education and Children's Services from the other place has indicated on more than one occasion that he will consult and work with any group of persons, whether it be teachers, parents of students or students themselves, in relation to schools that are considered for closure. Clause 3A the insertion of section 104A, which gives an 18 month embargo on closing schools, is ridiculous to say the least, and I will give a quick analogy. At the beginning of any year, by looking at the enrolment figures and the geographical area of, say, school A and the schools in the near vicinity, the Minister can gauge fairly accurately what the future enrolment of that school will be for the following year.

Over the year, he can then consult with the teachers and the parents of the students who are attending that school, and at the end of the year he can then close the school—a 12 month process. But under this legislation, the Minister, after identifying that the school is not financially viable and has close, handy alternatives in which to put the students, would have to keep the school open for another six months. To do that would be an added waste of finance—and the previous Government seemed to be able to waste finance very well—and, after he closed the school after 18 months, he would have to disrupt all those students' education and have them go to other schools. Of course, the other alternative would be to leave the school for another six months after the 18 month period so that those students would not be disrupted, but again that would be at great and unnecessary expense.

If successful, this Bill will cause the Government to waste desperately wanted finances to reduce the State's debt. The recommendations of the Audit Commission are simply that—recommendations—and this Government has not embraced them all. It has taken on board the recommendations and the reasons why they were made, and it is making decisions that will least affect residents of South Australia and, in this case, the students of South Australia. As I said, it is about time Opposition members woke up to the fact that the Government is desperately trying to undo the legacy the previous Government left to South Australia, and it is time they worked with this Government so that the State will be financially viable in the future so that their children and their children's children can have an education and, more importantly, a future in South Australia. The then Deputy Leader, now Leader, said, in his closing speech:

I want to hear from some of the marginal seat members opposite about why they support their Education Minister. I want them to explain why local schools in their areas, ones that are designated as being under threat by the Audit Commission because of their size, should not be given formal notice of the Government's intention.

I suggest that they will be given formal notice. The Minister from the other place has given an undertaking to consult with the local communities if schools are identified for closure. The previous Government was very short on consultation when it was in office, but it now seems keen to see it carried out. Its attitude is a little bit like, 'Do as I say, not as I do.' It wants it all its own way. This Government has consulted in many areas where the previous Government did not, and I am sure the Minister in the other place will continue to consult. I oppose the Bill.

Mr KERIN (Frome): This school closure issue seems to have hung over us ever since the last election; it is being carried on as a scare campaign, and we seem to be coping it very often in my electorate. Although no schools in my area

have closed, the Hon. Ron Roberts is often in the media up there saying we will close 23 of the 28 schools in the electorate. He cannot count; there are more there than that. He has specifically named Peterborough High School. It is pretty easy to scare the people of Peterborough who, having had a lot of kicks in the midriff over the years, now believe almost anything.

Just to prove the Government's commitment to Peterborough High School, which we are supposedly closing, we have put in \$1.5 million to upgrade the high school, so if that is not a reassurance to the people of Peterborough, nothing is. When a school, particularly a small rural school, becomes less than viable, sometimes the closure is a good idea. When it gets down to only one or two in a class, socially and educationally that is not the ideal. One of the dangers with an 18 month waiting time is that people would bypass the school during that period; it would be left with five or six students but it could not be closed.

We are already seeing that with the Risdon-Port Pirie High School amalgamation referred to earlier by the marvellous member for Unley. With Port Pirie High School as the preferred site, Risdon High School has lost quite a few students to it. If we had an 18 month waiting list on any closures we would find quite a few students being enrolled in alternative schools and the absolutely ludicrous situation of schools operating with very few students. It is largely for that reason that I oppose the Bill.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I certainly oppose this Bill. Just imagine what the 18 month prior notice would do to some of the small schools that may or may not close one, two or three years down the track. I think of the case of Arthurton in my electorate, where the school got down to three pupils, and there were three adults there as well: a principal, an assistant and a teacher aide. The Labor Government's decision to close that school caused the community considerable stress.

The Leader of the Opposition may remember that I asked a question in this Parliament as to whether the Minister was thinking of closing the school, and at that stage the Minister had not made a decision. My constituents were not at all happy with me for having asked that question, because they went in to bat for their school to the nth degree up to the final hour. I know of the emotional concern in the community on that occasion, as well as the concern of the then principal, the other staff member and the assistant teacher, and here the Leader is suggesting that we give 18 months prior warning to make sure that people are absolutely distressed out of their mind in the lead-up to a closure. What a way to perform!

The Leader obviously does not understand rural situations and small schools. He does not understand that their enrolments can vary considerably from one year to another and that with a certain number of families in the area they can be in a viable situation one year, while the next year if several families move away the Minister may have no option but to say, 'You have reached a stage where you have only four or five students.' One school in my electorate has received notice of closure at that number. It is distressing for that community.

However, even the Leader would acknowledge that there comes a point when a school has to be closed. This move would do exactly the opposite of what the Leader wants in his Bill. It would lead to despair in the community, greater trauma and an emotional situation that is not conducive to the wellbeing of the students, parents and staff. For those reasons

and others that have been identified by the members for Unley, Florey and Frome, I oppose the Bill.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I shall be brief, because much of what I wanted to say has already been covered very well by my colleagues. I find it difficult to believe that this Bill should be introduced by the Opposition when a lot of the damage and uncertainty in school communities was brought about by the Labor Party, especially during the last election campaign. I oppose the Bill, because in essence it sets a time limit and we are fighting over the time. It seems that time is more important than the educational process. We seem to forget that education is about students and their interests. That should be paramount, not the time factor. We should consider what is best for the students and the community. I find it difficult to believe that 18 months is better than any other period.

For those reasons, I oppose the Bill. I suggest that the Opposition should rethink its strategy and not try to bring in a Bill which will disrupt school communities and create uncertainty, especially in country areas. In such areas 18 months would cause a lot of heartache, disruption and uncertainty within the school communities instead of giving them the opportunity to get on with providing an educational environment conducive to learning and the wellbeing of the community.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): I am disappointed with the Government's response. I expected some members of the Brown Government to have the guts to stand up and fight for their local schools. I believed that this Bill would be amended by the Government: I expected it to bring in an amendment that would perhaps require nine months or a year's notice to be given of a school closure. School closures represented a central issue in the last election campaign. We all remember what the Premier and the Minister for Education and Children's Services said. We all know from the Audit Commission report and from the Government's current budget (also knowing what will be in next year's budget) that more and more schools will be closed. We want a list of the schools to be closed so that those school communities, parents, teachers, staff and principals can be adequately consulted. The fact is that the Government does not want any consultation provision to be built into this Bill. If it was serious about 18 months being too long, why did the Government not suggest an amendment to the effect, 'Let us make it a year, nine months or six months, but only if the local community agrees'?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I am not pointing at the Minister for Industrial Affairs who is busy working trying to increase his majority at the next election. What I am saying is that the responses today have not been dinkum, and your communities will be advised of your stand against consultation over the closure of schools. What we are saying is simply there should be a provision in the Act that, when a school is to be closed, it should be listed in the *Gazette*—

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has just advised all members of this House that our electorates will be advised of our position on this Bill. I ask you, Mr Speaker, if you consider that the Leader of the Opposition is attempting to intimidate members in the exercise of their vote?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: When the House comes to order, the Chair will rule on the point of order of the member for Unley. It is contrary to Standing Orders to in any way attempt to intimidate a member as to how they may or may not vote in this Chamber. I would suggest in this case that the Leader of the Opposition is making a passing reference to a course of action which he may or may not take. I do suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he not pursue that matter.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Certainly, if I was to raise this issue publicly on the results of this debate, you can be assured, as ever, that this Leader of the Opposition, this member of Parliament, would make sure that the views expressed are expressed accurately in the letterboxes. All we are asking for is notice of closure to be tabled and mentioned in the *Gazette*. What is wrong with that? All we are asking is for school communities and parents to be consulted about TAFE closures and school closures. What is wrong with that? You deserve to be condemned. You have been whipped into line. I know there would be some Liberals who would believe that consultation with their local communities is important. Have the guts to produce the hit list before this Liberal panzer division marches through our school communities.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Before putting the vote, let me say I do not think the last comments of the Leader of the Opposition are particularly appropriate.

The House divided on the second reading:

AYES (9)

Atkinson, M. J.	Blevins, F. T.
Clarke, R. D.	De Laine, M. R.
Foley, K. O.	Geraghty, R. K.
Hurley, A. K.	Quirke, J. A.
Rann, M. D. (teller)	

NOES (28)

Allison, H.	Andrew, K. A.
Armitage, M. H.	Ashenden, E. S.
Baker, D. S.	Baker, S. J.
Bass, R. P.	Becker, H.
Brindal, M. K. (teller)	Brokenshire, R. L.
Buckby, M. R.	Caudell, C. J.
Condous, S. G.	Cummins, J. G.
Evans, I. F.	Greig, J. M.
Ingerson, G. A.	Kerin, R. G.
Lewis, I. P.	Matthew, W. A.
Meier, E. J.	Oswald, J. K. G.
Rosenberg, L. F.	Rossi, J. P.
Scalzi, G.	Such, R. B.
Venning, I. H.	Wotton, D. C.

PAIRS

Stevens, L.	Wade, D. E.
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Majority of 19 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negated.

DAYLIGHT SAVING

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. Frank Blevins:

That the regulations made under the Daylight Saving Act 1971 relating to summertime 1994-95, gazetted on 15 September 1994 and tabled in this House on 11 October 1994, be disallowed.

(Continued from 20 October. Page 737.)

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Some people enter this House as advocates for the State and they act in the best interests of the State, other people enter this House as advocates for their

electorate and act accordingly, but not the member for Giles. The member for Giles acts as an advocate for political tomfoolery. The actions of the member for Giles need to be exposed for everyone to see. This motion associated with altering the time period for daylight saving time follows hard on the heels of the motion by the member for Giles to move to Eastern Standard Time.

When the two motions are lined up you have to wonder about the mental capacity of the member for Giles. However, if the member for Giles' mental faculties are in order, you then have to wonder about his political headings. If the member for Giles is acting in the interests of his constituents, you have to wonder why he, as a country member, has moved a motion for permanent half hour daylight saving time. That is the essence of what the member for Giles moved in his original motion earlier this year—to have eastern standard time on a permanent basis. During debate on that motion the member for Giles did not mention daylight saving time. So, one would have to assume that, if his motion is carried, we would have daylight saving 1½ hours ahead of the current situation. One has to wonder about the capacity of the member for Giles with regard to either his mental or political leanings because it is obvious that the member for Giles—

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Standing Order 127 provides:

- Digression; personal reflections on members.
- A member may not . . .
- 2. or impute improper motives to any another member,
- 3. or make personal reflections on any another member.

Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule in accordance with that Standing Order.

The SPEAKER: The Chair is well aware of Standing Order 127 and intends to apply it quite rigorously. I suggest that the member for Mitchell address the subject of the motion and not personalities. I uphold the point of order.

Mr CAUDELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had no intention of reflecting on the member for Giles; I was trying to work out which way he was heading. Like everyone else in this House, we had problems trying to ascertain which direction the member for Giles was moving because one week he moved one motion and the next week he moved another motion which was totally opposite to the first motion. During the contribution of the member for Giles in that debate I made a comment which he took completely out of context. At that stage I took a similar point of order as the member for Hart, but unfortunately mine was not accepted whereas the member for Hart's was upheld.

One wonders about some of the things with little basis uttered by the member for Spence earlier in the week. I said to the member for Giles that country people do not have to suffer it. The member for Giles said that I was laughing at people in the country. I was reflecting on the fact that, if the member for Giles was at all serious about acting in the interests of his electorate, instead of moving a motion in respect of eastern standard time and then a motion in respect of daylight saving time, he would have moved a motion dealing with central standard time. His motion should have been to move South Australia to the correct meridian to take the pressure off country people so that the effect of daylight saving is minimised. At no stage has the member for Giles been interested in looking after country people in relation to the proper time zone. I conclude by saying that the motion before the House is nothing but political tomfoolery. It is not in the best interests of this State. It is not in the best interests

of the people of his electorate or any other country electorate, and therefore it cannot be supported.

Mr KERIN (Frome): I must say that I thought the member for Mitchell was most unfair to the member for Giles. I can understand why the member for Giles would be hurt and offended because he did not move the motion on eastern standard time: he only spoke very passionately in favour of it. As a country member I am extremely aware of the strong opposition to daylight saving within some sectors of the community. Despite the last ruling, I feel that this is not really a technical debate. Daylight saving and eastern standard time are intrinsically linked because they both change where the face of the clock sits. I know it is only by accident that the member for Giles has supported eastern standard time and opposed the extension of daylight saving time, but it shows some rather appalling logic.

The member for Giles spoke passionately about those in his electorate who want this 21 hours of daylight saving time struck off. The member for Giles is equally passionate about the effect of the 180 hours, which is nine times eastern standard time, on country people—and it is country people who are the most passionate about this. I suppose the member for Giles has been very consistent because that depicts the divided opinions within his electorate. I can see why he is standing up for everyone, and hence the inconsistency. I do not feel that constantly raising this issue all the time is all that helpful. It is certainly not a technical argument. It is perhaps a little bit of political tomfoolery or whatever. I hope in the future we do not see a similar motion after this one is defeated.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I would not directly knock the member for Giles either because, as I have already recorded in *Hansard*, I know the experience and effort the member for Giles has put into this place over a number of years. I often watch him, and pick up different points from him that I hope to put into practice over a considerable number of years to come. I cannot follow what the member for Giles is on about with this motion to disallow a regulation—a responsible regulation that is all about creating jobs for South Australians, economic development for the State, and supporting the revamp of tourism that we now have so successfully in place in this State.

I would have thought that the member for Giles would clap his hands on this issue because I often hear him say that Whyalla, the West Coast and his electorate of Giles are lovely areas in which to live or to travel for a holiday. Given the difficult economic times the State has encountered for so long, particularly in an area like Whyalla which has been vulnerable with all aspects of its economy over time, one would have thought that he would clap his hands, delighted that there was an opportunity for an additional three weeks to capitalise on the magnificent strategy, development plans and general revamp of the tourism development of this State by our Minister, Graham Ingerson. The member for Giles should applaud the regulation because it will put more dollars in the pockets of people in his own community.

Unfortunately, because the member for Giles is retiring in three years, he seems to get a bit frustrated on the back bench, and I can understand that because he is one of the few on that side who has real ability and who should be on the front bench—probably as Deputy Leader or even as the Leader. He gets frustrated and probably likes to play a few games. I would have thought that, if the Opposition was really serious

about having a crack at us in about three terms to try to become a genuine alternative Government—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The honourable member will be, for sure. In fact, he has already been gone twice from this House in less than 11 months of being in the Parliament. I am sure that, with the honourable member's record, he will be well and truly long gone—probably to Canberra, working for the UTLC, or some group like that, again on the gravy train, because he will not be able to handle the pressure here for too long; he will burst. The fact is that, instead of the member for Giles putting the fatherly image before the Opposition Party, giving it advice and trying to build up some credibility again, or maybe thinking of getting over to Whyalla and doing some fishing and enjoying the fruits of labour from his long career—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: The member for Giles says that it is too dark in the morning. Perhaps when he leaves this House we can all dob in a few dollars and buy him a Dolphin torch and, if he happens to let it fall out of the boat, it will float on water. The member for Giles should be starting to think about his retirement and about enjoying the fruits of his labour in this House and not being mischievous and moving frivolous motions such as this that really only waste the time of the House. We all know we have more important things to do in this House than to waste time on issues such as this.

We know the tactics of the Opposition: it is not about saying, 'Well done, the Brown Liberal Government. Three more weeks of extended daylight saving will be good for the community and the economy.' The Opposition is about mischief-making. That is all it can do—mischief-make. In fact, the member for Spence is another mischief-maker—

Mr Brindal: He greases the sewers.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Yes, greases the sewers, as the member for Unley says. Members opposite are only about mischief-making; they cannot run on the economic record of their Government; and they cannot talk about the economic record thus far of this Government. They are hoping that, as Paul Keating continues to inflict more pain into our economy, not only in this State but in Australia, some of our budget lines may not come in, thanks to Mr Keating, and then they will be jumping for joy, claiming how brilliant they are on economic issues. We have a few other strings to our bow and we will have to work past the Keatings of this world, because we do care about our State Federation and this country. We have to question whether Mr Keating does.

The Opposition is about mischief-making and, whether the issue is this motion on daylight saving, the closure of schools, and so on, it is concerned only with peripheral issues. This motion is definitely a peripheral issue and is totally irrelevant.

Members interjecting:

Mr BROKENSHIRE: As the member for Unley said, it is as irrelevant as are members opposite. I sincerely wish they would get on with the job of being a bit more like an Opposition. Frankly, this motion has no credibility whatsoever.

Mr BASS secured the adjournment of the debate.

SHOP TRADING HOURS (EXEMPTIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 20 October. Page 741.)

Ms GREIG (Reynell): I would like to make clear that I am not a supporter of Sunday night trading or Friday night trading, but I would also like it noted that I am not a supporter of the political stunt put before us by the member for Ross Smith. We are not debating shop trading hours. This Bill does not wipe out Sunday trading and, I point out, not one member opposite has even mentioned Friday night trading. The Bill deals only with this Minister's ministerial power to issue certificates of exemption. The member for Ross Smith's Bill proposes that certificates of exemption should be disallowed by Parliament.

Members opposite have forgotten that the former Government issued 883 certificates of exemption between 1988 and 1993, and not once did it bring any of those exemptions before the Parliament. The Bill proposed by the honourable member opposite—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I am trying to hear my colleague speak and I cannot hear above the cacophony of babble coming from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Interjections from any source are not permitted under Standing Orders, and I ask the honourable member to adhere to the Standing Orders.

Ms GREIG: The Bill proposed by the honourable member opposite does not require any of the 883 certificates issued by the former Labor Government in the past five years to come before this Parliament. How can any member of this House support this kind of selective trading? The former Labor Government allowed 358 of the exemptions granted under its Administration to trade on Sundays. Again, is it fair to small businesses and traders who have been given an exemption under the Liberal Government to have their certificates of exemption brought before this Parliament when exemptions granted under the previous Government are free from this kind of scrutiny?

A number of members opposite have bleated emotive, gut wrenching statements across the floor. Members have been addressed as gutless for not supporting the hypocritical tripe that we have had to endure throughout this debate. What members opposite have overlooked is their amazing turnaround in thinking. We are addressing an Opposition that not only believes in deregulating shopping hours but also in doing so by every possible means, including the use of ministerial and executive powers. We should dust away a few more cobwebs and remind members opposite that it was their Government which introduced late night shopping in 1977. What thought was given to small business then?

In 1986, Labor granted a ministerial allowance for petrol stations to trade 24 hours seven days a week. In 1988, Labor deregulated shopping hours for all furniture and floor covering shops. In 1989, deregulation was again introduced by Labor for hardware stores and shops which sell automotive spare parts—deregulation seven days a week, 365 days of the year. In 1990, shopping hours were extended to include Saturday afternoons, and in October 1993 trading hours were extended for all supermarkets on five nights a week.

The member for Napier in her contribution to the debate speaks about consistency. I cannot support this kind of consistency. If anyone knows how to cripple small business, members opposite hold the track record. There has been a strong call by members opposite and their union friends for back bench members to cross the floor and support the member for Ross Smith's Bill. If the intent of this Bill was to the benefit of my electorate, I would do that, but in this circumstance I will not and cannot allow small businesses in

my electorate to be hoodwinked by a Bill that means nothing. As I said earlier, it is a political stunt, full of flaws and, as has been explained previously by the Minister, it is impractical and unworkable. As Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Ross Smith should come clean, let the community know what he really means and not hold this Parliament or even this State in contempt.

Mr BASS secured the adjournment of the debate.

SPEAKER, IMPARTIALITY

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): I move:

That in the opinion of the House the Speaker ought not attend parliamentary Party meetings.

Confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker is an indispensable condition of the successful working of procedure. Many conventions exist which have as their object not only to ensure the impartiality of the Speaker but also to ensure that his impartiality is generally recognised. These are not my words nor those of the Opposition: they are to be found in Erskine May's *Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*.

Mr Brindal: Which editions?

Mr ATKINSON: Nineteenth and twenty-first. The relevance of Erskine May's treatise is that our first Standing Order states that the usages of the House of Commons are to be observed in this House unless other provision is made. The Opposition wants to have confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker. It believes that our democratic system works best when Government and Opposition conduct business in the House under the direction of a disinterested chairman. It believes that confidence could be fortified by the Speaker's absenting himself from the Liberal Party room.

In Britain, the Speaker is the spokeswoman of the House in its relations with the Crown, the House of Lords and persons outside Parliament. She presides over the debates of the House and enforces all rules for the preservation of order. The Speaker was expected to resign from her Party on appointment and should the Government of Britain change she will remain in office. Indeed, the Speaker was a member of the Labour Party at the time she was elected by a Commons with a Tory majority. The Speaker seeks re-election to the House without a Party label and by convention is not challenged by the other parliamentary Parties.

The Opposition does not ask our Speaker to do the same. I, for one, do not expect him to refrain from supporting the Government on Bills and motions, although I note that the Liberal Party expected the last Speaker to refrain from supporting the Government on motions and Bills and moved a no-confidence motion in him when he continued to vote with the Government, and the member for Unley voted for that motion.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley will have the opportunity to respond.

Mr ATKINSON: I do not expect the Speaker to resign from the Liberal Party; I do not expect him to forgo Liberal Party preselection; I do not expect him to be returned to the House unopposed. If he had to be returned unopposed he might choose the Hindmarsh, Croydon, Woodville and Findon areas as a nice constituency from which to commute to Parliament instead of his Mount Cooper fastness.

Mr Brokenshire: You would lose your seat.

Mr ATKINSON: Exactly, the member for Mawson is right; I would lose my seat. So I do not want to see Mr Speaker seeking re-election in Spence. Four times in the past 30 years the Government of South Australia has had to rely on the casting vote of the Speaker. There being only 47 members of the House of Assembly, such Parliaments are likely to be elected in the future, so it would be unreasonable not to expect the Speaker to be a supporter of the Government.

In the House of Commons, with more than 600 members, casting vote Parliaments do not occur. All that we are asking now, Mr Speaker, is that you absent yourself from meetings of the parliamentary Liberal Party during the weeks that Parliament is sitting. It is true, Mr Speaker, that the parliamentary Labor Party adopted this position in 1990, only when it was forced to do so by its being a minority Government. An Independent member, the Hon. Norm Peterson, was elected Speaker with the support of the Labor Party, and at no time in the next four years did he attend meetings of the parliamentary Labor Party.

For the Labor Party it is like the man in psalm 84: 'who going through the vale of misery use it for a well: and the pools are filled with water'. The Hon. Norm Peterson fulfilled his duties admirably, especially on the score of impartiality. A member of the Opposition had this to say about him during a motion of no confidence in the Speaker that you, Sir, supported:

You have demonstrated a sense of fairness that I believe has been honoured and recognised by all.

I became a member in that Parliament. Perhaps I have been spoilt by the Hon. Norm Peterson's tenure of the office of Speaker and now notice the difference because I have not served—

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the honourable member that his motion is very narrow, and the Chair is of the belief that those comments are a reflection on the Chair. I ask the honourable member not to proceed on that line. He is aware of the Standing Orders.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Speaker, I have moved a substantive motion on the question of the speakership. The relevance of my remarks is to the question whether the Speaker ought to be sitting in the parliamentary Liberal Party. If I cannot make out a case for the Speaker's being required not to attend Party room meetings by referring to your record, Sir, as Speaker, then I would be unable to make out my case and I am effectively gagged.

The SPEAKER: I point out to the House, and I will read the motion to the honourable member again—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I suggest to the member for Hart that he not—

Mr Foley: You suggest what?

The SPEAKER: Order! The motion states:

That in the opinion of the House the Speaker ought not attend parliamentary Party meetings.

That is a narrow motion. Therefore, I point out to the honourable member that that does not give him the opportunity to be critical of the Chair. If he wants to proceed with criticisms of the Chair, there are forums open to him. The Standing Orders state quite clearly that if he or any member is not satisfied with the Chair they can, first, dissent from a ruling by a motion, or, secondly, they can move other motions in the House.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Speaker, before your indignation rises about this motion before us, I think you ought to recall how you voted on a motion to condemn the Speaker in the last Parliament.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order. I just heard the member for Spence refer to your indignation. I believe that is a reflection on you, Sir, as Speaker of this House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair is listening very carefully to the member for Spence and does not wish to be over-restrictive. However, the Chair will not permit criticism of either the current Chair or my predecessors. I cannot uphold the point of order.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Speaker, I do not see how I can make out a case for a change in the requirements of the Speaker by this House without being able to refer to your record and that of previous speakers. It is not possible to make out a case. I point out that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ATKINSON:—in the last Parliament, you, Sir, voted to condemn the then Speaker and, in doing so, you impliedly endorsed the remarks of the now Premier, then Leader, about the then Speaker, that he brought contempt and ridicule on the position of Speaker. Certainly I am not saying that you bring contempt and ridicule on the Parliament, as your Party said about the then Speaker in regard to a motion. However, I want to refer to your record and that of the previous Speaker on particular rulings to make out a case for my substantive motion and, unless I can do that, I am effectively gagged.

The SPEAKER: Order! So that there can be no misunderstanding I will read the motion to the House again. It states:

That in the opinion of the House the Speaker ought not attend parliamentary Party meetings.

I do not wish to restrict the member in his debate, given the inference that may come from that, but this motion is quite specific; it relates to the Speaker's attendance at Party meetings and does not contain criticism of the Chair. Any criticism of my or my predecessors' actions can be made only in a specific substantive motion. The wording of this motion does not allow that to continue. The member for Spence.

Mr ATKINSON: I find that an extraordinary ruling and it is not in accordance with precedents.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member is unhappy with the ruling, there is a proper process available to him.

Mr ATKINSON: I will consider your words very carefully indeed, Sir, and I may have to amend the motion.

An honourable member: You guys criticised Norm Peterson for years.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ATKINSON: So, when the current Speaker was in the last Parliament, he endorsed the words that the then Speaker had brought contempt and ridicule on the position of Speaker. However, times have changed; times have moved on. I would say that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and in what follows I hope to prove that this sauce has a bit more flavour than that which was applied to the last Speaker by the current Speaker and by the current Government. At least this motion is constructive.

The Speaker perhaps ought to reflect on his being named on 11 October 1972 for persistent defiance of the suggestions of the Chairman of Committees that his remarks be relevant to the clause. The Committee showed him mercy by accepting his apology—a mercy the Liberal Party has not extended

to the member for Ross Smith on the last two occasions of his being named.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order. I ask you again to rule on relevance, as those comments have nothing to do with the motion. My second point of order, if I may make two, is that I believe that that is a reflection—

Mr Foley: You cannot make two.

Mr BRINDAL: I will sit down, then get up and make another one if you want. My second point is that those remarks are a reflection on a decision of this House.

The SPEAKER: The member for Spence cannot reflect on decisions of the House. I point out to the member for Spence that on the first occasion the member for Ross Smith was named, on the advice of the Speaker, the House accepted his explanation. The member for Spence.

Mr ATKINSON: With respect, I did not say that the Speaker did not do that; I said 'on the last two occasions', so that really amounts to an interpolation into my speech. I did not claim that you had failed to show the member for Ross Smith mercy. If the House will grant me scope to make my point, I want to give examples of proceedings in the House in this session and the last which gave the Opposition a sense of being treated unjustly. Before doing so, I must in fairness note that the Speaker has begun each of the two sessions of Parliament with good intentions and, in my view, good deeds. At the start of each session few members were called to order and few were warned. Calls to order were distributed in reasonable proportion between the Government and the Opposition. A forthright attempt was made to prevent the Premier and his Ministers being irrelevant and prolix in their replies to questions: credit where credit is due. It is also said for the Speaker that he is more impartial than any recent Speaker of the House of Representatives. I would say that that is true, but then looking at the House of Representatives it is not saying much.

The people of South Australia voted in record numbers against the ALP on 11 December 1993. They reduced us to the smallest Opposition this century. We accept that judgment by the voters. We accept the vast majority that the Liberal Party now enjoys in this House. We in Opposition must bear not only the wave of derision from the Treasury benches when one of us rises to speak or take a point of order, but we must also endure interjections from alongside and behind us because the Government extends to what were hitherto Opposition benches.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Mr ATKINSON: Much. The Opposition was always going to find it difficult in this Parliament, but I raise the following points to illustrate my question to the Speaker: how difficult does it have to be? My illustrations are drawn from Question Time only. Twice in recent weeks the Deputy Premier has risen under the guise of a point of order to tell the Speaker to bring Opposition members to order. An independent Speaker would not need such guidance. An independent Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is implying that the Chair is taking instructions from the Government benches. Let me make it clear to the member for Spence that the Chair takes no such instructions. The Chair regards that as an unwarranted reflection on the Chair.

Mr ATKINSON: It would be an unwarranted reflection if I were making it separately from a substantive motion. I now have a substantive motion before the House, that the Speaker not attend parliamentary Party meetings, and I am

trying to make out a case for that motion. Unless I can refer to specific examples to make out a case, how can I—

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

Mr ATKINSON:—make out the case. I have unlimited time under the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! Under the Sessional Orders of the House, the honourable member has 15 minutes.

Mr BRINDAL secured the adjournment of the debate.

The SPEAKER: The adjourned debate be made an order of the day for?

Mr ATKINSON: Thursday next, Sir.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Spence that this is the House of Assembly in South Australia and he does not do himself or the House a great deal of good by making such comments.

Mr FOLEY: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. What comment did the member for Spence make that you found offensive? There was no comment made that was offensive.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Hart that, in the view of the Chair, the tone and the manner of the last response of the member for Spence was unnecessary, and the Chair stands by that ruling.

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Given your last ruling, how will any member of this House be able to anticipate the Chair's response to any nuance or tone members may use?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair will ensure that all members are given the opportunity to discharge their duties as a member of this House. The Chair has been most tolerant with members. I suggest to members that they make a close study of the *Hansard*; I believe the comments I have made can easily be justified.

BERRI BRIDGE

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Andrew:

That this House supports the need for a bridge over the river Murray near Berri and urges the Government to carry out its assessments of the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies report 'An evaluation of a Proposal for a Bridge at Berri' so that a decision on the proposed bridge is made as soon as possible.

(Continued from 20 October. Page 744.)

Motion carried.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Adjourned debate on motion of Mrs Rosenberg:

That this House urges the Federal Parliament to make such legislative and administrative changes as necessary to require recipients of social security unemployment payments for 12 months or more to perform work for a proportion of each week either for local government or in a community service program within the locality in which they live, if not already in an approved training course.

(Continued from 25 August. Page 326.)

Mr De LAINE (Price): I move:

That the debate be further adjourned.

The SPEAKER: Is that motion seconded? For the question say 'Aye'; against, 'No'. The Ayes have it. The adjourned debate be made an order of the day for—

Mr Lewis: No.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the adjourned debate be made an order of the day for—

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order, Sir: when you put the question that the debate be adjourned I called 'No'. You did not invite me—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member was entitled to speak. The motion that the debate be adjourned was moved and we are now determining the date to which the debate will be adjourned.

Mr LEWIS: Mr Speaker, I called 'No'; you did not declare the vote either aye or nay and denied me the opportunity to call a division, which I choose to call.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair has not got to that stage. When the honourable member rose the Chair was about to put the motion. For the benefit of the honourable member I will put the motion again. The question before the Chair is that the debate be adjourned.

The House divided on the motion:

AYES (10)

Atkinson, M. J.	Blevins, F. T.
Clarke, R. D.	De Laine, M. R. (teller)
Foley, K. O.	Geraghty, R. K.
Hurley, A. K.	Quirke, J. A.
Rann, M. D.	Stevens, L.

NOES (26)

Allison, H.	Andrew, K. A.
Armitage, M. H.	Ashenden, E. S.
Baker, S. J.	Bass, R. P.
Becker, H.	Brindal, M. K.
Brokenshire, R. L.	Buckby, M. R.
Caudell, C. J.	Condous, S. G.
Evans, I. F.	Greig, J. M.
Kerin, R. G.	Leggett, S. R.
Lewis, I. P. (teller)	Matthew, W. A.
Meier, E. J.	Penfold, E. M.
Rosenberg, L. F.	Rossi, J. P.
Scalzi, G.	Such, R. B.
Venning, I. H.	Wotton, D. C.

Majority of 16 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I thank the House for the opportunity in private members' time to debate this motion, which I support. The member for Kaurna has previously outlined the reasons for the motion. She provided ample information and statistics with regard to the severity of unemployment in Australia and pointed to the strong correlation between unemployment and health problems. I wish to complement those statistics by referring to the statistics relating to the Federal budget that was brought down earlier this year.

If we were to be optimistic, as Treasurer Willis implied in his forecast of a 4.5 per cent increase in gross domestic product, the unemployment level would still be around 9.5 per cent, or just under one million. If we are to look into the long term, with a so-called full employment target of 5 per cent, we would still have 500 000 unemployed Australians. Even if his forecasts are correct, and I agree with commentators that they are optimistic, given the current economic circumstances with interest rates and so on, we have a long-term serious problem which is beyond the normal short-term cycles. As outlined by the member for Kaurna, this has serious consequences when the 20 to 25 year old age group makes up 20 per cent of the long-term unemployed.

In South Australia, with just under a 40 per cent unemployment rate for the 15 to 19 year age group statewide, there

are very serious concerns. There is a huge probability that a significant proportion of the population, especially the young, are marginalised from mainstream society. I commend the Federal Government for some of its initiatives to deal with the unemployment problem and, in many ways, when these initiatives are taken, we should have a bipartisan approach. The incentives and training programs are good short-term measures, but it is like giving aspirin to someone with a brain tumour because they have a headache. The Federal programs still fail to give real incentives for the provision of long term jobs, to give a sense of responsibility, to allow people to contribute to the society in which they live, and to feel successful. Even if all the programs were successful, we still talk of 5 per cent full unemployment, with 500 000 Australians without jobs.

Some academics talk about educating for leisure and promote the economic argument that we must be prepared to support such a number. I reject the notion of condemning such a large number of Australians to the scrap heap. There are enormous social consequences if we do not promote the participation of such large numbers of Australians. If we ask ourselves the question, 'Why do people work?' there is a variety of reasons why people work. It is not just one factor, such as for money. It varies with individuals, but all have ingredients of the following. It is often a combination: to have an income; to have some money for family support; to support leisure activities; to feel part of society; to increase participation; to gain experience and to promote self-esteem.

When one is employed, it increases his or her well-being. There is a positive multiplier, not only in economic terms but in social and emotional terms, and society does benefit, because we well know that if the individual has a sense of well-being, then society has a sense of well-being, and the families associated with those individuals who are working have a sense of well-being. When that is the case, there is less stress on the State to be able to provide for those individuals who are not as fortunate as many of us here today. Unemployment has the opposite effect, with negative social consequences. Work is important to an individual's well-being. Without work, the possibility to participate and contribute is diminished. With work, it is increased. You cannot participate fully in society if you are marginalised, unemployed or not involved.

By international standards even the unemployed appear to be relatively well off. They appear to have the basics for survival, at least in the physical sense. The social security system addresses many of the individual's physical needs. That is provided by all Governments, regardless of political persuasion, and as Australians we should all be proud of the fact that we do care for the less well off and the underprivileged. The dole and other social security benefits do provide in this sense, and rightly so, but no amount of social security can provide for self-esteem, a feeling of participation, a feeling that you are contributing and, ultimately, a sense of self-worth. What we need is not a safety net, but a trampoline. We need to have a trampoline mentality, not a safety net that forever entangles the individual and makes them dependent.

The resources within an individual are his or her greatest assets. Research supports networks and community networks often provide the jobs that give a start, especially to young people. We have found that a lot of jobs are found or given to an individual through family contacts and by being able to be involved with community organisations, friends and, again, as I said, these community networks. In other words,

when one knows someone they are often willing to give them a try. So families, networks, friends and community organisations are often important bouncing boards for the unemployed.

That is precisely what this motion intends to promote: to increase networks, to increase participation and to increase choice. Individuals can be involved with local governments, organisations such as St Vincent De Paul, the Salvation Army, Greening Australia and important community organisations which will provide that sense of participation and self-worth. This will ultimately lead to a community well-being. We have a choice to be a wealthy State or a community State: one encourages dependence and the other independence, participation and contribution.

Education does not stop with school; it is a lifelong process. Community involvement is part of that process. The unemployed are not to blame; they must not be made to feel that it is their fault. In fact, when I used to teach career education one of the first things that I used to put on the blackboard was, 'Do not make a career your life, but make a career of life.' To do that and to participate in that lifelong term promotion of the individual, one must have the commitment to be involved in the community and not just be given handouts, because that ultimately does not reward the resources that are within that individual. Working for the dole will promote responsibility, participation, contribution and a sense of well-being. That is what this motion is all about: to give those people who are not as fortunate as we are an opportunity to participate and be part of society. Imagine what people feel like when someone asks, 'What do you do?' and they have to say 'I am unemployed.'

Mr FOLEY (Hart): I find the member for Hartley one of the more sincere members in this Chamber and I respect his opinion on many issues, but this motion shows the Liberal Party for what it is. The hidden message in this motion is that anybody who cannot get a job after 12 months is a dole bludger, that anyone who is not fortunate enough to be in the work force after 12 months is a scab and a dole bludger. That is the message that Liberal members are sending in this motion. Let us have a look at what the Federal Liberal Party wanted to do at the last election. I remind members opposite what Fightback wanted to do for the unemployed in this nation.

After 12 months the Liberal Party wanted to eliminate the dole. If you could not get a job after nine months, out the window went the dole. That is what John Hewson wanted. What about John Howard's youth wage? It is a policy that the Liberal Party is still putting forward. A youth wage of \$3 an hour was the Liberal Party's answer to unemployment. The Federal Liberal Party is bereft of any labour market or economic policies that will get this country working again.

John Hewson has referred to the renters and the dole bludgers, and that is what this motion is all about. The Liberal Party has the impression that any person who is not fortunate enough to enter the work force after a period of unemployment must be a dole bludger: that is implicit in this motion. That is the underlying cruel nature of the conservative party of this country. The Liberal Party is a cruel party. If we look at what happens at the Federal level—

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Given the number of interjections that occur on the Government side, and in particular the way a certain number of Opposition members have been ticked off in the past about

interjections, I would appreciate it, Mr Deputy Speaker, if you dragged your members into gear.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member is well aware that interjections of any description are out of order. The member for Hart is being slightly antagonistic in light of the debate. I request that members refrain from being incited and to take the opportunity, which is open to the majority of them, to put their names on the substantial speaking list for this topic.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am standing up and defending the unemployed in this nation who do not deserve the implication that if they cannot get a job after 12 months they are somehow dole bludgers. I repeat the point that the Liberal Party is a cruel party in respect of the unemployed. Look at what John Howard has professed for the past, five, six or eight years. John Howard wants to take away the safety net and the award system. He wants a \$3 per hour youth wage, and he wants to remove unemployment benefits after 9 months. John Howard is a cruel politician. Why have Australians rejected the Federal Liberal Party for the past 11 years? Why does the Liberal Party think it has been rejected election after election? It has been rejected because the general public of this nation know that the Liberal Party is a cruel party when it comes to economic policies and policies in respect of labour market programs.

Let us look at what the Federal Labor Government has done to improve employment in this nation. Let us look at the Working Nation document that is creating a future for our unemployed. The Working Nation document has been roundly supported by every walk of life in the community, from the social services groups through to community and employer groups, but not by the Liberal Party, not this mean, dispirited, cruel Liberal Party, which can never acknowledge at the Federal level that some policies the Federal Government puts in place are good policies. I acknowledge that the member for Hartley has done that in this Chamber. I do not include him in my umbrella of criticism about the Liberal Party because he is certainly a sincere man. We are not debating the relative merits of the State Liberal Party but the relative merits of the Federal Labor Government and the Federal Liberal Party. If members opposite want to stand in this Chamber and support John Hewson and little Johnny Howard and his \$3 youth wage and reduction of the dole after nine months—

Mr Kerin interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Alexander Downer has not repudiated these policies: they are still on the table. These are included in 'The Things That Matter'. I want to expose this motion for what it is. It is a shallow attempt at cheap headlines. I am disappointed that the member for Kaurua framed such a motion. I would have expected it from the member for Lee, but I am disappointed that the member for Kaurua feels so politically vulnerable that she must seek that support in the community at which these sorts of motions are targeted. I am disappointed, but we all make mistakes in this Chamber and I am sure the member will see the error of her ways.

Members interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: No, I have made a number of mistakes. Unemployment is a tragedy of this nation. We have a Federal Government that is working towards making worthwhile employment available to every able person in this nation. The reality is that there are long-term unemployed in our community; it is a great tragedy and a sad fact. It should not be assumed that, after 12 months of unemployment, everybody

is a dole bludger or that everybody does not want to work, because that is not the truth. I know many people, even in my own family and amongst close friends, who have been unemployed for more than 12 months and they scour the papers, walk the streets and make telephone calls every day in a desperate attempt to find employment. They should not be branded dole bludgers. It should not be implied that they are somehow rotting the system, sitting back collecting their dole cheque and watching television. They are not doing that—they are pounding the pavements.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The members for Mawson and Colton.

Mr FOLEY: If members have not had a visit from constituents who have been unemployed for more than 12 months, who are knocking on doors every day, walking the streets looking for work or going to the local CES office every day, they have not seen enough constituents. I have plenty in my electorate and I am standing here today defending those people and defending the sincerity with which they are attempting to seek employment. Members opposite can sit in this Chamber and heckle me, deride me, yell at me and—

Mrs Rosenberg interjecting:

Mr FOLEY: Interjections do not bother me. Members opposite should remember that when polling day comes their electors will remember those people who stood up in this Chamber and defended them as human beings. They will remember that Labor members did not come in here making cheap political points with motions that are nothing more than cheap stunts. Members opposite should ask their Federal colleagues why they are so cruel and mean when it comes to the unemployed. Your Party needs decent Federal policies.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. I point out that the member for Hanson was interjecting away from his seat.

Members interjecting:

Mr BASS (Florey): Obviously the member for Hart had nothing prepared, so he stood up and let fly with some of the worst verbal diatribe I have heard in this place. It is unworthy of the member for Hart to make those comments. I thought he was going to be a good member, but if he keeps that up that probably will not be the case.

Unemployment benefits assist those who, unfortunately, cannot find employment. The benefit assists people to support a family or to support themselves. In today's environment, many unemployed people have no qualifications or they have qualifications in areas where vacancies are not available to them. This motion requires people who have been receiving unemployment payments for 12 months to perform some sort of community service work. It is not slave labour: it is giving these people an opportunity to be involved in something that might, in the future, help them find a job. The Leap program, which has just been completed in my electorate, is an example.

The program was carried out in conjunction with the Tea Tree Gully council and involved 15 long-term unemployed young people, both male and female. They were taken to the Edinburgh Reserve, a large area of land through which a creek runs into the Torrens River. An unemployed mature-aged person was given the job of looking after these people. Over six months, they attended to this area: they planted over 400 shrubs, they were shown how to lay underground pipes for irrigation, and they were taught about maintenance of land

and how to look after trees to ensure that they survive in our harsh climate. And through a vacant block of land on the other side of the creek they constructed a long path of paving bricks.

Nine of these young people completed the six months and the other six found employment in the type of industry about which they had learnt during their two or three months in this Leap program. I was invited to the opening of the Edinburgh Reserve and I spoke to some of these people. One young man came up to me and I said to him, 'Did you enjoy the six months?' He said, 'I learnt a lot. I wasn't getting on well at home. I was sitting around with nothing to do and, suddenly, I had an objective.'

Instead of waking up in the morning and saying, 'What am I going to do?', he knew that, with the friends he had made since being involved in the program, he had to continue the work he had started. One of the youths could not read or write and his new friends in the project actually taught him how to read and write; and, when the course was finished, he wanted to attend classes so that he could further his education. These people were not treated as dole bludgers: they were given an objective in life. And not only were they given an objective but, over the six months, they learnt something that would give them a good chance of getting employment in the future.

I asked one of these young people what he wanted to do in the future, and he said, 'I really want to get involved on the land. I did not like it when I started, but over the past six months I can see the progress I have made, and it has given me a good feeling.' This person had been unemployed for nearly two years, he had no self-esteem, he did not know what to do with his life and, because he was given the chance to do something, he was quite proud of himself. He now had a craft, so to speak: he knew how to plant trees and to lay irrigation pipes and brick pavers.

As part of this course, these people took it in turns to be the boss under the supervisor, so they learnt a little about being responsible. For the member for Hart to say that we are picking on dole bludgers is absolutely ridiculous. We are trying to give these unemployed people the opportunity to gain a skill. If they gain that skill and if within a few months, as many of these people did, they gain employment, we have achieved something. The member for Kaurna's motion will give the long-term unemployed, those who obviously have a problem because either they lack skill or have a skill that no-one wants, the opportunity to learn another skill in the work force. They will then have a good chance of gaining employment and getting off the roller-coaster.

Members of my family have been unemployed, and I know that they do not like it. Youths of today are no different from youths of the 1950s, when I was a youth—if I can remember back that far.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr BASS: It could be the 1930s. When I left school I could have had one of six jobs. As life went on, I had two or three jobs, and then I joined the Police Force. It must have been fairly easy to get in.

Mr Foley interjecting:

Mr BASS: I think they might have been. Still, I had a job, and the youths who left school with me also gained employment. Youths of today have no future whatsoever, thanks to the Federal Labor Government helped along by the previous State Labor Government. I agree that these people should never be treated as dole bludgers. They must be given the opportunity to improve their skills, and why not do that whilst they receive unemployment benefits? Many councils could

undertake a similar task as that undertaken by the Edinburgh Reserve. I invite any member, especially the member for Hart, to have a cup of coffee with me and I will take them to the Edinburgh Reserve. This project was conducted entirely by unemployed people, and it has given all those people self-esteem. They have learnt a new skill, and they have gone out to look for work in that area. I am sure that the proposal of the member for Kaurna would improve the position of many unemployed people and give them the chance to obtain employment in the future. I support the motion.

Mr CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

AUDIT COMMISSION

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Premier): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am pleased to present to the House, the response by the Government to the report of the Commission of Audit. Members will recall that I tabled the report of the Commission of Audit on 3 May of this year. Within two days of taking office, the Government had appointed the commission to make an independent assessment of the State's financial position, and to provide the Government with advice on measures necessary to restore the State's finances and rebuild public confidence in Government administration.

The commission's work was extensive—easily the most extensive of any of the commissions of this type appointed by State Governments in recent years. I undertook when I tabled the commission's report to provide a response to the Parliament by the end of October on all the commission's recommendations. I now do so.

In summary, our response shows that the Government has adopted, in whole or in part, 273 of the commission's 336 recommendations. The Government has rejected 17 recommendations, and the remainder are still under consideration. The level of acceptance of the commission's recommendations is an important indication of the extent of this Government's public sector reform program—a reform program that is setting new standards in Australia for the management of public finances and effective public administration to assist economic and social development.

Central to all of the commission's recommendations was its identification of an underlying budget deficit of \$350 million a year. That is, this Government inherited a situation that would have added more than \$1 000 million to the State's debt in just three years. This was a situation that had to be addressed with the utmost urgency. Accordingly, on 31 May, the Treasurer released a comprehensive statement detailing measures that the Government was immediately putting in place to reduce the deficit and contain spending.

The measures that the Treasurer announced at that time are now reflected in the forward budget strategy. Members will recognise that the Commission of Audit also addressed many other major issues of Government administration. Its report was a far reaching document that dealt comprehensively with the need for reform of the management and accountability of the public sector.

I take the opportunity to remind the House that the commission said, in effect, that South Australians have a

clear choice between restoring an affordable and efficient public sector and maintaining a public sector which had become inefficient and a growing burden on the social and economic well-being of the State. The former is essential: the latter, unthinkable.

From the day we took office, we have demonstrated that we will not permit this State to go on being the poor cousin of the Federation, sinking into national and international obscurity. At the time I tabled the report of the Commission of Audit in May, I indicated that the Government would institute a comprehensive process of consultation on the commission's findings. Since tabling the report, the Government has been taking active steps to ensure that all the matters it raised were considered properly and in detail.

The Government invited comment on the report from public sector employees, trade unions, business groups, community organisations and, indeed, all South Australians, through public advertisements. In all, over 4 000 written responses were received. Many constructive and sensible comments were made in those written responses. I thank all of those who have made contributions to this process.

I recognise, in particular, the positive, constructive and enthusiastic manner in which many sections of the public sector have received and responded to this report. Through individual Ministers, all Government agencies were required to respond in detail to the recommendations of the Commission of Audit and to establish plans for their implementation. The continuing progress of agencies in implementing recommendations will be closely monitored by individual Ministers. A process based on the agency plans has been established within the Office for Public Sector Management to assist them to do so.

In honouring the undertaking to table a full response, I now table a schedule of the Government's intentions in relation to all the recommendations of the Commission of Audit. This schedule is divided into two sections. The first deals with the Government's response to the whole of Government recommendations made by the Commission of Audit. The second addresses the recommendations made in relation to individual agencies. The Government fully intends that the valuable work done by the commission will be continued through the process of planning and implementation to which I have already referred.

The Government has endorsed the general thrust and major directions set by the Commission of Audit. Many of the recommendations have already been acted upon as part of the preparation of the financial strategy announced in May by the Treasurer and confirmed when the budget was brought down at the end of August. In particular, the Government has adopted and implemented the overall strategy for the unfunded liability and the reduction of debt, and is taking positive action in relation to asset management, the implementation of accrual accounting, the integrated management cycle and the reform of the program budgeting format.

The Government has accepted in principle the proposal for a Financial Reporting Act but is still considering the wider implications in terms of existing legislation. Many of the recommendations concerning Government business policy were addressed in the May statement and the budget. In general the Government has endorsed the recommendations and most are being implemented now. For example, the Government has already announced a major initiative in information technology. This is one of the largest outsourcing proposals in the world and will bring major benefits to the State as well as substantially reducing Government IT costs.

Other major initiatives taken include the corporatisation of the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the creation of the South Australian Ports Corporation and TransAdelaide, and the outsourcing of Government services in the building, construction and maintenance areas. In relation to agency performance, the Government has accepted most of the recommendations of the Commission of Audit and expects all agencies to achieve best practice benchmarked against national and international standards.

The Commission of Audit made a considerable number of recommendations in relation to individual agencies. These have been examined in detail and the Government's position on them is in the report I have just tabled. The people of South Australia have a right to expect first class Government services. These have to be provided efficiently, effectively and at a level consistent with the capacity of the public to pay. At the same time the Government has been ready to accept comments and suggestions made during the consultative process which question or oppose the recommendations of the commission. This has applied particularly where the social and economic cost of accepting a recommendation would have meant even greater hardship than the citizens of the State have already been made to bear by past Government failures.

Similarly, whilst the Government has every intention of vigorously pursuing improvements in public sector management efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, this will be through management reform. Public employees are the Government's most valued asset and they have played an important role in implementing major reforms very quickly indeed. Consequently, on the basis of maintaining equity and industrial harmony in the environment of enterprise bargaining and reform, the Government has not adopted some of the commission's recommendations in relation to the conditions of employment of public employees. I commend to the House the schedule of the Government's response to the recommendations of the Commission of Audit.

WATER PLAN

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Liberal Government undertook to prepare a water plan for South Australia in its pre-election policy on national resources, environment and conservation. This policy commitment was made for four reasons. First, many of our rivers, lakes and estuaries have lost the diverse and abundant wildlife that thrived in them when we were children. Secondly, the quality of water has deteriorated; for example, we see more and more algal blooms in our rivers, lakes and estuaries. Thirdly, water is seen as limiting economic development. However, much of our water is used inadequately, locked away in unused allocations or, in the case of urban stormwater and treated effluent, its potential is not recognised. Fourthly, we need to get more from the sustainable use of our natural assets, including water, to support economic and employment growth and debt reduction over the long term.

The SA Water Plan will describe what water is available throughout South Australia, the way we use water now and may want to use it in the future, how water should be managed and protected and who is accountable for the management, allocation and protection of water. The water

plan will establish how Government will achieve its vision for water, namely, that South Australians recognise water as a most precious resource. Through innovation and best practice in its management and use, water sustains healthy ecosystems and South Australia's development opportunities. The water plan will focus on change. It will challenge the way things are done now, so we can build on what we do well with innovation. To achieve our vision we must use our water resources more effectively, improve the quality of our water, work together, improve our expertise and understanding and provide cost-effective water services that distribute the costs equitably.

An effective water management program requires the State Government to have productive partnerships with local government and the community. They need to be strengthened and a whole of Government approach needs to be taken. I have asked the South Australian Water Resources Council to provide me with recommendations on water planning in consultation with stakeholder groups. They will deliver these recommendations to me in April next year. The South Australian Water Resources Council has prepared a discussion paper entitled 'A State view of our water resources' and a series of regional information sheets headed 'The status of key water resources in South Australia'.

The first of these papers focuses on what change is required and how it might occur, by drawing out water issues and the key areas for change. An extensive list of strategy options is provided for discussion. The second paper summarises the location, quantity and quality of the State's water resources, including urban stormwater and treated effluent, for the first time in a document of this type. The available water, its allocation and use are listed, with comments on sustainable management issues and opportunities for the future. These documents will be distributed to an extensive list of stakeholders at the end of this week, and interested individuals will also be able to obtain copies.

During the next month the Water Resources Council will approach peak organisations with an interest in water to develop papers which focus on particular stakeholders in water management, including local government, irrigators, farmers in water catchments, industry and the environment. These stakeholder papers will be used as a basis for extensive consultation later this year and in the new year. The discussions will focus on appropriate strategies and their impact. Water Week is a most appropriate time to launch a consultation program on planning for the future of our water in South Australia. All South Australians are encouraged to take part in shaping the future by commenting on these papers and actively participating in the consultation process.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): I bring up the thirteenth report of the committee on the Canadair CL415 inquiry and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Deputy Premier): I congratulate the committee and move:

That the report be printed.

Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME

WORKCOVER

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Affairs. Who authorised the raid on the independent WorkCover Review Office by WorkCover's Fraud Investigation Unit; what records and documents were seized or viewed during the raid; and can the Minister guarantee that WorkCover will not use any of the information gained in the raid against injured workers taking matters to review?

There have been media reports today that, during the hunt for the person or persons responsible for the leaking of the Government's secret WorkCover Bill, the independent review section was raided by WorkCover's own officers. The Fraud Squad sought transmission records from a fax machine, but other material may also have been taken and/or viewed by the raiders. It is understood that, after complaining about the conduct of the raid, a WorkCover review officer was questioned by the police. WorkCover review officers have quasi-judicial powers and are meant to be independent of the corporation as they hand down determinations on appeals against WorkCover without fear or favour. Concerns have been expressed that this raid was an attack on the independence of review officers.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: As I reported to the House the other day, the whole exercise as it related to the involvement of a union official was authorised by Mr Lew Owens.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr CUMMINS (Norwood): Is the Premier aware of a recent decision by the Federal Government on the management of information technology services and, if so, to what extent, if any, do they follow the format set by the South Australian Government?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Yes, I am aware of an announcement by the Federal Government on 21 October. It is interesting that the Federal Government has acknowledged that it should now look at the establishment of independent information technology outsourcing at Federal level. To do that, it has set up an information technology review group to assist the Government to identify opportunities for the more cost-effective delivery of Government IT services. That statement was put out by the Hon. Kym Beazley, the Minister for Finance. In his press release, he put out four terms of reference for the review. The second was:

To identify and assess recent State Government and overseas initiatives in the provision of computing services by Government agencies with particular reference to any initiatives to secure economies of scale by adopting a whole of Government approach.

It is interesting, because only one Government in the whole of Australia has adopted a whole of Government approach. The South Australian Government is probably one of the first, if not the first, in the world to adopt a whole of Government approach, and this has now been widely recognised throughout the world. It is interesting that in the computer pages of the *Australian* of Tuesday 25 October, where it was writing up the announcement by the Federal Minister, it stated:

The terms of reference also suggest that the Government is keen to learn from the more aggressive approaches taken by the State Governments, notably the recent large South Australian outsourcing project.

The article then recognises that South Australia has signed with EDS probably the largest outsourcing contract in the whole of Australia.

It is also interesting to see the extent of outsourcing carried out by other State Governments. Despite the recognition by the Federal Minister that other State Governments have done some outsourcing, looking at the figures we see that the South Australian Government is the only one to have taken any move to outsource all of its data processing. To have done so uniformly across the whole of Government and to have taken a whole of Government approach is an innovative step.

We are delighted that the Federal Government has now recognised that this Government has taken a pioneering step. The Government of Australia, which has been in office for more than 10 years, has now recognised that what the Liberal Government in South Australia has done in the past 10 months is worth following, and it has set up a task force to make sure that it can follow suit. The good news from this is that, when the Federal Labor Government finally adopts this practice of outsourcing and does so with a whole of Government approach, hopefully the message will filter down through the Labor Party so that even members like the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hart might finally get the message from within their own Party that what we have done is good for South Australians, that it will save taxpayers money and that it is a very revolutionary and pioneering step in information technology.

WORKCOVER

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Has the Minister for Industrial Affairs requested a full report from Mr Dahlenburg, Chairperson of the WorkCover Advisory Board, on his comments to the board about the Minister's reaction to the release of the secret WorkCover Bill, and does the Minister still accept Mr Dahlenburg's advice that he told the committee that 'the Minister was very annoyed at the leak and the matter was being investigated'? The Opposition now has statutory declarations from two members of that committee. They have declared that Mr Dahlenburg told the committee that the Minister 'ordered' the police investigation.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I think I will read out the statutory declaration from Mr Dahlenburg because, as I said the other day, Mr Dahlenburg did telephone our office and advise exactly. Since it is now in a statutory form, I think it is much better if I read it out. It states:

I, Robert Louis Dahlenburg do solemnly and sincerely declare that in my capacity as Chairman of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Advisory Committee, I chaired a meeting of that committee on the morning of Friday October 21, 1994. Whilst the issue—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Just hang on. It continues:

Whilst the issue of the 'leaked document' was discussed on two separate occasions during the meeting, at no time did I advise the committee that the Minister had ordered the police inquiry. However, I did indicate—

as I said to the House the other day—

in general discussion on the issue that the Minister was most annoyed that the document had been leaked and that he was keen for the CEO of WorkCover to get to the bottom of who was responsible. I also indicated at some time that the Minister—

Mr Clarke: That is not what you said the other day.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It is exactly what I said the other day. It continues:

I also indicated at some time that the Minister was aware that the matter was being investigated.

For the benefit of the member for Spence, that is signed by Mr Dahlenburg and witnessed by Mr D.K. Arthur, J.P., a Justice of the Peace in and for the State of South Australia.

ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS

Mr BECKER (Peake): Will the Treasurer inform the House of the progress being made to improve financial accounting systems within Government? In recent years the Auditor-General has been extremely critical of the standard of financial accounting within the Government. Indeed, a recommendation of the Commission of Audit was that all public sector agencies in South Australia should prepare general purpose financial reports using the accrual basis of accounting, commencing with the 1996-97 financial year. Those statements should comply with the Australian accounting standards.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I thank the member for Peake for his question; I know his deep and abiding interests in accountability. The Government is pleased to announce that Computer Associates and the Masterpiece suite of programs is being mandated for the whole of Government. This means that for the first time Government will have a consistent accounting and financial system in place. I would like to reveal to the House that the Masterpiece 3 software, for which the licence has been granted, includes a number of modules: general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, fixed assets, fund accounting, purchase orders, inventory control, job costing, order processing and labour distribution.

So, I would like to make a very strong point to this House and it reflects the decay that crept into Government over a long period of time. I asked one of my officers to check on what systems were operating within departments. Many of the departments were unable to tell us exactly which licences had been issued for which software programs in this accounting and financial area. However, we did a quick check of certain agencies and we counted up to 20 different accounts receivable systems across a number of agencies. We did not finish the process because we thought the point had been proved.

Every agency has developed its own system over time without any possibility of feeding that information back into a central system so that we know exactly what is happening in Government. Not only has the Auditor-General reflected on the lack of consistency of accounting systems across the public sector but, of course, members reading the Audit Commission report would clearly understand that one of the significant recommendations—and a number of recommendations—related to accounting processes and financial accountability within Government.

We have not previously had the tools to do this properly because Government has never bothered. In the past it has let each agency do its own thing without any associated responsibility and accountability. We are pleased to report that there will be one system in operation. It will take some time to implement and it will mean that there will have to be some changes made in the way certain finance sections approach their tasks but, importantly, we want to be fully prepared to introduce accrual accounting across all agencies in 1996-97. We want to be able to meet the Auditor-General's recommen-

dations that we have whole of Government accounting, and he has made those recommendations in the last two Auditor-General's Reports.

We are taking a significant step forward. This is the most efficient, effective and certainly most cost-efficient package that we were able to contract. That contract took some months to complete, but what we will now have is the best and eventually, when the departments implement it to the extent that we believe is appropriate, we will have a system whereby, at any one point in time, we will be able to tell exactly what the state of the finances are, exactly how the revenue position is being maintained or otherwise and exactly what is happening with our assets. Indeed, Government will be in a much healthier state, because each department and agency will no longer be able to say, 'We do not know.' I thank the member for Peake for his question.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): My question is also directed to the Treasurer. Has the Government appointed a new General Manager for SAFA? Is that person a former Victorian Treasury official, and could the House be made aware of the salary package details for that appointment which the Opposition believes is in the order of \$200 000 a year?

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: I can assure the honourable member that the last point is totally incorrect.

An honourable member: Three hundred.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Very funny. As reported to me earlier this week, the negotiations have reached a stage of almost finality. I have not talked to the Under Treasurer today to ascertain whether everything has been signed off. We are well aware that the marketplace has been talking about this issue and it was to be the subject of a ministerial statement next week. What the honourable member is saying is absolutely correct. I hope that all the details—

The Hon. Dean Brown: Certainly the appointment, not the salary.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Yes, not the salary, but certainly the appointment. I hope all the matters have been finalised because we are in the process of negotiation, and I was well aware there was some discussion outside the bounds of my office on this matter. Yes, we believe that, if that has been finalised—and I understand the documents are with the Commissioner for Public Employment right at this moment—we will have a very fine leader of our South Australian Government Financing Authority—a person who comes highly recommended, who has had extensive experience in the T-Corp in Victoria and, of course, who likes the idea of coming to South Australia and coming to work for a very strongly focused and innovative Government.

JOB VACANCIES

Mr LEGGETT (Hanson): Will the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education report to the House on the latest survey of skilled job vacancies in South Australia?

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I thank the member for Hanson for the question because it is another good news answer. The skills vacancy survey conducted by the Federal department DEET is based on a count of vacancies in the major metropolitan newspapers of each State and the Northern Territory. The latest figures available today show that South Australia

has recorded its sixth consecutive monthly rise in skilled job vacancies. Skilled job vacancies rose by 6 per cent in the month to October—the second highest monthly rise of any State. Compared to October last year, vacancies rose by 62 per cent, which is a significant increase and an indication that employers have confidence in the Government and the economy here in South Australia.

When those figures are combined with the Bureau of Statistics figures showing that 16 200 people have entered new full-time jobs since January, it provides further evidence of increasing confidence in South Australia. The growth in skilled job vacancies has been in the areas of nursing, printing, electrical, electronics and computing. Within the good news there is an important message for employers, that is, to make sure that they have enough trained people to meet the growing demands of our economy, because down the track there will be increasing requirements for highly skilled people. I have been saying this for many months and advising industry and employers to take on new people, to train them and also to train and retrain their existing work force.

Whilst the figures are exceptionally good news, within them there is the notification to employers to boost their training and to increase the number of skilled personnel within their particular industry.

HOUSING TRUST RENTS

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition): When will the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations announce the Government's decision on market rentals for non-subsidised trust accommodation and on increasing subsidised rentals from 18 per cent towards 25 per cent to 30 per cent of income? During the Estimates Committee, the Minister said the Government was looking at the options for a market-related rent structure and is considering the Audit Commission's recommendation to increase rents.

On page 66 of today's Government response to the Audit Commission (announced previously as the final response) the recommendation to set public housing rents more closely in accordance with general market levels was listed as 'still under consideration'. Housing Trust tenants in Burton, Paralowie and Salisbury North want the Opposition to find out when that announcement will be made and, of course, now know why the Liberal Party is not running a candidate in next week's by-election.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader knows that he is commenting. Surely, the Chair should not have to call him to order. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: The final words of the honourable member's explanation summarised exactly what was to be the start of my reply: that we now have another by-election coming on. I well recall in the Torrens by-election—

The Hon. M.D. Rann: And we were right.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to resume his seat. Until the House comes to order there will be no further proceedings. If members are not prepared to act in a manner which the public expects, the Chair will take various actions to ensure that the conduct of the House is as it should be. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: Thank you, Sir. During the Torrens by-election campaign, I was asked exactly the same question purely because the Opposition wanted to raise an issue in the House for the purposes of that campaign. I could

refer the honourable member to the answer I gave in relation to the Torrens by-election and just sit down, because the answer is the same. However, I will add one other aspect to it: this question of market rent is a very complex one and it is genuinely under consideration, because when you start looking at market rents many properties will come down in value, and therefore the rents will come down in value. It is not a question of rents skyrocketing out of all proportion, as is peddled by the Labor Party: the reality is that, when property values come down, rents come down.

The Housing Trust is looking at computer models, which are indicating that there will be drops in rent in regard to many properties and, indeed, where the current by-election will be conducted there will be drops in rentals on properties if it ever went over—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: Members opposite should tell their constituents that, if they went over to market rents, on many occasions their rents would drop. As stated in the report tabled today, the matter is under consideration; that is an accurate statement, and in due course the Housing Trust computer runs will come to me and the Government will make a decision.

CONVENTIONS

Mr CAUDELL (Mitchell): Can the Minister for Tourism inform the House of a recent decision which means that the international convention spotlight shines even more brightly on South Australia? South Australia is already a well established convention venue and hosts almost 20 per cent of all conventions held in Australia. The convention sector is a healthy contributor to the State's economy with positive effects on employment and tourism.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: It gives me a great deal of pleasure to inform the House that Pieter van der Hoeven, the General Manager of the Adelaide Convention Centre, has just been elected President of the International Congress and Convention Association, which makes him the world President. It is a very influential position, and it will focus clearly on the ability for South Australia to maintain its position as the nation's leading convention centre. I thank the honourable member for the comments in relation to our reputation: we now have over 18 per cent of the convention business lined up for the next three years, and that is an excellent result compared to some of the previous results we have had in tourism.

Mr van der Hoeven is the first person outside Europe to be elected as the President of this very important group and, on behalf of the Government, we ought to congratulate him on doing such an excellent job and being appointed to that position.

WATER RATES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. How much will household water rates be increased as a result of the Government's adoption of the Audit Commission recommendation 14.2, to remove the free water allowance and to eliminate wherever possible cross-subsidies for water?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: This matter was raised in the House just last week with the Minister for Infrastructure, who said that the Government had no proposal put to Cabinet, and

I can assure the honourable member that no proposal has yet been put to Cabinet.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I know it says that the Government is going to adopt it, but there has been no firm proposal.

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Just listen.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: We are going to adopt the recommendation, but no proposal has yet been put to Cabinet for an adjustment of water rates.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: That will be taken up in the next financial year. If the honourable member wishes to go and look at the statutes, he will find that you take up on an annual basis an increase in water rates; there is a specific time when that is taken up—and that is December—for the following financial year.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The Government has made no decision as yet, because no proposal has been brought to Cabinet.

Mr Foley: You said you'd adopt it.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I suggest that the poor member for Hart sit back and listen to what is said, because what the Government has agreed to do is adopt this recommendation; that is right. However, because of legislation, it cannot adopt it until the new accounting year for the EWS when new charges apply, and that is exactly when we will do it.

Mr Foley: So as soon as you can—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Flinders.

TATIARA MEATWORKS

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Can the Minister for Primary Industries tell the House whether there is any future update on the situation at the Tatiara Meatworks at Bordertown?

The Hon. D.S. BAKER: Part of the bank and the receiver's requirements, as I mentioned yesterday, was an undertaking of support from the employees at Tatiara. This morning the industrial relations consultant, Paul Houlihan, had a meeting with some 275 potential employees at the meatworks. At that meeting he went through the agreement to which they had agreed the week before, he answered any questions and then asked them to vote, and I can report that overwhelmingly they have supported that agreement, and that is a credit to them.

The Government had to do two things: it had to get an agreement from the employees about working conditions at that abattoir, and that has been done; and the financial consultant will start work this afternoon, getting the weekly cash flow and financial arrangements in place and deliver them to the receivers and the financiers by Friday night. So, I am now confident that, with the support of everyone in the Bordertown district, all the things that the Government said it would do will be completed by Friday night, and that will allow the bank and receivers to make a decision by Monday or Tuesday next week.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections on my right.

SEPARATION PACKAGES

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): What action has the Minister for Health taken concerning allegations that an engineering and building services manager has approached employees at Lyell McEwin and Modbury Hospitals with a suggestion that they accept TSPs, but then return to the same job as employees or working shareholders of the manager's private company, which has negotiated with the Health Commission in regard to tendering for maintenance work at the hospitals?

The Opposition is aware that unions wrote to the CEO of the Health Commission on 6 September expressing concern about the apparent conflict of interest involving this manager, and seeking clarification of the situation. The union is also concerned that this scheme violates Government guidelines on TSPs. Workers at the hospitals have expressed their concern to me about the delay in resolving this matter in view of the approaching deadline for TSPs and privatisation of Modbury Hospital.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I would be delighted to receive details of the matter from the member for Torrens rather than these reasonably vague allegations that we have, because I will certainly investigate it and stop it; it is as simple as that. The principles are that, in that sort of circumstance, someone is ineligible for a TSP. TSPs constitute a system whereby the taxpayer is actually able to relieve the recurrent expenditure to the extent of that salary and, obviously, if someone takes a TSP on Friday and comes back as an employee of a different company doing the same job on Monday, the State has not gained anything at all. So, in fact, that matter has been addressed in relation to countless other areas within the Health Commission, because a number of people wish to partake of the mechanisms we are putting into place via contestability, and they wish to be part of these processes of providing services more effectively and efficiently.

Indeed, as the member for Torrens would probably realise if she had done any background reading on this matter, there are bonuses for people who go into these outsourcing circumstances, those bonuses varying from between \$2 500 and \$10 000, depending upon a person's length of service within the Health Commission entity. They are more than free to come back working for a different company, but they do not take a TSP because, as the honourable member says, it violates the rules and it simply will not happen.

I would be delighted to get the information; it would stop straight away. I would equally encourage workers within the system to identify the benefits to them of partaking in these outsourcing arrangements. Not only is there the financial benefit straight away of cash in hand depending on how long they have been working, which determines the amount that they get, but also there is the benefit to the system of those services being provided more efficiently and effectively. I well recall speaking about these matters prior to the election with a unionist at one of the hospitals. I said to him, 'You could set up your own private company; you could be the managing director and all of your fellow workers could be shareholders.' He looked at me and said, 'When can we start?'

SPORTS POLICY

Mr ROSSI (Lee): My question is directed to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. What is the current Government policy in regard to opportunities for interstate competition for primary school students, especially in circumstances where this is different from the former Government's junior sports policy of opposing or not supporting such sporting and athletics competition?

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I am sure all members recall the 10 or 11 years under the Labor Party in South Australia where that political Party set out to penetrate every aspect of our lives. Its tentacles stretched into sport and junior sport. One of the significant policies it brought in was the ban on interstate competition. One of the first things I did on coming into Government was to reverse that policy on behalf of the Government and reinstate interstate competition. Since the beginning of 1994 a number of sports have participated in interstate competition, including Australian Rules football, tennis, basketball, swimming and diving. It is expected that the number of sports involved will double by 1995.

The National Junior Sports Policy that I launched in this State with my colleague the Minister for Education and Children's Services this year provides:

Primary school interstate competition may be conducted when there is an agreement between the national sporting organisations in consultation with the State affiliates, education authorities and school sporting organisations about the concept and the format of such competition.

The South Australian Government supports this approach. We were vocal and forceful when the National Junior Sports Policy was being put together in forwarding submissions to the persons who were involved in writing that document. As well as the reintroduction of primary school interstate competition the Government has also maintained its commitment to year 7 sports camps to cater for talented young sporting people, and 22 sports have already conducted or will conduct sports camps during 1994.

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Affairs. How does the Government intend to appoint a person to represent employees not covered by unions at enterprise bargaining negotiations, and is such an arrangement contemplated by the Industrial and Employees Relations Act? Yesterday, the Minister told the House that in the private sector enterprise bargaining was being conducted with the union official nominated to represent a group of employees and a person representing the balance of employees. The Minister said it was the Government's intention to do exactly the same thing.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I think I answered this question yesterday, but we are pretty lenient on this side. One of the difficulties for the Deputy Leader is that since he was dropped by his own union as Secretary—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Do you want the answer or don't you?

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest the Minister answer the question and ignore interjections.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: As I was starting to say, it is such a long time since the member opposite was involved

with negotiations, and it was just prior to when he was dropped as Secretary of his union, so it would be difficult for him to understand the position. Just out of curiosity—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON:—this morning I was at a briefing with AWU-FIME, and I noticed that the Deputy Leader snuck out just before I had the opportunity to brief those present. One comment made after my briefing was, 'It's nice to hear something positive going on in our State.' Some of the other comments were interesting, but I cannot repeat them here without embarrassing members. Obviously, the Deputy Leader should not get too uptight about how the Government is going to negotiate enterprise agreements. I understand that the chief executives of all departments and statutory authorities have this matter very capably in hand. From the briefings I have had with all chief executives, I know that they are having progressive discussions with unions and employees over enterprise bargaining. It is our view that in the near future some exciting and interesting enterprise agreements will be announced in the public sector.

QUEEN'S THEATRE

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources please advise the House on the current state of progress for the conservation of the old Queen's Theatre? By way of explanation, during my time as Lord Mayor of Adelaide, I did bring up the matter with the former Premier because I believed the building had enormous pluses for the city. Eminent South Australians such as Keith Michell and people like Barry Humphries have praised the theatre, but it is one of the most—

Mr CLARKE: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I did not know that we had started the grievance debate just yet. We are waiting for the question, and that is my point of order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Colton—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Now that the House has come to order, I point out to the member for Colton that before explaining his question he should seek the leave of the House.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. When a point of order is being made, it should be made explicitly. No-one was sure what the Deputy Leader's point of order was.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Chair was of the view that the point of order concerned what appeared to be a particularly long question. The Chair did not intervene, because a number of questions asked today have been long. However, now that the matter has been drawn to the Speaker's attention by the Deputy Leader, my request to the member for Colton is that if he is making an explanation he should seek leave of the House. He should complete asking his question and then seek leave to explain it.

Mr CONDOUS: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to explain my question. The theatre is seen as one of the most significant heritage buildings and significant pieces of artistic heritage in this country, and it is recognised as such throughout the length and breadth of Australia. It is of importance not only

to South Australians but to all Australians as the birthplace of theatre in this country.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I share the member's enthusiasm about this building, and I would like to commend the part he played as Lord Mayor in making the authorities aware of the importance of what, without doubt, is this State's most significant heritage item. As the member for Colton has said, it is probably one of Australia's most important heritage items. As the House is aware, because I have brought this matter to the attention of the House before, the Queen's Theatre is a place of significant heritage importance and is entered on the register of the National Estate, the State Heritage Register and also the City of Adelaide Heritage Register. These entries are indicative of the recognition of the heritage value of this site to all levels of Government in Australia—Federal, State and local.

The building was opened in 1841, as the member for Colton has said. It was the first purpose-built theatre on mainland Australia. The Theatre Royal in Hobart predates it by four years, having been built in 1837. In 1843 the theatre was adapted for use as South Australia's Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court, and in December 1850 the building was reopened as the Royal Victorian Theatre, with its present Georgian facade. Since the late 1860s the building has been used as a city mission, a tobacco factory, Formby's horse bazaar and saleyards and, since 1928, an inner city car park. Since my announcement in April this year that \$50 000 would be allocated towards the conservation of the Queen's Theatre, the State Heritage Branch of my department has been coordinating the conservation of the facade of the building.

This project is being funded by the State Government through the State Heritage Fund, by the City of Adelaide and by the present owners of the property, the South Australian Asset Management Corporation. I am pleased to be able to advise the House that the work on the facade, commenced in the middle of August, has now been completed. I would recommend to any members of the House that if they are in the vicinity of the theatre they go and have a look.

The Chairs and administrators of the various State Government heritage agencies from throughout Australia are meeting in Adelaide today, and I took the opportunity to launch the Queen's Theatre conservation project publicly during their conference. In association with the Minister for the Arts, I have recently established a joint ministerial committee to oversee the transfer of the theatre site to the State Government, and detailed negotiations are proceeding with the property's owner. Following that transfer, the Minister for the Arts and I will become joint trustees of the site, and the committee will also be responsible for investigating options for the future development of this historic site. Finally, I will just say that I was pleased that the current Lord Mayor today was able to launch a public appeal to enable the community to get behind this project as well. I would again encourage all members to participate in that appeal, because it is certainly the State's most significant heritage item and one of Australia's most significant.

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Industrial Affairs name those departments that have commenced enterprise agreement negotiations with employees? Yesterday and today the Minister told the House that the Government was negotiating enterprise agreements with all departments. However, the Nurses Federation lodged

a claim in August and has not yet received a reply, and the South Australian Institute of Teachers has been waiting for advice since the beginning of the year on how negotiations will be conducted.

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: My understanding is that there are at least six departments and, as I am aware—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I didn't say that; I said the guidelines have been accepted. At least six are well down the track, and I know of at least two statutory authorities that will be announcing theirs—

Mr Clarke interjecting:

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: I said six that I am aware of.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.A. INGERSON: Just shut up and listen. Just let me complete my answer. The honourable member is so keen to jump down here and ask all these questions. It is a bit like the other day when the Deputy Leader was given the opportunity to have a briefing at WorkCover. He passed Mr Owens in the corridor here and said 'Hello' to him, but I notice he has not been down to have the briefing. Perhaps he really does not want to know the truth of the whole issue. To return to the question, at least six departments that I am aware of are well into the enterprise bargaining process. I am aware of at least two statutory authorities that are doing it. Through the coordinating committee that comes under my control, all departments have been instructed to get involved in the whole process of enterprise bargaining, and they are all well into that process.

MONARTO ZOO

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): What information can the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations give the House about the recent and proposed developments at the Monarto open range zoo?

Mr Quirke: And has he got a spare cage?

Mr LEWIS: For you, yes. All members, including the member for Playford (not that he is endangered), will know of the highly successful endangered species program at the Monarto zoo. They will further know that Mr David Langdon, the dynamic livewire manager of this zoological park in my electorate near Murray Bridge, is constantly working in cooperation with local volunteers, service clubs and local government, State and Commonwealth Government agencies to make this park one of the most outstanding tourist attractions of its kind anywhere.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I thank the honourable member for his question, knowing his intense interest in the future development of the Monarto zoo complex. I was very pleased to make an announcement last Sunday week with my colleague, the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, of a further commitment of \$750 000 over the next three years from the Planning and Development Fund to assist in the development of stage 2 of the Monarto Zoological Park, which will include a comprehensive visitor complex. The Planning and Development Fund provides the means for the State Government to implement its open space programs, of which Monarto Zoological Park is an important regional open space development initiative.

The Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government Relations is the landowner. David Wotton is the visionary who was involved in the concept of the zoo during

the Tonkin Government in 1979, a matter which should not be overlooked. He is actively involved in the zoo's program for the breeding of endangered species such as bilbies. The zoo is currently hoping to secure six elephants from Indonesia for its breeding program.

It was just over 11 years ago that a 160 hectare site at Monarto was transferred by lease to the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia for the purpose of the breeding and agistment of animals. Although the availability of the land was of invaluable assistance to the society in furthering breeding programs and the continued redevelopment of Adelaide Zoo, little funding was provided by the Government for additional facilities or improvements at Monarto. During the first six years a small annual grant was used to upgrade roads, erect new animal shelters and purchase equipment. In 1990 a concept plan for the whole site was developed and was favourably received by the Government and the public. Since the release of this report, an allocation has been made available annually from the Planning and Development Fund. This has enabled considerable progress to be made—

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Sir: it is my understanding that Ministers have time available to make ministerial statements at the beginning of Question Time.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

The Hon. J.K.G. OSWALD: I am relating to the House what has the capacity to be a world standard tourist facility in this State, and I would have thought that members opposite, who showed some interest in this project in Government, would be ready to endorse the information I am giving to the House and go out publicly and promote it, not get up and complain because I am giving a little bit of good news about what is a magnificent facility in this State; something which will surpass Dubbo zoo as a world standard facility. As I was saying when I was interrupted, this has enabled considerable progress to be made towards the development of the public exhibit component of the park and has resulted in the opening of stage 1 in October last year. Since opening to the public on a limited basis, the park has attracted 45 000 people and has proven to be a very popular and successful tourism, recreational and nature education feature for the State. The visitor pavilion has recently been completed and now provides amenities and services to the public within the park. The pavilion, which utilised funds from the South Australian Tourism Commission and the Planning and Development Fund, complements the extensive walking trail system which has now been finalised and which enables visitors to view exhibits within stage 1 of the park from various vantage points amongst the natural vegetation.

The first allocation of \$250 000, which was handed to the society last Sunday week, will assist towards the development of a major visitor complex, which will be the focal point of the park. I also handed to the Zoological Society a 45-year-plus lease agreement which will secure the future of the park, which, as I said earlier, has the capacity of surpassing Dubbo Zoo and becoming one of the world's leading open range zoos here in South Australia.

TEACHER NUMBERS

Ms HURLEY (Napier): My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Government stand by its announcement—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education is continuing to interject and chatter. The member for Napier.

Ms HURLEY: Will the Government stand by its announcement not to cut any more than the 422 teachers already cut in the budget? The Government has today indicated that recommendation 12.22 to reduce the number of teachers to establishment positions is still under consideration. There are 1 039 teachers in that category.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I have said in the House several times since the budget was brought in, and I will repeat it for the honourable member: as a result of the budget 422 teaching positions will be cut in South Australia. It fascinates me that the Opposition seems to raise these issues day after day. I wonder whether it is the different factions within the Labor Party which each put up their questions.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Today, we had the announcement that there are four factions, coming on five. There are the two Left factions—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: There is only one Centre Left faction, but we know that there is the faction showing allegiance to the member for Playford and the faction showing allegiance to the member for Ross Smith.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has a point of order.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Olsen faction is growing daily.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the House that there has been a tendency for members to raise frivolous points of order.

An honourable member: What about answers?

The SPEAKER: I am addressing all members. If members would like me to be more specific, I will deal very firmly with frivolous points of order from now on. The Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I was pointing out that there are four, if not five, official factions opposite. We know that there is a Centre Left faction around the member for Ross Smith and another one around the member for Playford, and the two do not meet. We know that there are two Left factions—

Ms HURLEY: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! I take it that the member for Napier is raising a point of order.

Ms HURLEY: Yes, Sir. I am querying the relevance of this answer to the question that I asked, which was about teacher numbers.

The SPEAKER: The Chair cannot uphold the point of order. It has been the tradition of this House that Ministers are given far more latitude in answering questions than are members in asking them. That has always been the practice. The Premier.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: What fascinates me is that there are five factions but only 11 members. That means that there cannot be more than about two members per faction in the House of Assembly. I have come to the conclusion that the reason we get the same question repeated day after day, as I got again today and I think for the third time in recent weeks about teacher numbers, is that the different factions sit down—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections, and I think the Premier has well answered the question.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Mr Speaker, I will round it off now. I think that the individual factions sit down and work out their own questions for the day and do not liaise with each other. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition claims to be unaligned to any faction, so that works out to an average of two members per faction in the House of Assembly.

CANADAIR FIRE BOMBERS

Mrs KOTZ (Newland): My question is directed to the Premier. Following the release of the report of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee on the use of Canadair fire bombers in Australia, will the Premier take up this issue with the Prime Minister?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am delighted that the honourable member has raised this issue. I congratulate her, as the Presiding Member of the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, on the report that has been tabled today. It is another very good report from the committee.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health and the member for Playford are not assisting the Chair.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: South Australia, together with the rest of south-eastern Australia, faces a very high fire risk this year. It is of grave concern that the Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 immediately followed the drought of 1982. As we have had another severe drought and therefore the soil moisture levels are extremely low in the bushland of south-eastern Australia, there is definitely a high fire risk this year with similar fire situations to those which developed in 1983. None of us would like to see a repeat of that.

I believe it is time that Australia tested the Canadair bomber aircraft to put out large bushfires. I had an opportunity to talk to the other Premiers and the Prime Minister shortly after the New South Wales bushfires earlier this year where they had extensively used small aircraft and, in particular, helicopters dropping buckets of water. They found that the helicopters were virtually inadequate in combating fires, particularly where the fires had a strong front burning towards houses. Therefore, it was agreed at this informal meeting that it was time that the State Governments, with support from the Federal Government, tested the Canadair bomber aircraft.

There is an opportunity this year to test that aircraft. Here is a report that again recommends that the aircraft should be tested, and it can only be sustained financially if the Federal Government joins at least three State Governments—New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. On behalf of the South Australian Government, I give my support to being part of the testing program for this summer. However, it concerns me that the Federal Government has called a meeting of Ministers of Emergency Services for 14 December to discuss this very issue. That date, 14 December, will be too late for this summer season and the bushfire risk that goes with it, because those aircraft must be booked and got to Australia before Christmas if they are to have any chance of being properly tested throughout the summer period.

I have already written to the Prime Minister and raised this issue, pledged the support of the South Australian Government, and asked that these bomber aircraft be tested in Australia as a matter of urgency. Inspired by the report from the committee, I will again take up this matter with the Prime

Minister to make sure that once and for all the Federal Government makes the commitment, together with the State Governments, so that we can test the Canadair bomber aircraft this summer and see whether it is effective in combating very large bushfires which endanger human life.

AUDIT COMMISSION

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. Why, after almost six months of considering the recommendations of the Audit Commission report and promising a final response by 31 October, are there 46 of the most contentious recommendations still to be considered? Is this just a case of the good news Premier leaving the bad news to his hapless Ministers?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: The honourable member is not looking at the facts. I refer him to the ministerial statement that I made earlier this afternoon. Of the 336 recommendations in the Audit Commission report, we have already adopted 273, either in whole or in part. Obviously, we cannot implement all those adoptions immediately, because a number of them can be implemented only over a series of years.

In fact, the Government is implementing that program as quickly as possible. There were only 17 rejected, and I point out to the House that 6 of those 17 were in the area of education, because the Government places a very high priority on education and disagreed with a number of the recommendations of the Audit Commission. The clear evidence is there that, in the space of less than 12 months, this Government has had the most comprehensive Audit Commission report of any of the Governments in the whole of Australia. We have come back with a larger number of acceptances than I understand applied to any of the other Audit Commission reports in Australia, and in fact we are well down the path of implementing most of those recommendations.

I can assure the honourable member that we will continue to make sure that the implementation is put into place as quickly as possible. I will cite one recommendation that has been adopted, that is, what we have done in the IT area right across Government—or what we have done in terms of the ports corporation or in corporatising the EWS. Legislation will be introduced next week for significant amendments to the Act covering ETSA. Legislation also will be introduced into Parliament next week covering the employment of Government employees, again a recommendation of the Audit Commission report, so the Government is adopting those recommendations as quickly as possible. In fact, if anything, after 11 years of effectively no reform at all whilst the former Government was under the advice of the now member for Hart, I can assure the honourable member that we have shrugged off that inactivity and we are getting on with the job of reform.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

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

Mr ASHENDEN (Wright): I want to outline to the House the events that led to the most unsavoury incident at

Golden Grove High School yesterday. Some weeks ago, two senior executives of the South Australian Institute of Teachers started working amongst the teaching staff at Golden Grove High School, talking to them in small groups and urging them to take very serious action. At no stage was a meeting of all members of the union and the staff of that high school called to determine whether industrial action would be taken. Yesterday, quite unilaterally—

The SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the member for Wright has given notice to the House today that he intends to move a motion in relation to the matter he is now debating.

Mr ASHENDEN: Yes. I am outlining the course of events today.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have to advise the honourable member that, having given notice of a motion, he cannot now canvass the matters contained in that notice of motion.

Mr ASHENDEN: Am I able to outline the events that occurred yesterday?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member has to be very careful, because he is treading a fine line. Having given notice to the House of his intentions, he now cannot debate the same issue.

Mr ASHENDEN: With respect, I was advised that there had been a previous decision in the House that, where a member had moved a motion for private members' business, that matter could be discussed in the forum of the Parliament.

The SPEAKER: I will listen very carefully while I seek advice. I advise that he must stay within very strict guidelines.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: Are you the Speaker now?

The SPEAKER: Order! As I understand the motion, the honourable member can refer to Golden Grove, but he cannot canvass the matters which are contained in his motion.

Mr ASHENDEN: If I merely talk about what happened yesterday, that will not be against Standing Orders?

The SPEAKER: The Chair intends to listen to the honourable member very carefully.

Mr ASHENDEN: As a result, action was taken yesterday and students at the school were advised that the school would no longer allow those students to attend a camp next week and that various other curricula details would no longer be provided at the school, including the removal of a girls' leadership camp. To have that occur when we are celebrating the Year of the Family, at a time when we are encouraging females to take an active part in our community, is rather remarkable. As a result, some of the students yesterday became very angry and concerned; they left their classroom and went onto the oval. The headmaster of the school—

Mr ATKINSON: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I understand that the motion the member for Wright has given notice of condemns SAIT for causing a walkout of students and for removing certain items from the curriculum. Standing Order 184, 'Business not to be anticipated', provides:

A motion may not attempt to anticipate debate on any matter which appears on the Notice Paper.

It appears to me that the member for Wright is canvassing quite directly those items in his notice of motion, namely, the walkout and absence of certain matters from the curriculum.

The SPEAKER: Order! As I have indicated earlier to the member for Wright, he cannot canvass the matters that are contained in his notice of motion, and I rule accordingly. Therefore, he must confine his remarks to areas which do not in any way relate to his motion.

Mr ASHENDEN: In the brief time the Opposition has left me, I wish to commend the principal and senior staff of the school for the excellent manner in which they handled the situation yesterday and for the way in which the principal tried to bring calm to the school. Because the disturbances had occurred—

Members interjecting:

Mr ASHENDEN: Opposition members would have liked to see the way stones and mud were thrown at the principal, because that is the way they behave themselves. I am just saying that I believe that the principal and senior staff of the school must be commended for the manner in which they handled a most unsavoury situation that was brought on without any warning by the South Australian Institute of Teachers.

Mr CLARKE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I would like to read into *Hansard* the statutory declarations completed by two members of the WorkCover Advisory Board in relation to events that happened last Friday. The first reads as follows:

I, David Gray... do solemnly and sincerely declare that I attended a meeting of the Workers' Compensation Advisory Committee on the morning of Friday, 21 October 1994. I am a member of that Advisory Committee. At that meeting I sought endorsement by the committee of payment of a legal bill I had incurred as a result of my being questioned by police early in the day on Saturday, 24 September, at my home. The police questioning arose out of questions I raised at the advisory committee meeting held on 23 September 1994. My questions had concerned a copy of the index to a proposed Bill for the reform of the Workers' Rehabilitation and Compensation Act which had come into my possession.

Considerable discussion ensued between myself and the Chairman of the committee concerning confidentiality of committee proceedings. The Chairman advised that he did not feel that the advisory committee was responsible for my legal bill as the topic raised by me at the earlier meeting had not been on the formal agenda.

Furthermore, he advised (whilst assuring me that no impropriety against myself was being alleged) that the Minister was 'very angry' that the Bill index had been leaked and had 'ordered a police investigation'. I then confirmed, through the Chairman, that no discussions at the advisory committee concerning the leaked Bill were subject to committee confidentiality, due to the police inquiry. The meeting concluded shortly thereafter.

That was signed by David Gray on 24 October. I also have a statutory declaration signed by Anne McEwen, which states:

I... do solemnly and sincerely declare that on the morning of Friday 21 October 1994 I attended a meeting of the Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Committee held in the boardroom of the Workcover Corporation Building, 100 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. I am a member of the advisory committee. One of the agenda items for discussion at that meeting was the confidentiality of proceedings of the committee.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek your ruling. We have heard read into the record of this House today so far two, and it will be three, statutory declarations. By the very nature of the statutory declarations, one appears to seriously contravene the Oaths Act of the State of South Australia 1936.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has no point of order.

Mr BRINDAL: Yes, I have, Mr Speaker: are the declarations being read subject to the privilege of this House or can they upon request be surrendered to appropriate authorities? Do the documents have the privilege of the House or are they subject to seizure by the appropriate authority?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Any information read by any member purporting to come from the member has the privilege of the House. What happens to statutory declarations subsequently, or prior to their being read in the House, is not really the worry of the House. There is no Standing Order with regard to reading one, two, three or more statutory declarations during parliamentary proceedings. It is not the duty of the House to establish the accuracy or veracity of statutory declarations, which, to the best of my knowledge, have no legal standing in any case. The member for Ross Smith.

Mr CLARKE: The declaration continues:

I am a member of the advisory committee. One of the agenda items for discussion at that meeting was the confidentiality of proceedings of the committee. Mr David Gray, who is also a member of the committee, spoke to the agenda item and considerable discussion ensued. Discussion included the issue of confidentiality of committee proceedings and also the matter of how officers of the SA Police Department had come to interview Mr Gray about a document in his possession. That document was a copy of the index of the proposed draft amendments to the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act.

There was discussion about the 'leak' of this document, the ensuing police investigation into that leak, and how the investigation had come about. Mr Gray said that he had been interviewed as part of that investigation.

To the best of my recollection, the Chairman of the advisory committee, Mr Bob Dahlenburg, said during discussion that the Minister had been very angry about the leak and had ordered a police investigation. I definitely recall that Mr Dahlenburg, when referring to the role of the Minister, used the words 'ordered' the 'police investigation' [signed on 27 October 1994].

I also advise the House that Mr David Gray has written to Mr Boyce, of the Police Complaints Authority—and that letter will be delivered this afternoon—raising a formal complaint with respect to the officers from the Anti-Corruption Branch.

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

Mr VENNING (Custance): I congratulate the Government on the release of the report today, 'The Government's Response to the Report of the Commission of Audit', which has now been tabled in the House. I also congratulate the Government on its record thus far, considering it is only 11 months into its term, and I congratulate it particularly in terms of a comparison with our predecessors. If members examine pages 70-72 of the report, referring to Labor's detailed plans to right the wrongs it has done over the past decade, they will find that those pages are blank—the result, we understand, of 10 years intensive consultation and debate within their Caucus.

I notice some supplementary observations on pages 24, 38 and 48, but if members examine those pages they will find that they, too, are blank, and it is indicated that they have been left blank intentionally. Six pages say a thousand words.

I now wish to convey my appreciation of the opening of the Custance electorate office this Sunday at 81 Main Street, Kapunda. I want to put on the record my appreciation to all those involved. I refer, first, to the owner-builder, Philip and Mary-Anne Hunt, who had the foresight to buy a derelict heritage building (which can be a risk, as members would know) in Main Street, Kapunda, and then to lovingly restore it at considerable cost to them. They have done a magnificent job. I have invited all members (including the Opposition) to inspect the office, either on Sunday or at any time thereafter. The standard and quality of the work has recently been recognised by the presentation to the Hunts of a State Heritage Award.

Secondly, I want to congratulate the Minister and his department, SACON, via their Nuriootpa representative, Mr Max Rasmus. They have done a top job in equipping the building at only slightly above budget. I mention that because there was a budget and, being a heritage building, it involved extras that neither I, the builders or the department anticipated. Nevertheless, I consider that we got very good value, and I ask members to be the judge of that.

The people of Kapunda have been very supportive and even had a petition prepared to encourage me to locate my office there. There was a very intense campaign during the decision period, and I think the petition actually led to the final result. Of course, with this building one would almost think it was purpose-built for the use now being made of it. People in the area are stunned at the apparent demise of the seat of Custance. They are great people and have supported me for all my four years in Parliament.

I also want to put on the record, in order to allay any fears of any conflict, that I am privileged to be able to rent rooms above the electoral office. I assure the House of total propriety in relation to my personal relationship with the owners. I have gone to much trouble to ensure that this business is at arm's length from SACON's contract with the owners. I pay separate council rates, separate rent and have my own metered power, etc. I have gone to great lengths to ensure complete propriety in all these matters. To be able to be accommodated on site in such a large electorate, I am sure will cut down my travelling greatly and enable me to offer even better—and I highlight even better—representation to the people of Custance in the next three and a half years.

I am very pleased with the result and am looking forward to Sunday and to having the Minister, the Hon. Mr Ingerson, officially open the office at 2.30 p.m. It somewhat compensates for the sad event of my having to leave Clare, whose residents could not have done more for me when I was there. The electoral boundaries—which seem to be the bane of my life—necessitated that move. I want to thank all those involved in enabling me to have this lovely new facility in Kapunda and, again, I invite all members, including the member for Ross Smith, to call in and have a look for themselves.

Mr LEWIS (Ridley): In the first instance, in connection with Monarto Zoo, the matter about which I asked the Minister a question this afternoon, I indicate how pleased I was to learn from him of the number of things he is personally involved with in connection with the development of that facility. It will become equal to the best in the world, if it is not already in that category in many respects. Our pursuit of excellence in all forms is vital to not just our capacity to provide jobs for the future generations and those who are already unemployed, but also to ensuring that those jobs endure right across the spectrum of our field of endeavours relevant to that future. Monarto Zoo is setting a fine example in that respect.

I commend David Langdon, the current Manager, for the work he has done and for the consultation he has had with the local community and organisations, as a result of which he has received support not only from service clubs and State departments such as Correctional Services but also, more importantly, from the Murray Lands Regional Tourist Association and the Murray Bridge Tourist Association. I continue to be impressed with the manner in which he goes about managing the limited resources at his disposal.

Some new innovations include, as I understand it, the use

of solar energy for powering the site without the necessity to drape power lines across it or to dig trenches in order to install power mains in various localities where lighting will be required if we are to derive the greater benefits of being able to observe animals just after dusk and pre-dawn as part of the overall program provided for visitors.

I now turn to another aspect of development that this State needs in general and in my electorate in particular. One of the problems which has been identified by many people farming in Europe and by the consumers of Europe and elsewhere in the northern hemisphere is that, because of the density of their population, the intensity of their industries and the stupidity with which the former Eastern Bloc countries of the Soviet Union went about these tasks, there is now a great mess of pollution there.

The radioactivity across the northern hemisphere, including Europe and Asia, resulting from the Chernobyl disaster reminds us of how serious that problem is. Here in South Australia we have developed a means by which, for instance, we can make a massive contribution to the removal of chemical pesticides from the practice of agriculture, if not totally eliminating the problem by the turn of the century then going a very long way towards doing so. Patents held by two scientists at the University of Adelaide now make it possible for us to use germs—bacteria, if you like—to attack those insect pests, which compete with man for that essential foodstuff (whatever it is), and by that means, using the bacteria in the pesticide, leave absolutely no residue, toxic or detrimental, to man or any other of the higher animals. They are specie specific and, accordingly, are to be encouraged.

I make no secret of the fact that I am presently actively engaged in recruiting capital, and it requires only \$3 million now and another \$3 million in a year or so, to produce an enterprise, for instance, which will eliminate the risk and damage resulting from sheep blowfly and sheep body lice, and that market alone, in terms of chemicals around the world, is worth something like \$200 million. That particular treatment has the capacity to keep the sheep protected from blowflies and lice for at least as long as the most toxic chemical currently in use continues, and it will be at least as cheap as the cheapest.

Coopers and others like that ought to be interested, although I cannot find a way of getting them interested in providing the capital finance for this enterprise. I am now actively seeking that capital overseas. I do that deliberately because I do not want to see this massive technological breakthrough, this scientific breakthrough, lost to South Australia the way we lost photocopying. Photocopying was invented at Prospect, and it would have been worth billions to this State's economy if only someone had listened in time. This is another risk venture, which has the capacity to change the way in which we feed and clothe ourselves free of chemical pollution, yet I cannot find the capital locally.

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

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I want to read into the *Hansard* record a letter from Mr David Gray to Mr P. Boyce, of the Police Complaints Authority:

Dear Mr Boyce,

I wish to make a formal complaint. Early in the day on Saturday 24 September 1994, I was questioned by two officers apparently from the Anti-Corruption Branch of the South Australian Police Force. They questioned me about a copy of an index to a proposed Bill for the reform of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act.

I suspect that these police officers questioned me as a result of a politically motivated inquiry, possibly originating from the Minister for Industrial Affairs, the Hon. Graham Ingerson, or a senior member of his staff. I base my suspicion on the facts that:

- (a) I raised questions concerning the proposed WorkCover Reform Bill at a meeting of the Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Advisory Committee which I attended as a member on Friday 23 September 1994.
- (b) The Minister for Industrial Affairs returned from overseas on or about Friday 23 September 1994.
- (c) The Minister's answers to questions in Parliament, and his ministerial statement tabled on Tuesday 25 October 1994, show that he or his staff have, at some stage, been in communication with Mr Lew Owens of WorkCover regarding this issue.

I consider it improper that police have been used to intimidate me for political motives.

The second aspect of my complaint is that the Anti-Corruption Branch forwarded a copy of a record of my interview with police, as detailed above, to Mr Basey of WorkCover. I do not believe that the police had any right to disclose my answers to questioning, to WorkCover.

Would you please also consider the impropriety of this action and assess what action should be taken to ensure that this sort of disclosure does not happen again.

The letter is signed by David Gray. I now want to talk about the Para Districts Counselling Service. A few weeks ago that service was informed that \$50 000 had been cut from its budget and that, following this year, it would receive no funding at all in the future. This service was set up 30 years ago, having been opened in August 1964 when Sir Thomas Playford was Premier of South Australia. The service has outlasted many Governments from 1964 to the present, but it is now unlikely that it will outlast this Government as it rampages through the health sector, calculator in hand, slashing services, using financial imperatives rather than health imperatives as a measuring stick.

After much consternation and seeking of information, the Para Districts Counselling Service was told there were three reasons why its funding had been cut and why it would not be funded in the future: first, that a proportion of the services provided were considered non-health related; secondly, it was difficult to justify continuance in one geographic area and not in others; and, thirdly, that the newly formed Northern Community Health Service would pick up responsibility for health-related counselling.

I will read some other facts into *Hansard* relating to the Para Districts Counselling Service, which show that those reasons are completely inaccurate: in 1993-94, the Para Districts Counselling Service spent 3 245 hours on counselling; the 21 volunteers, three full-time and five part-time staff, provided 141 hours per week of counselling time with only 26 hours devoted to financial counselling. The financial counselling aspect is funded by the Federal Government and not by the State Government. The vast bulk of the services provided by the Para Districts Counselling Service concerns matters such as grief, attempted suicide, anxiety, substance abuse, many minor tranquilliser addicts, domestic violence and child sexual abuse survivors.

The South Australian Health Commission is probably saying that, by its own statistics, only 20 per cent of what it does is health related. The Para Districts Counselling Service has divided its statistics into purely health matters: depression, anxiety, minor tranquilliser addictions, etc. Much of the other primary health care work has gone under—marital relationships, violence, grief and the other things I mentioned. In fact, 90 per cent of all the service's work for the past financial year fits into the same activity categories as those involving community health centres.

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

Mrs ROSENBERG (Kaurna): I rise to reply to the article in today's *Advertiser* by Mr Greg Kelton. Mr Kelton has decided to look at the performance of 15 women members of Parliament and give his opinion, and I would like to stress the word 'opinion'. It is my understanding from most people with whom I speak in the community that they are absolutely fed up with journalists in this State putting forward their opinions in the newspapers. The people of this State are looking for factual and investigative reporting, for which journalists are paid; nobody is terribly interested in their opinions. According to the *Macquarie Dictionary*, 'performance' is described as:

A musical, dramatic or other entertainment. The performing of ceremonies, or of music, or of a play, part, or the like. Execution or doing, as of work, acts, or feats. An action or proceeding of a more or less unusual or spectacular kind. The act of performing.

The very suggestion of looking at a performance demeans the process of Parliament and our contribution to it. Mr Kelton probably rates very highly the performance of John Bannon, and we have seen how the State performed under that sort of high performance in this place. As a reason for the examination of women members of Parliament, Mr Kelton refers to Paul Keating's statement that 'political careers are made or shattered in Parliament'—not in the electorate but in this place—'and for those who are seeking a political career'—and I emphasise 'career'—'the way of proceeding is to perform like some circus animal'—and we see plenty of that on the other side of this House.

Mr Kelton has never bothered to speak to any members on this side of the House, in particular myself, nor has he been present in the press gallery at any time other than Question Time, nor attended any grievance debate or any debate on Bills in this place to which I have contributed or to which, to my knowledge, any other female member of this Parliament has contributed, and he is not here now. How then is his rating calculated? Perhaps on hearsay? Surely, a highly paid investigative journalist should do better research for articles than depend on the hearsay and suggestions made to him by a few people in his confidence.

One can perhaps guess which members are in his confidence by looking at the ratings given, and comparing the ratings directly to the contributions made in this House. I hope that the ratings were in no way clouded by whether Mr Kelton has had long-time buddies amongst the women members of Parliament or whether he has been on their party guest list from time to time. That can be seen most clearly if you question the ratings given for some members, which do not simply reflect intelligence, honest debate and contribution but rather political stunts and backroom dealings. In one instance, comment was made about the lack of opportunity to contribute. That is simply utter rubbish. All members of this House have equal opportunity to contribute, and I have taken that opportunity on many occasions.

If our performance is based on biding our time and not on contribution, I suggest that the basic premise of Mr Kelton's argument is flawed. I list my contributions so far and invite Mr Kelton to take some time to look at them. I have contributed in private members' times to three motions dealing with work for the dole, private health insurance and interest rate effects on economic growth. In relation to debating Bills, I have spoken on matters such as private prisons, living resources, women in Parliament, child sexual abuse, truth in

sentencing, stalking and compulsory voting. Issues raised in grievance have concerned Flinders University research, environment and natural resources, Noarlunga—together against crime, Arthur Tunstall and smoke pollution.

I put Mr Kelton on notice that, as the member for Kaurna, I am not here seeking a career; I have no ambition to climb the political ladder; and I am not interested in a popularity contest. I accept only the final ratings of my electors on election day; anything put forward by journalists of Mr Kelton's standing up until that time are frankly irrelevant. Mr Kelton, my score for you is 'F' for fail: you have failed to research; you have failed to talk to members, you have failed to talk to constituents; and you have failed to hide your own personal bias. On behalf of the backbench women on this side of the House, I reject your rating technique and the theatre it is designed to create to hide the major contributions made by this side of the House.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order and draw your attention to Standing Order 133, which provides:

A member who complains to the House of any statement published, broadcast or issued in any manner whatsoever is to give all details that are reasonably possible, and be prepared to submit a substantive motion declaring the person or persons in question to have been guilty of contempt.

I ask for your ruling, Sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member has simply quoted the standing order. What ruling is required? The standing order is accurate.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask whether you will now require the member for Kaurna to indicate her preparedness to submit a substantive motion that the *Advertiser* is in contempt.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair is always in the hands of members and is not placed in that position to instruct the House on the course of action to take, unless the House transgresses. Standing Order 133 really leaves the Chair with little course of action to take, other than to acknowledge the fact that the Standing Order is there.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, and in terms of clarification, if the member for Spence is right, is it not a requirement of the Standing Order that a substantive motion be put forward? I think that is what the honourable member's question was.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair is in the hands of the House. If a substantive motion is put forward, it will be up to the House to debate the matter.

Mr ATKINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I take it that your ruling is that, where the Standing Order says 'is to give' and 'be prepared', the enforcement of that Standing Order must be by motion of the House and not by the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes; Standing Order 133 provides that an honourable member must be prepared to submit a substantive motion declaring that the person is guilty. It does not say they have to submit it; it says they must be prepared to submit it. If the House wishes to refer this matter to the Standing Orders Committee—

Mrs ROSENBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I indicate that I am prepared to move a substantive motion if that is the wish of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This matter is still in the hands of members; the Chair does not wish to instruct.

LAND TAX (SCALE ADJUSTMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DUTY (EXEMPT ACCOUNTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 12 October. Page 573)

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I wish to place on the record a few remarks about this Bill and, indeed, to ask a question about it. The Opposition supports this legislation, but it does have a couple of reservations. Within the Party room, some considerable debate occurred about how the first part of the Bill will affect persons who are not married, that is, those persons who are living in *de facto* relationships. Some members in the Party room in particular were very keen on detailing that position.

As I said, the Opposition supports this legislation because it seeks to do two things. First, it seeks to make superannuation more portable. Indeed, when a person loses employment or when they go from one type of employment to another, that person carries their superannuation with them, and they could be liable for relevant State stamp duties. This legislation seeks to make those arrangements much more portable. In relation to many persons, that is a necessity because of work arrangements.

The Hon. S.J. Baker interjecting:

Mr QUIRKE: I thank the Deputy Premier for his intervention on this matter. Indeed, I have been practicing my arguments, and I now give him a couple more weeks to look into the problems of *de facto* relationships, as a number of members in the Party room were upset that *de facto* relationships were not taken into account in this Bill. No doubt he will come back with a fully prepared answer when that piece of legislation is debated. In essence, the Opposition supports this legislation. We have had a close look at the legislation—as close as time would permit—and we support it.

Mr KERIN (Frome): To my way of thinking, this is the most stupid, unfair, inequitable and damaging tax that was ever created. That was certainly made harder by the previous Government's greed and the damage done to the South Australian corporate sector when the tax was raised to 10¢ per \$100 from 1 October 1990. I remember arguing this with the former Leader of the Opposition, when he was the Minister for Primary Industries, in Port Pirie.

He argued that it was an equitable tax because everyone paid and paid at the same rate. That is absolute rubbish and shows the lack of financial understanding which helped plunge South Australia into the devastating financial position it is now in. I will provide a couple of examples of how unfair the tax is. For public servants, general employees or MPs, we pay FID only on the net wage that is paid into the bank, whereas businesses pay FID on the total turnover. Many businesses on low margins pay enormous amounts of duty. Such sums paid by businesses are in no way related to profit.

In my previous business there were many months where we paid more in FID than would have been required to employ an extra person, and that seemed ludicrous. A case

in point involves farmers, who have to pay FID on each payment for wheat, wool, barley or whatever as their funds are paid into the bank, yet many farmers are on negative incomes and pay much larger amounts in FID than people on salaries of \$50 000, \$100 000 or \$150 000. In the lead-up to the last election the Labor Party sent out a leaflet to small business. It claimed that Labor had helped small business by dropping the FID rate from 10¢ to 6.5¢. However, the leaflet failed to say that the same Government lifted the rate from 4¢ to 10¢. While the Labor Party was claiming a 40 per cent reduction in the duty, it was really a 50 per cent increase.

When the rate was increased to 10¢, it did enormous damage to South Australia. I do not believe that State revenue increased by much because suddenly Elders, Dalgety and many businesses around town transferred their banking and financial activities to Queensland. I noticed that suddenly all the cheques were coming from Queensland. Jobs in banks were lost and head office accounting functions were transferred. It cost many jobs in Adelaide. At one stage all the dealers in a major motor company employed a courier each evening as part of their banking arrangements in Alice Springs.

FID has affected the way business is done in South Australia and the way daily transactions are handled. Indeed, this tax is a handicap to better financial management. The latest *Business Council Bulletin* quotes the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Westpac, Mr Robert Joss, who commented on FID. He has had his people look at the tax and, apart from Norfolk Island, we are the only country in the world with such a tax. The report by Mr Joss contains some good comments and states:

Apart from faithfully raising revenue, these taxes appear to have no economic rationale. They certainly do not meet the usual criteria for taxes of being equitable, simple and efficient. . . Every Government, in every country, is desperate for revenue. So if you find only one country in the world imposing a particular tax, you are entitled to be suspicious about its merits. Suspicion is more than deserved in this case. These really are BAD taxes in every respect. . . Perhaps the worst effect of transaction taxes is that they explicitly penalise the very act of saving. Australia is the only country that imposes an explicit tax on the very act of saving. That's what FID is—a tax that every Australian pays every time they make a bank deposit.

Mr Joss certainly makes it clear that he is less than impressed by this tax. If it were not for the absolute mess that the Treasurer has had to take over, I would be moving for the removal of such a stupid tax. However, South Australia's tax base is narrow and, considering the current financial position, it is difficult to see how we will be able to get rid of this tax. This position is magnified by the ruthless attitude of the Keating Government to deprive the States financially and squeeze us. If the Federal Government was fair dinkum about microeconomic reform, it should compensate the States to get rid of this tax because of the enormous harm it is doing to the economy. Having said that, I support what the Treasurer is trying to do with the Bill.

The Hon. S.J. BAKER (Treasurer): I thank members for their comments. I appreciate that each sector of the community has difficulties with specific taxes. We have already been through the debate on land tax and payroll tax, and I can refer to stamp duties and every tax placed on citizens and companies in South Australia and say that there is a level of disagreement, aggravation and protest about the imposition of those taxes. I thank the member for Frome for his comments, because I am sure they are shared by a number

of people. This Bill is not about the retention or otherwise of FID: it simply does two things. First, it ensures that local government has money for the Local Government Disaster Fund, and I am sure the member for Frome would agree with that proposition.

The second matter covered in the Bill relates to short-term money market dealings where there are some inequities and inconsistencies in the way that we levy FID, as explained in the second reading explanation. We are not debating whether we should or should not have FID: we are simply debating the means of improving the method of collection and making FID fairer in one or two areas. The member for Frome is right when he says people are distressed. I have had people through my door, particularly pensioners, who get really irate when they look at their bank book and say, 'Look, Mr Baker, I put money in there. The pension is not hit, but if you put in other money that is hit.' Some of them have a few transactions and then to their horror they see that they have had a 1¢ deduction from their book or whatever.

In the case of business the impact is much higher, and businesses with high volume cash flows pay commensurately more. The member for Frome's plea is recognised, but I also appreciate his assessment that, because of the parlous state of the finances, to do away with this taxation measure would cause the State a great deal more distress and cause problems in the distribution of services, particularly for his own constituents. I need not go through all the services the Government provides that are facilitated by our taxation revenue. There is a redistributive effect, and that money goes back into providing services.

I refer to the claim that Australia is the only country in the world that has this tax. In my view every tax at some stage is contested because it affects some people more than others. FID is simple, efficient and, of all the taxes we impose, it does not have the sectoral impacts of many other measures. I suggest in that way that it is perhaps more equitable than other taxes that we levy. The measure was provided to us by the Federal Government in recognition of the need to widen the tax base. It was part of a package involving FID and BAD taxes, and it was deemed appropriate to subject financial institutions to some form of taxation which has been passed on to the users of the accounts that the financial institutions maintain.

There has been a tradition amongst some of the smaller financial institutions to not pass on those costs directly. I am not sure whether the same position applies today, but it used to be the practice of some institutions that people earned less in interest but they did not see these little deductions appearing in their statements. I thank members for their contributions to this debate. The thoughts that have been expressed have obviously been taken into account previously and will be in the future, but I would have to be perfectly honest with the honourable member and say that, if there was to be a reduction in taxation—that is our great hope and our aim so that we can get our budget in order and offer some relief to provide the lowest level of taxation in South Australia—I cannot honestly say that FID would be my first area of endeavour.

It is important to put on the record, and we have put on the record previously, that because FID is not applied universally and because the rates are not universal it causes some 'externalities'. Money flows to jurisdictions with lower levels of taxation in the FID area, and Queensland is the prime example of this. Our information is that, through various devices, including setting up their own offices, a number of

companies have been using Queensland as their financial base, and we are quite distressed about this matter. It would appear from market intelligence that, given the sheer process of getting cheques back to South Australia and the costs of air freighting back and forth, some of the people who have taken that initiative are now reviewing their situation and it may not have proved to be financially beneficial to many of the medium sized operators concerned. We have already lost the larger operators, and I do not expect to get them back in a big hurry. That is the past. The future is that this Bill pre-

serves the Local Government Disaster Fund and clears up some inconsistencies in relation to the application of FID to the short-term money market dealers. I thank members for their support.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.7 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday 1 November at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Tuesday 25 October 1994****QUESTION ON NOTICE****TRANSADELAIDE**

120. **The Hon. M.D. RANN (Leader of the Opposition):** What public transport services presently provided by TransAdelaide that service the electorate of Taylor are being considered for tender, and what percentage of all the service operating in that area will those services to be tendered represent?

The Hon. J.W. OLSEN: The electorate of Taylor is no different to any other electorate in metropolitan Adelaide in that all parts of Adelaide are subject to consideration for tendering out of public transport services over the next few years. At this time, no decision has been made as to which area will be tendered out first or what percentages of services will be so tendered.