

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Second Session of the Forty-fifth Parliament (1983)

Parliament, which adjourned on 2 June 1983, was prorogued by proclamation dated 23 June. By proclamation dated 23 June, it was summoned to meet on Thursday 4 August, and the Second Session began on that date.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 4 August 1983

The PRESIDENT (Hon. A. M. Whyte) took the Chair at 12 noon.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

The Clerk (Mr C. H. Mertin) read the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor (Sir Donald Dunstan) summoning Parliament.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

His Excellency the Governor, having been announced by Black Rod, was received by the President at the Bar of the Council Chamber and by him conducted to the Chair. The Speaker and members of the House of Assembly having entered the Chamber in obedience to his summons, His Excellency read his Opening Speech as follows:

Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the House of Assembly:

1. I have called you together for the dispatch of business.

2. It is with regret that I record the death on 9 February 1983 of the Honourable John William Hurtle Coumbe, A.M., who so ably served this Parliament and the people of the electorate of Torrens for the period of twenty-one years from 1956 to 1977. Mr Coumbe was Minister of Works, Minister of Marine, Minister of Labour and Industry from 17 April 1968 to 2 March 1970, and Minister of Education from 3 March 1970 to 1 June 1970. During the period 19 March 1973 to 24 July 1975, Mr Coumbe held the position of Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I know that you will all join me in expressing sympathy to the members of his family in their sad loss.

3. I am sure you would all wish me to place on record the deep sympathy we feel toward those South Australians who lost relatives, friends or their homes in the bushfires which devastated large areas of our State on Ash Wednesday. This tragedy deeply affected all South Australians and aroused the concern and sympathy of people throughout

the nation and the world. Twenty-seven lives were lost and the damage to property and livestock runs into hundreds of millions of dollars. Those who saw the results of the devastation at close hand, as I did, can appreciate only too well the intensity and savagery of the fires that burned on that day and the courage of those who fought them and those who returned to clean up and rebuild in their wake.

4. I am sure that you would also wish me to pay tribute to the generosity of all who gave so willingly and spontaneously to the Premier's Bushfire Relief Appeal, the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Channel Nine Appeal and all other associated appeals. I am pleased to record that a total of \$11.5 million was raised.

5. Unfortunately, our State's experience with natural disasters did not end with the fires, and the sudden floods which followed brought similar devastation, damage and suffering. In both emergencies, my Government acted quickly to co-ordinate relief measures and to begin reconstruction.

6. My Government has already reported to the Parliament on the serious financial situation which confronted it upon election in November 1982. That situation has not eased, and indeed, has been worsened by the costs to the State's revenue of drought, fire and flood. Stringent controls have been applied to expenditure and in consequence, the end of year results for 1982-1983 will be more favourable than was first expected. However, the financial weaknesses which have been developing for some time within the State's accounts, remain an urgent and serious problem as the ability of the State to sustain a large deficit is quite limited. My Government has fully honoured its obligations under the wages pause and not sought to increase its revenues. However, it now believes it would be totally irresponsible to allow any further weakening of the State's financial strength.

7. During the coming session, a number of measures will be placed before you aimed at raising the revenue required to meet the State's liabilities in the most equitable way, given the extremely restricted nature of the revenue base. My Government has studied the results of inquiries into revenue raising conducted by other States and notes that the recent Premiers' Conference agreed to establish a Working Group to examine the revenue powers of State and Federal Governments. My Government will also press ahead with its plans to inquire into the best means by which this State

can raise the revenue necessary to satisfy the demands placed upon Government by the community.

8. While the economy shows some signs of improved growth, the immediate situation remains bleak. In important areas, South Australia's relative performance shows signs of improvement; however, there is no early prospect of substantial reductions in unemployment.

Positive factors over the next twelve months will be a rural uplift, a marked growth in the Federal Government's expenditure and specific stimulation in the new dwelling sector and the building industry. However, the current high levels of unemployment are a major concern to all Australians and South Australians. My Government will continue to work with the Commonwealth Government in developing job creation schemes to benefit as many unemployed individuals as possible, within the financial resources available.

9. The problems of our regional economy have been severely affected in the past few years by the drought. Fortunately, this situation now appears to have eased, and although all agricultural districts have received well below average rainfall for the month of June and most of July, late July rains have transformed the agricultural outlook. The Northern Mallee, Northern Murray Plains and large areas of the Northern districts which had previously been in the state of drought, have now received substantial relief. A record grain sowing of nearly three million hectares has been completed and there are now good prospects of a reasonable finish to the season. The late July rains have also enabled farmers to reduce the costs of hand-feeding and agistment in the drier areas of the State.

10. My Government accepts that one of its major responsibilities is to encourage economic development. An important aspect of that role is to encourage communication and consultation between all sections of industry. My Government was a principal participant at the National Economic Summit and in the development of the Economic Planning Advisory Council of which South Australia is currently one of the three representatives of all the States. Through this Council, South Australia will have an opportunity to influence national economic policy and emphasise the need for better regional economic development. My Government also believes that it has a responsibility to promote the widest possible informed discussion and awareness of economic issues and has begun publication of an Economic Report to provide factual information on significant issues to the South Australian business and industrial community.

11. An efficient and effective system of public administration is vital to the well-being of the State. On coming to office, my Government established a review of government management and operations with the objective of identifying and reviewing key areas affecting planning, organisation, management and control of public sector activities.

This review has so far been involved in the establishment of the Department of State Development, the reorganisation of the Cabinet management process, the restructuring of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, with particular emphasis on the establishment of a Cabinet Office and an expert Economic Unit, and the implementation of a major examination of financial management within the public sector and a review of the management of Public Service departments.

12. For more than two decades, South Australia has relied for its prosperity and growth on the manufacturing sector. While this important area remains the basis of our economy, my Government believes that our economic base must be broadened and expanded, particularly in the area of tertiary and service industries. To give this impetus and to further assist the development of the financial infrastructure of South Australia, my Government has announced that the Savings Bank of South Australia and the State Bank will

merge their operations. My Government also supported the proposal of G. H. Michell to the Federal Treasurer to form a new merchant bank in partnership with the International Bank of Detroit.

13. The development of Technology Park as a site for new industries is continuing, and in conjunction with this, a major marketing exercise is proceeding to attract investment from the United States in high technology and general manufacturing industries. My Government believes that special attention must be given to a more professional and active approach towards marketing the State, its technology and its products.

14. Small business forms a vital part of our economy and provides many South Australians with employment. My Government is currently taking action to give effect to its promise to improve assistance to the small business sector and to establish the State Enterprise Fund. It is expected that initiatives in these two important areas will be implemented before the end of this financial year.

A complete review is also being made of the financial incentives which are currently offered to encourage investment, both from within and from outside the State.

15. South Australia has an excellent industrial relations record. However, the field of industrial relations is constantly changing and it is now some years since Parliament examined the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in its totality. Following the comprehensive review of the Act by Mr F. K. Cawthorne, a Senior Industrial Magistrate of the South Australian Industrial Court, my Government proposes to introduce a Bill to adapt the legislation to meet current conditions.

16. My Government recognises the great potential that tourism has for generating economic activity and employment and is engaging in extensive and sophisticated promotion of this State's holiday attractions in Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand and Japan. Much of this activity is being undertaken in co-operation with private tourist and travel agencies.

17. My Government is very conscious of the effect that difficult economic conditions, unemployment and high interest rates have on the demand for public housing. It will support and encourage the Housing Trust in its efforts to house those people in urgent need, and to develop new initiatives such as Rental Housing Co-operative Associations, which utilise the funds of private financial institutions. My Government will renegotiate the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and endeavour to provide the finance to enable the Housing Trust to pursue a high volume construction programme. This will provide a direct boost to private builders and the construction industry generally.

18. The opportunity now exists to redevelop and rejuvenate many of the older areas of Adelaide. My Government's decision in June of this year that the North-South transportation corridor is not now required will provide a unique opportunity for urban renewal within inner western Adelaide suburbs. Similarly, my Government has promoted the redevelopment and revitalisation of Port Adelaide as a major commercial, residential and tourist centre.

19. The education of children and the continuing education of its citizens, no matter what their age, remains a primary responsibility of State Governments. My Government clearly demonstrated its commitment immediately on coming to office by allocating extra funds to employ an additional 231 teachers and to return ancillary staff numbers to their 1979 levels. New initiatives are planned in Aboriginal education and the provision of child care facilities in colleges of the Department of Technical and Further Education will be expanded. It is an essential part of my Government's policy that education should be realistic and relevant. The implementation of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board

of South Australia Act will have a wide-ranging effect on the type of education offered in schools and help ensure that senior students are better prepared for employment in a changing society.

20. My Government has taken a number of steps to improve the status and well-being of women in South Australia. A Women's Adviser has been appointed to the Department of Labour and a Task Force on women's employment has been established to provide continuing advice to the Minister of Labour.

An Aboriginal Information Officer has been appointed to the Women's Information Switchboard to ensure that Aboriginal women have easier access to the Switchboard and to supply advice to my Government about the needs of Aboriginal women in South Australia. Funds have been made available for the establishment of Women's Community Health Centres at Elizabeth and Port Adelaide, and for a medically based project on women's needs in relation to repetition injury. A review of South Australia's rape laws is to be carried out with a view to recommending appropriate legislative amendments in this area.

21. My Government is committed to restoring South Australia's reputation for enlightened legislative action to protect consumer interests. This will be done by affirming principles of fair trading in the community. It will also be pursuing a number of avenues with a view to achieving national uniformity in various areas of consumer law. Legislation to give statutory backing to a code of practice for rental referral agencies, to reinforce the minimum grape price provisions of the Prices Act, and to transfer the functions of a number of occupational licensing bodies to the Commercial Tribunal, will be introduced. Amendments to the Consumer Transactions Act, designed to limit certain types of insurance commissions will also be put before you.

22. In concert with the other States and the Commonwealth, my Government intends to introduce legislation to ensure that legislative authority for Acts governing the people of South Australia resides in this Parliament rather than that of the United Kingdom. Amendments to the Constitution Act to provide for fixed Parliamentary terms and simultaneous elections, and legislation to remove magistrates from the Public Service, will also be introduced.

23. The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General will shortly consider a uniform Bill concerning children born as a result of artificial insemination. My Government will introduce this Bill as soon as it is agreed upon. Amendments to the Sex Discrimination Act to provide a remedy for persons who are sexually harassed, and to deal with discriminatory practices of clubs, will be introduced. As well, my Government will proceed with the introduction of legislation to facilitate the incorporation of associations and to provide for a more appropriate level of regulation for these organisations.

24. Following a recent proclamation of amendments to the Community Welfare Act, it is expected that a Children's Interest Bureau will be established during this session. My Government also intends to establish a mechanism within the State Ombudsman's Office to deal with complaints against the Department for Community Welfare's administrative decisions. A Bill to establish a Commissioner for Aged Care and Services will also be introduced this session.

25. Since coming to office, my Government has undertaken a number of major initiatives to ensure that all South Australians have equal access to the best possible health care. Construction will commence this year on the Noarlunga Health Village which will provide medical, community health, and twenty-four-hour accident and emergency services. Planning for the redevelopment of the Lyell McEwin Hospital serving Adelaide's north, will also commence soon.

26. Major legislation on drug law reform will be put before you. The legislation will implement many of the important recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs in South Australia and will also take account of the proposals concerning drug trafficking contained in the report in the Australian Royal Commission into drugs conducted by Mr Justice Williams.

27. The protection of the State's natural environment is a major concern of my Government. Over 80 per cent of South Australia has already been cleared of vegetation and my Government believed it necessary to introduce controls so that some native vegetation can be retained and conserved. Consequently, regulations requiring planning permission before clearance can commence, have been brought in. Following the disastrous fires to which I referred earlier, my Government has established a project team to assess and co-ordinate fire management planning in the Adelaide hills. It has also established an inquiry into the role and effectiveness of our emergency services.

28. It is pleasing to record that some major additions have recently been made to South Australia's National Parks system. Three new areas have been proclaimed as Parks, and over 34 000 hectares of land have been added to existing Conservation Parks. My Government proposes to establish a Consultative Council on those areas administered by the Pastoral Board and the Land Board. Primary production and conservation interests will be represented on the Council.

29. The review of the Planning Act has been completed, and legislation resulting from that review will be introduced during this current session.

30. A major initiative for 1983-1984 will be the establishment of a combined Recreation and Sport Administration Centre which will provide administrative offices for Recreation and Sporting Associations on a low-rental basis. My Government will also increase its financial commitment to the Sports Administrator/Coaching Director Subsidy Scheme, the Recreation Administrator Subsidy Scheme and the Junior Sports Coaching Programmes.

31. My Government is pleased to note that the new River Murray Waters Agreement now only awaits ratifying legislation from the Commonwealth and Victorian Parliaments before it can be brought into operation in this State. My Government will also introduce legislation providing for the better management of the flood plains of this State. Work will commence shortly on a \$1.6 million scheme to upgrade water supplies to Stirling, Crafers, Heathfield and Aldgate, which should ensure a more secure water supply in times of bushfire risk. The Noora Saline Drainage Disposal Scheme should be fully operational by the end of 1983 and the Berri Irrigation Area Rehabilitation Scheme should be completed by the end of this financial year. In the metropolitan area, construction of the Little Para Water Filtration Plant, the fourth of the six plants needed to service Adelaide, is well advanced. Construction of the Morgan Plant, the first of the two plants needed to service the northern areas of the State, commenced in February 1983 and is proceeding satisfactorily.

32. Expenditure on mineral exploration in the last financial year totalled \$45 million and my Government is seeking to maintain the same level of commitment during the current year, despite the depressed state of mineral commodity prices on international markets. The value of mineral production last financial year exceeded \$305 million. It is pleasing to record that the first consignment of condensate transported from the Cooper Basin to Stony Point through the new liquids pipeline was shipped out in February this year.

33. Detailed studies are being made of the various options for future generation of electricity in this State, and decisions as to the future source of fuel and the site for a new power

station should be made by the end of this year. Negotiations directed at ensuring that the State's future gas requirements are satisfied beyond the current contracted period are continuing.

34. Following my Government's acceptance of the Environmental Impact Statement regarding the Olympic Dam project planning has begun for the construction of a pilot plant on the site.

35. Earlier this year, my Government negotiated special financial assistance from the Commonwealth to finance salvage operations in the forests severely burnt by the February fires. It is expected that logs to the royalty value of \$60-70 million will be recovered. Planting rates in the burnt areas will be stepped up from the 1983-1984 winter for at least 10 to 12 years. The market for sawn timber and other products has improved significantly over the last six months as a result of Government support in resolving problems associated with the importing of timber, and increased activity in dwelling construction.

36. Construction of the North-East Busway is proceeding rapidly, and commencement of operation of the system is expected by 1986. Consultants have been appointed and initial surveys and design work have been carried out for the project on the resignalling of the metropolitan railway system. This project will be completed over a six-year period, and includes the installation of a computerised Central Traffic Control facility in the Adelaide Yard. Sealing of the Stuart Highway is on target for completion in 1986. A further 200 kilometres of sealed road will be completed this financial year. Reconstruction of the Dukes Highway to conform with national highway standards is expected to be completed in 1986. By the end of 1983, upgrading will be completed through to a point about 25 kilometres north of Keith.

37. My Government will continue efforts to extend direct access to a wide range of shipping services. Access to raw materials and components and to markets is a vital part of overall State economic development.

Negotiations with shipping operators in South Australia's largest trade area, the near north, will continue. My Government is determined to press these negotiations to a successful conclusion.

38. Among the important legislative measures which my Government will put before you in the coming session are Bills concerning Aboriginal Land Rights. The Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Bill was introduced in the last session and a Select Committee was formed. It is anticipated that this Committee will report to the Parliament during this session. Certain amendments to the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act were introduced in the last session. They will be reintroduced during this session. These two Bills mark a further significant step in the Government's commitment to granting land rights to traditional Aboriginal owners.

39. My Government came to office eight months ago determined to give a new direction to South Australia's economic and social development. Despite the severe financial and economic crises in which it has found itself, its determination to maintain that course is undiminished. My Government believes that with the co-operation and support of all sections of our community, South Australia will once again be a pre-eminent State in the Commonwealth.

40. I now declare this session open and trust that your deliberations will be guided by Divine Providence to the advancement of the welfare of the people of this State.

The Governor retired from the Chamber, and the Speaker and members of the House of Assembly withdrew.

The President again took the Chair and read prayers.

[Sitting suspended from 12.51 to 2.30 p.m.]

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The **PRESIDENT** laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

North Adelaide School of Art and Craft—Upgrading,
Stirling-Heathfield Water Supply—Augmentation.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Attorney-General (Hon. C.J. Sumner):

By Command—

Bragg District By-election, 14 May 1983—Statistical Return of Voting.

Resolutions Adopted at the Australian Constitutional Convention, Parliament House, Adelaide, 26-29 April 1983.

Pursuant to Statute—

Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act, 1979-1982—Regulations—Appearance Forms.

Coroners Act, 1975-1981—Rules—Post-mortem Fees.

Cremation Act, 1891-1981—Regulations—

Coffin Materials.

Identification of Deceased Persons.

Department of Correctional Services—Report, 1981-82

Friendly Societies Act, 1919-1975—

Independent Order of Rechabites Friendly Society, S.A. District No. 81;

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Grand Lodge of S.A.;

Manchester Unity—Amendments of General Laws and Rules.

Industrial and Commercial Training Act, 1981—Regulations—

Roof Tiling.

Roof Tiling (Amendment).

Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1972-1981—Regulations—

Asbestos.

Asbestos Signs.

Commercial Safety Code—First Aid Boxes.

Construction Safety—First Aid Boxes.

Industrial Safety Code—First Aid Boxes.

Removal of Asbestos.

Industrial Court—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1972-1983—Workers Compensation Rules—Consent.

Justices Act, 1921-1982—Rules—Appearance Forms.

Motor Fuel Licensing Board—Report, 1982.

Pay-roll Tax Act, 1971-1982—Regulations—Deduction Levels.

Supreme Court—Supreme Court Act, 1935-1983—Legal Practitioners' Costs.

Trustee Act, 1936-1982—Regulations—Trustee Status.

Workers Compensation Act, 1971-1983—Regulations—Prescribed Forms for Wages.

By the Minister of Corporate Affairs (Hon. C.J. Sumner):

Pursuant to Statute—

Companies (Administration) Act, 1982—Regulations—

Companies Auditors and Liquidators Disciplinary Board Fees.

By the Minister of Health (Hon. J.R. Cornwall):

Pursuant to Statute—

Chiropodists Act, 1950-1973—Regulations—Fees.

Chiropractors Act, 1979—Regulations—Fees.

Dog Control Act, 1979-1981—Regulations—Extension to Coober Pedy.

Food and Drugs Act, 1908-1981—Regulations—

Cyanide.

Etiopinate.

Food and Drugs Advisory Committee—Fees.

Sale of Poisons.

Local Government Act, 1934-1982—Indenture between the Corporation of the City of Adelaide and the South

Australian Jockey Club Inc.—Victoria Park Racecourse.

Narcotic and Psychotropic Drugs Act, 1934-1978—Regulations—Dispensing Returns.

Nurses Registration Act, 1920-1970—Regulations—Fees.

Physiotherapists Act, 1945-1979—Regulations—Registration Fees.

Planning Act, 1982—
 Regulations—
 General Amendments.
 Mining Production Tenements.
 Crown Development Reports by South Australian Planning Commission on—
 Proposed Acquisition and Transfer of Land by Commissioner of Highways (4).
 Proposed Development at Port Augusta Memorial Park.
 Proposed Storage Shed at the Berri Slipway.
 Proposed Land Division at Section 378, Hundred of Loveday—Cobdogla Irrigation Area.
 Proposed Division and Transfer of Land by the State Transport Authority of S.A. in the District Council Area of Clare.
 Proposed Land Division, Part Section 925, Hundred of Yadnarie.
 Proposed Garage at Wudinna Area School, Wudinna.
 Proposal to Construct a Boat Storage Yard and Travelling Straddle Carrier at Lake Butler, Robe.
 Proposed Alterations and Additions to the Mount Gambier Court House.
 Proposed Erection of Community Library at Keith Area School.
 Proposed Development at Port Augusta College.
 Proposed Erection of a Police Radio Tower and Associated Structures at Waikerie.
 Proposed Division of Land at Allendale.
 Proposed Upgrading of Residence and Administration Area at Mundulla Primary School.
 Proposed Construction of Single Transportable Classroom at McDonald Park Primary School, Mount Gambier.
 Proposed Land Acquisition for Dyson Road.
 Proposed Land Division by Department of Lands—Section 71, Berri Irrigation Area.
 Proposed Land Division in District Council of Waikerie.
 Proposed Land Division by Department of Lands, Section 526, Hundred of Mobilong.
 Proposed Acquisition and Transfer of Land, Hundred of Talunga, District Council of Gumeracha.
 Proposed Redevelopment of Birdwood Primary and High Schools.
 Proposed Borrow Pit Operation.
 Proposed Erection of Visitors Centre at Salt Creek, Coorong National Park.
 Proposed Beach Access Ramp, Brighton.
 Proposed Land Division for future road purposes—North-East Road, Tea Tree Gully.
 Proposed Division of Land Irrigation in Perpetual Lease 1217, District Council of Murray Bridge.
 Proposed Acquisition of Land at Hundred of Talunga.
 Report redredging programme to widen the shipping channel and enlarge the swinging basin at Port Pirie.

Racing Act, 1976-1983—Betting Control Board Rules—Port Pirie.
 Stony Point Environmental Consultative Group—Report, 1982.
 District Council of Mannum—By-law No. 16—Parks, Parklands and Recreation Reserves.
 District Council of Paringa—By-laws—
 No. 10—Bees.
 No. 14—Inflammable Undergrowth.
 No. 19—Water Reserves.
 No. 20—One-way Traffic.
 No. 22—Garbage Bins.
 No. 25—Water on Roads.
 No. 27—Bees.
 No. 28—Repeal of By-laws.

By the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Frank Blevins):
By Command—
 Data Processing Board—Report, 1981-82.
Pursuant to Statute—
 Country Fire Services Board—Report, 1981-82.
 Harbors Act, 1936-1981—Regulations—Wharfage, Tonnage Rates, Conservancy Dues and Pilotage Fees.
 Highways Act, 1926-1983—Approvals to lease Highways Department Properties, 1982-83.
 Kindergarten Union of South Australia—Report, 1982.
 Road Traffic Act, 1961-1981—Regulations—
 Small Bus Standards, Traffic Lights and Motor Cycles, Weighing Devices.
 Traffic Prohibition—Enfield.

Roseworthy Agricultural College—Report, 1982.
 Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) Act, 1982—Regulation—Water Haulage Track.
 Seeds Act, 1979-1982—General Regulations.
 South Australian College of Advanced Education Act, 1982—Report, 1982.
 South Australian Teacher Housing Authority—Report, 1981-82.

By the Minister of Fisheries (Hon. Frank Blevins):

By Command—
 Australian Fisheries Council—Resolutions of the 12th Meeting of the Council, held in Hobart, 15 October 1982.
Pursuant to Statute—
 Fisheries Act, 1971-1982—Regulations—
 Licence Fees.
 Zone E Prawn Fishery.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: FINANCIAL SITUATION

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The statement concerns the operations of the Consolidated Account, 1982-83. On two other occasions, I have reported to the House on the serious financial situation which faces South Australia. On 14 December last year, the Premier reported on a review of the Budget which had been conducted by the Under Treasurer. This review detailed the financial position at the date of our election to office and indicated that the Budget outlook was far worse than had been publicly revealed by the former Treasurer.

On 3 May the Supplementary Estimates were introduced, and details were given of the impact of the drought, the bush fires and the floods on the Budget, and it was reported that the overall deficit on Consolidated Account could reach \$72 000 000. I am now able to report that the final outcome for 1982-83 is better than the result indicated last May, in part because of the strict expenditure controls on recurrent and capital expenditure by the Government. Also, claims for natural disaster relief have been somewhat less than anticipated, but this means there will be a carry-over of claims into 1983-84. The final result shows a deficit of \$57 100 000 on the Consolidated Account for the financial year ended 30 June 1983. It is made up of a deficit on recurrent operations of \$109 000 000 and a surplus on capital works of \$51 900 000. That deficit of \$57 100 000 has increased the accumulated deficit of \$6 100 000 as at 30 June 1982 to \$63 200 000 as at 30 June 1983.

I will, of course, give members a more detailed account of the factors which have resulted in that position when the 1983-84 Budget is presented to the House in the next few weeks. The seriousness of the financial position which now faces South Australia cannot be overstated. The ability of the State Government to carry a large deficit is severely limited, and the recurrent deficit of \$109 000 000 is a matter of grave concern. If left unchecked, the State's cash reserves, already depleted, would be very quickly exhausted.

This is a prospect which no responsible Government could contemplate. As was made clear to the Parliament during the debate on the Supplementary Estimates in May, the Government will not allow South Australia to be weakened by the destruction of its reserves, nor will it allow the problem to be put off, with future Administrations being made to pick up the bill. South Australia must come to grips with this problem now. As a Government we have taken steps already to ensure a tight control over all expenditures and to reduce any unnecessary spending and improve

efficiency. However, it will also be necessary to introduce a number of measures to increase the State's revenue.

Unfortunately, South Australia, like other States, suffers from the dual problem of an extremely restricted revenue base and the reliance on revenue measures which either directly affect employment, such as pay-roll tax, or which impact unevenly on the community. As members would be aware, the Government is setting up an inquiry into the best means by which it can raise the revenue to satisfy the demands placed upon it by the community. It is also participating in the working group, set up by the recent Premiers' Conference, to examine the revenue powers of State and Federal Governments. However, our immediate problems are urgent and pressing and it is necessary that we take action now.

In deciding what that action should be, the Government has determined that there should be no change to the level of pay-roll tax, as this would act as a direct disincentive to employment, nor should there be any change to the current arrangements concerning land tax, as this may adversely affect the important housing industry. The measures which we propose to increase are as follows:

- An increase in the licence fee under the Business Franchise (Tobacco) Act from 12.5 per cent to 25 per cent with effect from 1 October 1983. This measure is intended to bring in about \$13 000 000 in 1983-84.
- An increase in the licence fee under the Business Franchise (Petroleum Products) Act which will add 1 cent per litre to the price of petrol and diesel fuel at the pump. The present intention is that it have effect from 1 October 1983. This measure is intended to bring in about \$11 000 000 in 1983-84.
- An increase in the licence fee under the Licensing Act from 9 per cent to 12 per cent with effect from 1 April 1984. This measure is intended to bring in \$2 000 000 in 1983-84.
- An increase in the levy on general insurance under the Stamp Duties Act from 6 per cent to 8 per cent with effect from 1 January 1984. This measure is intended to bring in \$6 000 000.
- The introduction of a new financial institutions duty similar to the duty which has been operating in New South Wales and Victoria for some months. The level of duty, yet to be determined, will be on the transactions of all financial institutions and is planned to be introduced with effect from 1 December 1983.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: All designed to keep Jack Wright off the front page!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Let me make it clear that the Government is attempting to grapple with a problem that is largely not of its own making. We came to office to find a deficit already in place and a problem building up which we simply could not have contemplated from the Opposition benches. We have had to cope with a succession of natural disasters more severe than anything experienced in the State's history.

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Attorney-General has been given leave to make a statement, and I want to hear that statement.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: We have the continuing problem of a national economic decline which is not only reducing our revenue, but is also increasing the demands upon the Government.

To not act now would be grossly irresponsible and something for which we would be condemned by future Governments and future generations of South Australians. The basic financial strength of our State must be restored, and the measures that I have now announced will go part of the

way towards that aim. As far as our revenue base will allow, we have attempted to ensure that all South Australians make a contribution towards overcoming this serious and urgent problem.

QUESTIONS

FISHING FEES

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a statement before asking the Minister of Fisheries a question about licence fees.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: On 1 July 1983 the Minister of Fisheries sent a letter to the President of the Australian Fishing Industry Council in which he raised a number of matters. Some of these matters are as follows, and I will detail them one by one: first, make licences non-transferable. They would have the effect of completely destabilising the base on which fishermen borrow funds to purchase boats, which in some fisheries involves a considerable amount of capital, and any move to this would make fishing boats valueless if a fisherman either decided to or was forced to leave the fishery industry for one reason or another.

Secondly, increase the number of fishing units with compensatory controls on effort. This is a direct threat to the fisheries of South Australia by increasing effort, and the proposal continued with a threat to put controls on the number of fish of various types that could be caught by the fisherman. This would be almost impossible to police and would completely cut across the hard working members of the fishing industry who by their efforts enjoy greater catches.

Thirdly, distribute profits from authority holders to a wider group of participating fishermen: that is, skippers and crew. This is a most extraordinary proposal because it would be a direct Government interference in a business. It is a threat to impose Government controls on the distribution of profit according to socialist doctrine if ever I saw one! I hope that the Minister was not serious in that matter.

Fourthly, introduce a transfer fee on first generation licence holders. This could effect people who have been pioneers in the industry and who were instrumental in introducing controls in the late 1960s in the interest of the fishery and many of whom have been in the industry for 30 to 40 years, and would be a penalty on these people who have shown a very responsible attitude towards the industry and supported every move to bring in proper management.

Fifthly, increase licence fees to cover management costs. No doubt there is room for negotiation on increases in licence fees. However, if it is the Government's intention to eventually cover management costs, then they will be setting up to potentially wreck the industry by imposing a very heavy financial burden. If, of course, this occurs the fisherman would need to have some control over management costs, because otherwise the Government will be giving an open cheque to apply management costs that in many cases will be unnecessary or inefficient. In any case, it overlooks the fact that the industry does pay tax and so does contribute to the revenue of the country through export, and they also earn valuable export income.

The most serious part of this letter—and I quote the next paragraph of it—is:

Of these options, the Government has decided to seek industry's views on a new scale of licence fees for the abalone prawn and rock lobster fisheries. The order of fees being considered by the Government is set out in this letter. Industry's response to these proposed fee levels will determine to what extent the other options outlined above will be pursued.

That was a very serious threat to the fishermen. If they read the letter wrongly, they had every right to do so because it was certainly badly put by the Minister. I re-read the letter

many times because I heard the Minister say that it was not meant as blackmail. I read the letter repeatedly but could come to that conclusion only. As I read the letter, it is clearly the most blatant piece of blackmail by a Minister that I have seen in my 12 years in Parliament, and it is totally unreasonable. When the fishermen protested recently, the Premier (and I quote from the *News*) stated:

The Government will not succumb to blackmail of this nature. How could he say that the Government would not succumb to blackmail when he had asked the fishermen to do just that? It seems that the fishermen, whom I have found to be a most reasonable group over the years, could still be persuaded to discuss licence fees if this ridiculous and threatening letter was withdrawn and if the Minister sat down with the industry or if the industry sat down with him (I do not care who does it) and attempted to reach that famous word 'consensus'. My questions are as follows:

1. Will the Minister redraw this letter without reservation?
2. Following that withdrawal, will the Minister then agree to negotiations with the fishermen on licence fee increases without the threats included in the letter?

The Hon. L.H. Davis: You have him on the hook now; he is out of his depth.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Parliament has been in recess for some weeks, and it is fair to say that a few events have occurred during those weeks that would have warranted some attention by the Opposition in the first Question Time of the new Parliament. A Ministerial statement has just been given explaining, as did the Governor's Speech this morning, some of the enormous problems facing South Australia. They are real and serious problems, and I should have thought that any responsible Leader of the Opposition would have wanted to tackle issues such as those and question the Leader of the Government.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: Hurry up and answer the question so that we can do that.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will indeed, and I will do it in great detail. I indicate how puerile it is if that is the best that the Leader of the Opposition can do in asking a question after such an eventful few weeks in the recess; I am quite amazed. In his first question the Leader asked whether I would withdraw this letter, and the brief answer is, 'No'. I have no intention of withdrawing it. The Leader detailed the five options that were available to the Government and read them to the Council. What he did not do was read out the preceding words, which are as follows:

The Government has considered a number of options for the reduction of licence premiums and the recovery of management costs. The major alternatives are:

The alternatives read out by the Hon. Mr Cameron were those available to this Government, his Government previously and, I hope, to all future Governments. They were alternatives, and they were clearly stated as such. The letter was completely honest and open, and it stated the problem to which I will come in a moment. The letter stated the alternatives for solving that problem, and it then went on to state the Government's preferred alternative, which was an increase in licence fees. So, the Hon. Mr Cameron is misleading the Council in not stating that they were alternatives and that not necessarily all of them would be implemented.

Having, hopefully, cleared up points A, B, C, D and E, let us look at the problem. We have managed fisheries in this State because the Labor Party was the driving force in having them managed.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: In what year?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Over many years.

The Hon. J.R. Cornwall: When you were trying to win the seat of Millicent you were against them.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Labor Party is justifiably proud of its record in relation to managing fisheries. I agree that fishery management involves Government intervention, and I suppose that that is why the Opposition does not approve. However, the Government is saying on behalf of the community that this resource is ours and does not belong to an individual group, that it will manage the fisheries in the interests of the community as a whole, and that people will not be allowed to go fishing when they wish, thereby putting unnecessary pressure on the fisheries and destroying this community resource.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: You don't want anyone to get rich.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The honourable member has a point when he says it just allows people to get rich.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: I said you don't want anyone to get rich.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Labor Government created managed fisheries and restricted people's access to those fisheries, and in so doing created a problem. That problem is the absolutely exorbitant amount that people are now paying for licences. This matter has got completely out of control, to the detriment of the people who want to go fishing in this State (when the resource can stand it).

I will give an extreme example of what is happening in the abalone industry, although I do not want to take up too much of the Council's time. Prior to the previous Government coming to office abalone fishing licences could not be transferred and stayed, quite properly, where they belonged—with the community. Holders of those licences were allowed to fish and make as much profit as they wanted, but were not allowed to trade those licences. The previous Government, with the stroke of a pen, allowed abalone licences to be transferred. That gave an immediate hand-out of hundreds of thousands of dollars to abalone divers who held licences and straight away sold those licences. The cost of one of those licences today is close to \$200 000. There are examples of this in applications for transfer of abalone licences presently before the Fisheries Department. The most extreme example I have seen recently involves a licence transfer for about \$220 000-\$14 000 for the boat, \$20 000 for gear and \$180 000 odd for the licence. That presumably reflects the level of profitability in this industry.

The Government is saying that the community has a right to see a maximum number of people engaged in this industry, particularly during a time of high unemployment, but consistent with protecting the resource. We have at present a few very greedy people controlling this industry. They have taken control of the industry out of the Government's hands. Those people are trading in a community resource and making absolutely exorbitant profits.

I would be delighted for any such person to come here and show me how much they catch, what they get for it and why other people should not have access to this fishery. Why should these people have a monopoly, trading not in fish but in pieces of paper? If this is what the Opposition is trying to justify, then members opposite should say so. However, they must remember that the first generation fishermen paid not one cent for their licences and that, with a stroke of the pen, they were given a gift of \$180 000 by the previous Government.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: What happened to the egg industry?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: We are not presently dealing with the egg industry. However, I will be dealing with that industry shortly; the honourable member should not worry about that. The Hon. Mr Cameron is attempting to distract me, but I will not be distracted. This problem can be solved

in a number of ways. The alternatives that I have spelt out were quite clearly stated. The Government's preferred option is clearly stated as an increase in licence fees, so that some of the money gleaned from the community's resource, which the previous Government has allowed fishermen to monopolise, will come back to the community.

Even with this increase in licence fees, the community will still be subsidising the cost of management of these fisheries. How can one justify that? How does one justify the hundreds of thousands of dollars that people are making because of a monopoly control of a community resource? How does one justify the demands of those persons that the community further subsidise the costs of the management of these fisheries? This is what the Opposition is attempting to justify, but this Government will not do so. The Government has quite clearly stated that its preferred option is to return some of the value of this resource to the community.

If the fishermen involved in the prawn and abalone industries prefer another option, let them say so. To date all that they have done is what they did in 1978—attempt to stand over the Government. I think that in 1978 they were successful to some degree, but they will not succeed with this Government, because it will not be stood over and intimidated by these people. If Opposition members think that all fishermen support such tactics then they are welcome to come and look at my mail at any time, because that will indicate to them that working fishermen in Port Lincoln and the South-East have written to me saying that that is not the case.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: We'll take you up on that.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will give the honourable member a copy of the *Border Watch*—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: This matter is so important that I will read some of these articles to honourable members to help explain my answer more fully. I have plenty of similar articles. The one I will refer to appeared in the *Port Lincoln Times* and is a good example of this problem. I do not know the gentleman who wrote this letter, but he stood up at an AFIC meeting last Friday and stated what is contained in the letter that I will now read.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: He must have felt pretty lonely.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: He did, yet he did not get one line of publicity in the newspapers. This person is employed in the abalone industry and gives his name. Under the heading 'Changing industry power, profits', the article states:

I have been employed in the abalone industry for a number of years, and I am very interested in the proposals outlined by the new Minister of Agriculture, Frank Blevins.

In the abalone industry and in the other industries I see no threat to jobs by his proposals, but rather an increase for potential jobs.

In my view the main object of the new proposals as regard to the prawn industry, is an attempt to change the present situation brought about by limited entry, transferability and company ownership.

At present most profits and power is in the hands of boat owners; some own more than one boat and many no longer go fishing.

A snowball situation results where those owners enjoying large profits have great purchasing power to buy other prawn trawlers at top prices and thus monopolise profits in the industry.

Over-capitalisation results in putting the price of an authority well beyond the means of skippers and crew who actually do the fishing.

The crew have little say or bargaining power in the industry as to their wages or management decisions.

If present trends continue, the prawn fleet will be owned and managed by a few very wealthy ex-fishermen. Future fishermen will be nothing but wage earners.

The abalone industry is following closely in the footsteps of the prawn industry where the deck hands have little hope of

gaining an abalone authority and have no bargaining power as to management or their wages.

Crew are loath to say anything because of threats to job security. The Minister proposes to change the management structure, not throw it out of the window.

Is it a threat to jobs or is it a threat to the profits of the owners? If the proposed changes, radical as they appear, can change this situation, I see it as a good thing.

Considering the wealth and power of the fishing management bodies, I see little likelihood of them ever being implemented.

A last point I would like to make is that the opinions of the management bodies is not necessarily that of the fishermen.

I think that letter clearly spells out the problem that the Government is attempting to address. I assure the Council that the Government will regain control of the fishery and that it will manage the fishery. My door is open to the industry at all times, and I have discussions with it almost daily. In fact, I will be having further discussions with the industry again today.

I make it perfectly clear that the Government will, in no circumstances, hand over control of a community resource to a few very wealthy, powerful people. It does not matter how much noise these people make, they will not obtain total control of this community resource. Instead, they will have reasonable access and they will compensate the community at a reasonable rate. Although they have not done so yet, if these people claim that they cannot afford to pay the new licence fees, I will be happy to look at their fishing returns and their income tax forms.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: You can't do that.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Just a moment. If it can be clearly demonstrated that the community should continue to subsidise them, I will be happy to recommend to Cabinet that that be done. However, I do not believe for one moment that that is the case.

ST JOHN AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about the St John Ambulance Service.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I refer to an article in yesterday's *News*, headed 'Solve St John dispute move', as follows:

The Health Commission has been ordered to resolve the St John Ambulance Service overtime dispute.

The Health Minister, Dr Cornwall, confirmed today State Cabinet had instructed the issue be dealt with urgently.

The commission immediately would negotiate with St John, the Ambulance Employees Association and the Federated Miscellaneous Workers' Union.

Incidentally, there is no mention of the A.G.W.A., which is heavily involved in this area. The article continues:

The overtime dispute arose following an Industrial Commission ruling which allows professional staff to decline compulsory overtime by refusing to attend calls up to 30 minutes before the end of the afternoon shift.

Dr Cornwall said several crews had declined to attend calls between 6.30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Up to 10 career officers might be appointed at four key suburban stations to overcome the loss of service when crews exercised the right to decline overtime.

I understand that in at least four metropolitan centres volunteer ambulance officers have volunteered to commence work at 6 p.m. or earlier instead of 7 p.m., to alleviate the situation so that ambulance officers will not be disadvantaged. I have been informed that the St John Council accepted the offer, but the response from the Ambulance Employees Association is not known.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: That's because they are not genuine.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I do not know. It appears to me that this industrial move by the Ambulance Employees Association is an attempt to diminish or remove the role

of volunteers in the service, which has been a part of their effort for some time. I refer to page 14 of the report of the Opit inquiry and the association's submission which outlines its policy, as follows:

1. The employing authority shall not support further introduction or expansion of volunteers to the ambulance service or any other area which is industrially covered by the appropriate trade union, unless there is a fully negotiated agreement between the employing authority and the union on the use of volunteers.

2. The employing authority shall take steps to gain negotiated agreement in all the said areas to cover the use of volunteers, as applicable.

3. The primary objective of this policy is the protection of Ambulance Employees Association members. It is important that the use of volunteers does not prejudice members' working conditions, job security and employment opportunity.

4. Protection cannot be fully provided unless there are means of preventing polarisation and resolving disputes between paid workers and volunteers.

5. The association cannot sustain a position when it can only react after the event. There is an essential need for the organisation to take the initiative. Lines of demarcation in relation to areas of work and responsibility of both paid workers and volunteers need to be established.

6. In summary, the association has a clear responsibility to serve the best interests of its members. At the same time it would be counter-productive for the association to ignore community interests. In the interim a policy of 'integration' has been adopted by the Ambulance Employees Association of South Australia. It is essential that this policy be adopted by the ruling authority of the service as a matter of urgency.

I also refer to the Ambulance Employees Association Bulletin dated 21 June 1983. Although I read the association's policy in full, I will read only one paragraph from the bulletin (but I have no objection to the rest of it being used). The bulletin states:

Certainly some of us would have preferred a more radical and drastic approach to the problems of the service, but we must keep in mind the fact that the South Australian public, after more than 30 years of 'soft-sell' by the St John organisation, aided and abetted by a conservative media, in general likes its ambulance service the way it is. As a result, we must tread warily in getting the recommendations implemented, without making too much of a song and dance about it.

In view of the stance taken by the Ambulance Employees Association, will the Minister give unequivocal support to the St John Ambulance Service basically as it is constituted at present with a strong volunteer ingredient and with any suitable minor modifications that may be necessary following the recommendations of the Opit Report, but retaining the volunteer element as the basis? Secondly, how does the Minister propose to enforce the suggested appointment of 10 additional officers? Thirdly, what is the Minister's reaction to the offer made by the volunteers to commence work at 6 p.m. or earlier (if necessary) instead of 7 p.m. to solve the problem raised by the Ambulance Employees Association?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will give one unequivocal offer today, as I have given every day since I became Minister of Health: I have a total responsibility and a commitment to the patients. I do not play politics with lives. I think that the way in which the Opposition has tried to play politics with patients' lives over the past eight months is quite despicable. Let me illustrate that.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am not under any pressure and I am not embarrassed in any way by the totally irresponsible shenanigans of the Opposition. I will repeat— I have an unequivocal and total commitment to the welfare of patients, and I would hope that at some stage the Opposition might just drop off this total irresponsibility and try to behave like a reasonable Opposition should behave and stop leading with the chin. I can cite a well-documented case, involving a response time of 26 minutes. This occurred because of the on-going dispute between the volunteers and the professionals. It is a situation that can be resolved in

five minutes if the Opposition keeps its nose out of areas where it has no business.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: The Opposition should stop playing cynical politics and polarising the parties involved. In this case, a woman collapsed at Fullarton, and the call response time was a totally unacceptable 26 minutes. That occurred on 17 June 1983.

The Hon. J.C. Burdett: What time of the day was that?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: It was 1852 hours. I am happy to tell the Council that the outcome was not unfavourable but, if this dispute continues, inevitably a situation will arise where a patient will die. That is far too important for the Government and me to play politics with and I hope that it is far too important for the St John organisation to play politics with.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: What have you said to the professional organisation?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am saying to the professional organisation and the volunteers, 'For goodness sake, stop playing around as you are currently doing, sit down and talk—negotiate.' I have told the Health Commission—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Mr President, will you control members opposite during this session or will they carry on the way they usually do? I will not cop it. They cackle, laugh and giggle while we are talking about patients' lives. Frankly, I think that I deserve more protection and this Parliament deserves a bit more respect.

The PRESIDENT: If the Minister replies to the question, he will get all the protection that is necessary. It is not for me to tell the Minister how to reply to the question or how many interjections he is to take note of.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: A point of order, Mr President. I have not taken note of any interjections.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If the Minister does not reply to interjections, he will not be in trouble.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I do not believe that you, Mr President, are protecting me to the extent you should, quite frankly.

The PRESIDENT: That is a reflection on the Chair. If we start in that vein, we are starting on the wrong foot.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: This matter is far too important for me to be subjected to jackasses laughing and carrying on.

The PRESIDENT: It is not up to me to tell the Minister how to answer questions, but I ask him not to get himself into too big a knot in doing so.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: You, Sir, should not allow members opposite to giggle, laugh, and carry on in an irresponsible way. You have a duty.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Please be rational.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am being very rational.

The PRESIDENT: I do not believe that you are.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: That is the very thing to which I am objecting. He is a bloody jackass.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That remark is unnecessary and unparliamentary, and I ask the Minister to withdraw it.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I withdraw it.

The PRESIDENT: I ask the Minister to continue to reply.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will start again if you, Sir, wish. I cannot say this too often.

The PRESIDENT: I cannot restrict the amount of time that the Minister takes to reply.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: But you, Sir, can protect me.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister has protection.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Members opposite are still laughing, giggling, and carrying on.

The PRESIDENT: I cannot stop people from laughing.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: You can stop them from interjecting, Sir.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister must return to his reply.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will, and I will yet again give an unequivocal assurance that the Government and I will protect patients and their lives. The whole matter is far too important to be politicised and polarised, as the Opposition is trying to do.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: And trivialised.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Yes, indeed. The point is that response times are unacceptably high because of an ongoing dispute. The dispute has been continuing for years, during the three years of the former Tonkin Government. That Government did not want to intervene, because it did not want to upset the ancient and venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem. I am not in that position; that is not a luxury I allow myself. I will not attack the St John organisation and I will certainly not attack volunteers or a perfectly legitimate union—the Ambulance Employees Association. What I am asking (and I have asked senior people in the South Australian Health Commission to assist) is that those three responsible parties sit down and act responsibly to solve the problem in regard to the afternoon shift. This is one major symptom of the problem, and members must remember that within two days of my being sworn in as Minister of Health I met with Professor Opit in my office to ask him to conduct an inquiry to find out formally how we can resolve this whole matter.

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: You are the greatest goose to ever come in here.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the Minister not to become involved in debate across the Chamber.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: When I am talking about patients' lives, I find it hard to cop Legh Davis acting like a schoolboy debater. Let us get these things right in the Parliament.

The PRESIDENT: Does the Minister want to answer the question?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Indeed I do. I am doing it very well, and I will proceed with my usual humility.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: You are a real bloody comedian.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Is the Minister going to continue?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will. If necessary, I will stay here all day.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Some months ago, the Industrial Commission made a ruling in a case, reinstating a professional ambulance officer who had refused to accept a 'priority one' call less than 30 minutes before knock-off time at 7 p.m. Professor Opit looked at the situation and made the point that there were certain situations in high stress jobs (and ambulance driving is one of those high stress jobs) where it was not reasonable in all circumstances to ask a driver or an ambulance attendant to accept compulsory overtime. That is the position.

One of the suggestions for overcoming that situation was in regard to an afternoon shift from 3 to 10 p.m., or something of that order. Therefore, we could man four key suburban ambulance stations with professionals or a mix

of professionals and volunteer ambulance drivers during that crucial period, 6.30 to 7 p.m., and immediately after, which is a peak accident time. That would involve the employment of an additional 10 professionals. At present, there are about 140 to 150 professionals and about 600 volunteers directly involved in driving ambulances. If that is the formula that we need to follow (the employment of 10 officers additional to the 140 or 150 officers and 600 volunteers), I would be perfectly happy to look at it very seriously on behalf of the Government.

I come back to the point that I am in the business of protecting patients' interests and not in the business of protecting the egos of the volunteers, the Ambulance Employees Association, or the members of the St John Council. I do not give a fig about the three of them. The important issue is patient protection. We ought not to play politics in regard to this matter: it is far too important. A situation occurred on 17 June 1983, which I have documented and which occurred during the changeover period from 1835 hours, or 6.35 p.m. The time of refusal was 6.35 p.m.—right at that critical period when a crew acting quite within the law—

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: Not very professionally.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Acting with the full force of the law, on a ruling of the Industrial Commission, they refused to take the call. If there had been an afternoon shift—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: —of that relatively small number of professionals, that would have been avoided. I will not argue the rights and wrongs of whether they should refuse or accept the calls, but the fact of life is that on a ruling of the Industrial Commission they did not have to accept calls in that last 30 minutes. It can be overcome by employing an additional small number of professionals and putting in an afternoon shift. I have asked the Health Commission officers to talk to the unions and to the St John Ambulance Council. That is one way—and possibly the only way—although I will not commit myself there. It is certainly one of the major proposals to resolve the situation.

As to the appointment of 10 additional officers, yes, I think that that is a very likely outcome. The volunteers, as the Hon. Mr Burdett said, have offered to come in at 6.30 and start half an hour early, the rationale of that being that they would then overcome this possible hiatus between 6.30 and 7 p.m. Again, it is not for me to argue the rights and wrongs of that. I just want to see the matter resolved. All these disputes are ultimately resolved; the question is whether we try to make cheap political capital out of them, as our conservative friends do, or whether we sit down and resolve them in the interests of the patients. The offer to which I have referred is unacceptable to the Ambulance Officers' Association. It is as simple as that. They refuse to have volunteers coming on half an hour early. They see the solution as being the employment of a small number of additional professional officers. If that is the way to solve the problem, that is the one that I would endorse, but I am not presupposing anything.

I come back to the point, as I have done on a number of occasions in this rather lengthy and somewhat emotional answer—and I make no apologies for being emotional where patients' lives are involved—that we should sit down and solve the problem. I appeal to the Opposition to get the hell out of it and stop trying to play politics.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I wish to ask a supplementary question. As we are all concerned with patients' lives and as the St John Ambulance Service has been very much

concerned in the matter of protecting patients' lives over a long period, will the Minister answer the questions? I think that he answered the third one about the volunteer offer, but he did not answer the other two. Will he answer them? I will shorten the first one: will he unequivocally support the St John Ambulance Service, including its basic commitment to volunteers? Secondly, how does he propose to enforce the appointment of the 10 additional paid staff to which he has referred?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: If there is any imputation in that that I do not support the St John Ambulance organisation, of course that would be a filthy black lie, but I presume that there is no imputation of that. So, the answer as to whether I support or would support the St John Ambulance Service is, 'Yes, I have and I will continue to.' That does not mean that I regard it as having some degree of infallibility or that I would not at some stage reserve my right to go to the organisation, as I did recently. I told the General Manager that I was sick to death of the whole damn thing, that they should stop playing around and endangering patients' lives—which the St John Council in particular did by refusing to negotiate on a reasonable basis.

The St John Ambulance Service in this State is based on volunteers. I have never suggested that the volunteers should be moved out of the service. They have become totally paranoid at the very idea of increasing the paid force by 4 per cent or 5 per cent. That is how they are unreasonable, and it is about time that they got their act together. I will continue to support them, but I will reserve my right to go and be very angry with them if they continue with these strange ideas that they have.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: The strange ideas come from all parties involved, including the Opposition. The strange ideas come from the St John organisation and the volunteers, who will not reach a reasonable compromise, and from the A.E.A., which pushes its members' interests. It wants to see more professionals. That is an option.

An honourable member: So you support them?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am not supporting anyone except the patients. I have been on my feet for 20 minutes saying that.

An honourable member: You are supporting the paid staff.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: That is a blatant lie.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Lying is one of the things—

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: —that one is not allowed to do in this Parliament. We know that, Sir.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call on the Minister to withdraw the accusation against a member that he lied.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Certainly. He should not tell blatant untruths or even suggest them. I support the retention of the volunteers within the organisation. I support the St John organisation itself. There is no question at all that I want to see a sensible result to this most unreasonable dispute. It has been going on for years and it—

The Hon. J.C. Burdett interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr Burdett is continually provoking, whereas he could ask another question and get an answer in half the time.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: As to how I will enforce the employment of the 10 additional officers, I hope that that situation does not arise. However, if it becomes necessary I will enforce whatever I have to enforce to ensure that those ambulances are manned. I will not cop an on-going situation where at any given time there is no prompt response to a 'priority one' call because of the bloodmindedness of the volunteers, or the stupidity of the A.E.A. members or the intransigence of the St John Council members.

FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about Federal-State relations.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: No-one can really argue that the recent High Court decision is one of the most significant decisions in the history of the Federation. Particularly in the interpretation of the Commonwealth's powers in relation to external affairs, the decision dramatically tips the balance of Federal-State powers in the Commonwealth's favour. The potential is for Australians to be dominated totally by Canberra in both major and minor domestic matters where previously the States had significant powers and were able to deal effectively with those matters.

Recently, there was some public comment that minority groups may seek to exploit the Commonwealth's powers by seeking Commonwealth intervention in State matters where the Commonwealth has entered into a convention or treaty. Even in the past few days we have seen public comment by the Commonwealth Aboriginal Affairs Minister that he is to intervene in the current Aboriginal action over Roxby Downs and other groups particularly. Anti-nuclear groups want the Commonwealth to intervene in wider issues relating to Roxby Downs, obviously putting great and unreasonable pressure upon the developers, which must create a significant threat to that development.

The Commonwealth Government enters into many treaties and conventions each year, and some suggestions have been made that the total number now exceeds 1 500 in a wide range of areas—labour, human rights, private law and many others.

Under the Federal Liberal Government some mechanisms were established for State involvement when treaties and conventions were being developed (even membership of a negotiating delegation), and for information about current treaty considerations to be provided to the States. In the light of the threat to the States and their citizens presented by the High Court decision, I ask the Minister the following questions:

1. Has the State Government taken any steps to ensure a greater involvement by the State in treaty and convention negotiations and, if so, what steps have been taken?
2. Does the Commonwealth inform the State Governments immediately negotiations on treaties and conventions commence?
3. What action does the State Government take if that information is received?
4. Do the States continue to have a representative in Australian delegations negotiating treaties and conventions? If so, in respect of which negotiations does this currently apply?
5. What are the treaties and conventions currently being negotiated by the Commonwealth?
6. Can and will the Attorney-General make available a list of all conventions and treaties to which Australia is a signatory?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The situation as I understand it in regard to the negotiation of treaties is no different now from what it was prior to March this year when the Federal Liberal Government was involved in negotiating the treaties. Following the decision in the Tasmanian dams case I made the point publicly that it was important for the Commonwealth, when negotiating treaties containing provisions which could impact upon the States, to ensure that there was proper consultation with the States. I intend to pursue that issue with the Commonwealth Attorney in the proper forum,

which undoubtedly will be the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General.

At the present time the arrangements which existed previously still apply, as far as I am aware. I think that answers questions 2 to 6 asked by the honourable member. There are some issues about which he has requested that I obtain information. Obviously, I do not have it at the moment. Indeed, it will require an inquiry of the Commonwealth Government to ascertain what treaties are being negotiated, and I will attempt to obtain an answer to that and to the question of what treaties Australia is a signatory to. That will take some time as inquiries will have to be made of the Federal Government.

I do not know which negotiating teams have State representatives. I do not believe that the previous Federal Government established a rule that in every negotiating team there was to be State representation, but it may have been that on some negotiating teams the States were represented. For instance, I believe that the States sent representatives as part of Australia's delegation on discussions of the law of the sea. In that respect the situation obtaining prior to March, as far as I am aware, has not changed.

I believe that the other question will be capable of answer once the matter has been pursued with the Commonwealth Government to ascertain whether it intends to change the situation relating to the negotiating of treaties. I make the point that I believe that the States should be involved in discussions with the Commonwealth when treaties are being considered which involve State co-operation for their implementation. As far as the High Court decision is concerned, it is worth bearing in mind that the really significant decision was the Koowarta case, which involved the validity of the Racial Discrimination Act and the external affairs powers as a basis of legislative action by the Commonwealth in this country—

The Hon. K.T. Griffin interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The defence of the Racial Discrimination Act in the Koowarta case was conducted by the Federal Liberal Government.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am not arguing with you.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I appreciate that. The fact is that the Koowarta case and the Tasmanian dams case were determined by a High Court which contained six judges appointed by former Federal Liberal Governments and one by a Federal Labor Government. The point I make is that the issue of the external affairs power is not one that has arisen just recently as a result of the Tasmanian dams case but which has been a progression of judicial opinion over some considerable time. I will address the matters that the honourable member has raised with me in the manner that I have outlined.

COMPUTERS

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Education, a question about computing in schools.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: It was announced a couple of days ago that the Federal Government is to provide \$6 000 000 a year to promote computing as a subject in the schools of this nation. It promised \$6 000 000 a year for three years. I do not wish to enter into any argument at all about whether or not it is a sufficient sum for this purpose, but I point out that it is the first time that any Federal Government has decided to promote computing as an education subject.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: It's taken it all from the private schools!

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: On the contrary, it has given more money to private schools—not less. Computing is obviously of great interest to many people and has very strong vocational implications in view of the increasing use of computers in our society. It would seem both necessary and highly desirable that many schoolchildren have the opportunity to be educated in computing for the sake of their future jobs.

I received a letter recently from a person involved in the computing field who is concerned about the very small number of women entering that field. At the moment, at the University of Adelaide, for example, women comprise only 21 per cent of the undergraduates in the Computing Science Department—an increase from 19 per cent in 1982. This disproportion is even more alarming at higher levels. This year only two of the 32 honours students in computing are women. In the department there is only one woman research student (the third ever) and there is only one woman on the staff of 13½ academics.

Furthermore, my correspondent stresses that it has been noticed in several schools about which she has information that computing tends to be treated as a hobby subject at the moment and that there are few, if any, girls undertaking that hobby subject. Her claim is that there is no encouragement for them to do so. In fact, there is a great deal of discouragement, largely on the part of male students at the schools, which the teachers make no effort whatsoever to counteract. On the other hand, where girls do undertake computing studies as part of the curriculum they prove themselves every bit as capable as the boys, both in the theoretical and practical sides of the course.

Can the Minister inform us in how many Government schools computing is currently part of a curriculum subject and in how many Government schools computing is a hobby subject or an optional course? Also, what is the number of male and female students taking the course in each of these cases? If the answer does not show an equality of the sexes participating in these courses, will the Government ensure that some of the money to be provided by the Federal Government for computing is used to increase opportunities and encouragement for girls to take computing as a subject in at least equal numbers to boys?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will be happy to refer that question to the Minister of Education and bring back a reply.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES

The Hon. R.C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Premier, a question about electricity charges.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.C. DeGARIS: It is clear that South Australia must plan for a new power station following construction of the Port Augusta power station. It is clear that that new power station may be either a coal-fired or a nuclear-powered station, as they are the only options, I believe, available to us. It is clear that a considerable amount of work has been done on the best available coal resources in this State based on the cost of production of electric energy from those resources.

Has the Government undertaken any study of the costs of electricity generation from a nuclear source and, if so, will it make available to honourable members the cost of production of electricity from nuclear energy and, if not, will it ensure that the costs of generating electric energy from nuclear sources be investigated and the comparative

cost of generation between coal-powered stations and nuclear stations be made available to honourable members?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I will obtain that information for the honourable member and bring back a reply.

QUESTIONS

The PRESIDENT: I point out to honourable members that, as there are no Orders of the Day to continue with, they are at liberty to ask questions. However, under convention it has not been the case on previous opening days that questions have continued to be asked until all hours of the night. I remind honourable members of that convention.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Mr President, in view of your statement implying that we are extending Question Time unnecessarily, I point out that the situation arose to some extent because of very lengthy answers.

The PRESIDENT: I did not need that pointed out to me. It is no problem to me if people ask questions, or how long people take to answer those questions.

DIVING SAFETY

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: I seek leave to make a brief statement before directing a question to the Minister of Fisheries about diving safety.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: The subject I am about to raise has implications involving a number of portfolios, but I will begin with a portfolio held by the Hon. Mr Blevins, who has a new nickname 'Cough drop' or 'The fisherman's friend'. Have there recently been, or are there at present, any divers employed by the South Australian Department of Fisheries or in any other way working for the Department of Fisheries in South Australian or Victorian waters? If so, to what maximum depths are these divers working; what gas mixtures do they breathe; how many standby divers attend these operations to assist in the event of an emergency; if standby divers are employed, are they employed exclusively as standby divers or do they work under water and then act as standby divers after surfacing from a job; to what classes of divers (for example, construction employees, police, public servants, university researchers, or others) do regulations made under the Industrial, Safety, Health and Welfare Act apply?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will do my best to obtain that information for the honourable member and bring back a reply.

ETHNIC TELEVISION

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Ethnic Affairs a question about ethnic television stations.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.S. FELEPPA: On Saturday 30 June the Hon. Murray Hill, the Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Senator Bolkus and I participated in a protest march with many migrant group leaders and several hundred Adelaide citizens to the steps of Parliament House.

They protested about the Federal Government's decision to defer the establishment of multicultural television channel O.28, justifying the decision on the basis of maintaining a Budget deficit. I do not wish to give the wrong impression, but I believe the Prime Minister should be reminded of the

promise contained in his policy document in relation to the multicultural broadcasting sector, as follows:

We will provide a democratically controlled, ethnic and multicultural broadcasting sector, free of Government paternalism, enjoying the same independence as all other forms of broadcasting.

Will the Minister assure the Council that he will convey to the Hawke Federal Government, and in particular to the Minister for Communications, the angry reaction of at least one-quarter of the population of this State? Further, will he request the Prime Minister, who was voted into office on the basis of his promises, to consider the extension of channel O.28 into South Australia during the current financial year 1983-84, which is also the International Year for Communications?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I have communicated with the Federal Government in relation to this matter. On 2 June 1983 I sent a telex to the Hon. Michael Duffy, Minister for Communications, outlining the concern that would be felt in South Australia if there was any deferral of the decision to extend multicultural television or channel 0.28 to South Australia. Mr Duffy's response included the statement that the extension of transmission to Adelaide is planned for an early stage of development.

Further, on 28 July, I telexed the Prime Minister, the Minister for Communications, the Minister for Ethnic Affairs, the Treasurer, the Minister for Resources and Energy, the Minister for Finance, and Senator Bolkus, outlining again the history of this issue and urging the Federal Government to give high priority to the extension of multicultural television to this State.

As a result of the demonstration last Saturday, which I addressed along with certain other honourable members, I intend to attempt to see Mr Duffy at the earliest possible opportunity to put to him personally the concerns of the South Australian Government in relation to this issue. I have made some contact with Mr Duffy's office, and I hope that I can arrange to see him about this issue within the next week or so. If it is not possible to see him in person, I hope to have some further communication with Mr Duffy in order to outline the South Australian Government's view, which is supported on this occasion by the Opposition and, I believe, by the bulk of the people in ethnic communities in this State.

KANGAROO CULLING

The Hon. H.P.K. DUNN: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister for Environment and Planning, a question about kangaroo culling.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.P.K. DUNN: The Minister for Environment and Planning, Dr Hoppgood, has just announced a cut in kangaroo quotas to be harvested for the second half of this year. The cut is drastic, being two-thirds of the previous six months quota of 150 000. The cuts are so large that they imply that the Minister and his staff are being carried in whatever direction the wind is blowing. Last month there was a conference on the kangaroo problem in which the Minister took a prominent part. I would have thought that the conclusion from that conference was that the kangaroo population needed careful culling. The cut of 100 000 tags from 150 000 in the short space of six months does not in my view appear to be an act of good or careful management. Indeed, it appears to be a knee-jerk reaction to the relaxation of imports of kangaroo products into the United States.

If land surveys completed recently are accurate, surely those surveys completed six months ago are not. To the layman, kangaroo populations can vary greatly with the

onset of rains and the growth of feed, particularly away from the more obvious human habited areas. By nature, kangaroos will avoid these areas where they may be easily observed and counted. The suggested quota cuts must surely decimate the industry for shooters and processors. What criteria did the Minister and his officers use to gauge the kangaroo numbers on which I presume he made his decision to reduce the culling quotas, and was the industry consulted before the quota cuts were made?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will not attempt to answer the honourable member's question at any length. Rather, I will refer the question to the Minister for Environment and Planning and bring back his considered and sensible response. However, the honourable member should know that in the six months to the end of June about 113 000 kangaroos were actually taken. Between April and June, a ground survey was carried out across the State by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The survey indicated that the red kangaroo population had declined in the order of 40 per cent from the winter level of 1982.

The honourable member may well be concerned that the proposed cuts might do nasty things to the industry, but if it were not done there may be a nasty result in relation to the kangaroo population. Indications are that western grey kangaroo populations have also been greatly reduced in the northern extremes of its range. I have given the honourable member an interim reply, but I will certainly take the honourable member's question to the Minister for Environment and Planning and bring back his response as soon as possible.

MEDICARE

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I ask the Minister of Health, first, with the introduction of Medicare early in 1984, will he indicate whether he believes that it will result in an increased demand for beds at major public teaching hospitals in Adelaide, with a consequent lengthening of waiting lists for non-urgent or elective surgery? Secondly, can the Minister say whether there has been any significant increase in waiting time during the 1983 calendar year for persons seeking non-urgent or elective surgery at major public teaching hospitals in Adelaide?

Thirdly, with the stated initial cost of Medicare being a levy of 1 per cent of taxpayers' disposable income, does the Minister believe that this figure is likely to remain at that level in the second year of operation of Medicare, and does he agree with the views expressed by some analysts that the cost will quickly rise to 1.6 per cent or 1.8 per cent of taxpayers' disposable income?

Finally, with the expected appointment of Medibank as the agent for Medicare and the resultant loss of over 500 jobs in the volunteer health services sector of South Australia, will the Minister advise whether or not the South Australian Government will guarantee jobs elsewhere for these displaced people, given that it was elected on a platform of reducing unemployment rather than being a willing party to increasing unemployment?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: The first question refers to an increased utilisation of major public hospitals. I can give a guesstimate. There have been a lot of changes to the arrangements for health insurance funding over the past eight years, and the experience in South Australia has been that generally a hard core of people retain private insurance through thick and thin, through all the worst changes.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: No matter how hard you make it for them.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am not prepared to put a figure on it, but it would be a guesstimate rather than anything that should be taken down and held against me at

a future time. At a guess, I would say that it was 3 per cent to 5 per cent; it is unlikely to be any higher than that. I am referring to the metropolitan area and the use of the major public hospitals versus the use of the community or the district community hospitals or some private hospitals. There would be some shift, but we do not believe that there would be a major shift, and that shift should not have a significant effect on waiting lists.

However, I have already begun discussions for contingency plans in the event that it does have a significant effect, in order to determine the sorts of things we can do to overcome the problem. That would include, if need be, considering the possibility (and I put it no higher than that at this time) of contracting some beds in community hospitals. Of course, that was an election undertaking in any case, and it would be one of the contingency plans if the necessity arose.

Regarding whether there has been a significant increase in the waiting time for elective surgery, I am certainly not aware that that is the case. It seems that every year for the past few years, during June, July, and August in particular, there has been the usual crop of respiratory illnesses, which puts considerable stress on our public hospitals, particularly now that we are trying to run bed occupancy at about 85 per cent. It is inefficient to run average bed occupancy at a lower rate; it is now up to 85 per cent on average at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and it is higher than that at the Flinders Medical Centre (a little higher than we would like to see it). At 85 per cent, there is always the possibility of an additional 15 per cent or 17 per cent, so that at odd times bed occupancy will go over 100 per cent, and it then becomes necessary to defer admissions.

Waiting times are variable, especially in regard to, say, hip replacement at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, which I am told is about three months, compared to about nine months at the Flinders Medical Centre. As Dr Ritson would know, all sorts of interpretations can be put on how urgent a hip replacement might be: pain and a whole range of parameters are involved. I would admit that we are beginning to run into a problem at Flinders Medical Centre, and that is acknowledged as one of the reasons why we are building a 100-bed hospital at Noarlunga.

However, I would say that by and large the residents of Adelaide have been spoilt for a long time and that we have been unique in expecting to be admitted to hospital for elective surgery in a very short time and never having deferrals because we have always carried an excess bed capacity. It is very dubious, as we move into the 1980s, whether we can afford that luxury any more. We really might have to do some rethinking.

As the Hon. Mr Davis, being an economist, would realise, the 1 per cent levy on taxable income most certainly does not represent the total cost of running the health system. Very significant amounts of taxpayers' money are already taken in through a variety of sources. Over and above that, the tax rebate has been removed and will continue to be removed under Medicare, so the 1 per cent is something less than 50 per cent of the total cost of running the scheme.

I do not have a crystal ball, I am not the Federal Minister (for which, sometimes, I am quite grateful), and I am not intimately involved with the Commonwealth Department for Health senior officials, so whether that 1 per cent will remain in perpetuity I do not know. In this guessing game, I suspect that I do not believe that the figure would be 1.6 per cent, but again I do not believe that I am competent to comment in that area.

However, I am highly competent to comment in regard to the loss of 500 jobs. That is a reasonable estimate of the jobs that will be lost over a period of time, not on 1 February, from the private health insurance funds. It is estimated that, of those 500 jobs in South Australia, 300

will be taken up by the new Medicare arrangements, so that the actual net loss of jobs will be about 200. I stress again that that will happen not overnight on 1 February but over a period of time, as things swing in and as rearrangements are made. The Federal Minister asked the States at the last Health Ministers' conference to give an undertaking that they would take up the slack in State health care systems. I was unable to give that assurance on behalf of South Australia in those terms: I believe that the Premier might have cut my throat if I had unequivocally given that undertaking.

However, I was able to give the undertaking that, where appropriate (and, of course, mainly clerical positions are involved), over a time span we would certainly seriously consider giving preference of employment in the health industry to those people who are displaced. Again, that is not something that we would do overnight, but we would certainly consider listing those people and giving them preference of employment as suitable occupations arose in the health industry.

PRICE SURVEILLANCE

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Consumer Affairs a question about price surveillance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: An article in the *Advertiser* of 7 July noted a statement by the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, that legislation for the establishment of a price surveillance authority would be introduced during the forthcoming Federal Parliament Budget session. The Prime Minister was quoted as saying that the Government planned to have talks with State Governments, unions, and employers on the move. Has the Federal Government approached the South Australian Government on this matter? Does the South Australian Government support the proposal, and has it agreed to some form of price surveillance? If so, is it envisaged, for instance, that food prices would be included?

In the light of the Premier's concern last week on the release of the c.p.i. figures to the end of June 1983 (which noted, incidentally, that Adelaide's increase of 12.3 per cent over 12 months to the end of June was the highest in Australia), does the Minister accept that, if any such price surveillance authority is to be effective in checking inflation, the authority should have some responsibility for surveillance over State Government charges and taxes?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I do not believe that it would be possible for it to have any authority over State Government charges and taxes; nor would it be appropriate for it to do so. The fact is that the State Government supports the Federal Government's proposal for some form of prices surveillance authority. My understanding is that it would be an authority which would look at price movements of key products. Whether that would involve surveillance of the food products or not I cannot say, but I would think that it is more likely to involve surveillance of the key products in the economic area: petrol prices obviously (petroleum prices generally) is one. It may be that it would have some surveillance role over basic raw materials for food products, but that I cannot say at the present time as I have not seen the details of the proposals.

I do not know whether the Federal Government has drawn it specifically to the attention of the State Government. Certainly, in general terms, the State Government has been aware of the proposals and has supported them. The situation in South Australia is that the previous Government drastically ran down the Prices Branch. In fact it reduced the staff in it from 10 to four over three years. In the past few

months that branch has been supplemented by an additional two people, and perhaps three at times, to carry out general surveillance of prices in the South Australian community during the period of the wages pause. That surveillance has been continuing for the past few months.

WELFARE COMPLEX

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question on the subject of the Central Eyre Peninsula Emergency Services/Community Welfare Complex.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The District Council—

An honourable member: We'll be here all day.

The PRESIDENT: We will sit here all day if we cannot have a little decorum.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The District Council of Le Hunte has been involved in recent months in trying to establish an Emergency Services/Community Welfare Complex at Wudinna on the Central Eyre Peninsula. The complex is to provide accommodation for dental, physiotherapy, C.A.F.H.S. and other visiting health related personnel to the district, as well as to contain housing for emergency vehicles such as ambulance, C.F.S. and State Emergency Services vehicles. It certainly appears to be an innovative project deserving of support, and the district council and its officers are to be commended.

However, as with many innovative projects, funding remains the problem. The total cost will be about \$230 000, of which \$170 000 has been promised: \$45 000 has been supplied by the District Council of Le Hunte; \$70 000 from the Department of Labour job creation scheme; and \$55 000 from the C.F.S., State Emergency Services and St John, giving the \$170 000. I am also informed that the project stands a very good chance of obtaining a further \$30 000 from the Jubilee 150 Board. The ultimate success or otherwise of the project depends on obtaining \$30 000 funding from the South Australian Health Commission.

Previous statements from the Minister, both in policy and in this Chamber, seem to indicate that he is a strong supporter of such projects. I therefore hope that the Minister will ensure that the necessary \$30 000 is provided to complete the funding of \$230 000, so that this—only a small component—will be forthcoming to enable the project to go ahead.

I am informed that there are some time constraints with the project as the receipt of the \$70 000 job creation money is contingent on their starting the project within three months. They were advised that \$70 000 was available some time last month; so I guess that some time in September or October the three months will be up. If they have not started, there is the possibility that \$70 000 could be lost to the project. I am also informed that the District Council of Le Hunte or its officers contacted the Minister some six weeks ago for a response. My questions are:

1. Does the Minister support the attempt to establish such a complex at Wudinna?

2. Will the Minister attempt to expedite the reply to the District Council of Le Hunte to ensure the time constraints that I have talked about (that is, the \$70 000 job creation money not being available if they have not started within three months) will not prevent the money being made available to the project?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I am not really sure that this is a matter which should take up the time of the Legislative Council. It is something that I could have fixed up within five minutes if the member had seen me informally about it. A huge volume of correspondence goes through

my office. We have had some difficulties during the past couple of months—freely admitted—with the changeover of chairmen and so forth, and there have been a few logs blocking things up. (I am referring not to people but to a log jam.) I do not see correspondence coming in unless it is marked 'Personal and confidential' and drawn to the attention of the Minister only, etc. I have no doubt that the letter has been processed, but I do not know what the response has been. I am not terribly attracted to the capital finance part of it; my undertaking has always been to look at 50-50 funding with local government for meeting the recurrent costs of community health programmes.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: You have never really spelt that 'recurrent costs' bit out, have you?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Any intelligent person would interpret it that way. I could give you an example, Sir, of something not too grandiose in your home town. I think that it is called a community health centre. It is occupied by the local medicos, but I really do not know enough about this.

The PRESIDENT: It is a medical care centre.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Yes.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: This is for visiting personnel.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: No. It houses the local medical practice. I have said on many occasions that I am not getting into the temple building business in community health if I can possibly help it. We made a mistake federally, as a Party, in doing that in 1972-75. I do not believe that we should be spending lots and lots of dollars. If one has a local house that one can convert to something adaptable or that can be leased, one should use it. My funding offer specifically relates to recurrent funding and not to capital funding.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: You are not rejecting it yet, though?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Certainly not. It can be described as a Bert Shard, anyway. (He may have been before the honourable member's time; he was quite a distinguished Chief Secretary and Minister of Health.) It looks as though job creation funds of the order of \$70 000, as the honourable member has put it, have been committed, etc. I think that the amount which he is looking for is a relatively small percentage of the total. No doubt, we will give it very serious consideration. In view of the time constraints about which the honourable member is talking, I will ask my officers to make a special effort, and I will get back to him quickly.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY LAW, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I move:

That the members of this Council appointed to the Joint Select Committee have power to act on the committee during the present session.

Motion carried.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF PARLIAMENT

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I move:

That the members of this Council appointed to the Joint Select Committee have power to act on the committee during the present session.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE DENTISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL (Minister of Health): I move:

That the select committee on the Bill have power to sit during the present session, and that the time for bringing up the report be extended to Tuesday 13 September 1983.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES OF THE TOWNS OF MOONTA AND WALLAROO AND THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF KADINA

The Hon. G.L. BRUCE: I move:

That the select committee have power to sit during the present session, and that the time for bringing up the report be extended to Tuesday 25 October 1983.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES OF THE TOWN OF GAWLER

The Hon. G.L. BRUCE: I move:

That the select committee have power to sit during the present session, and that the time for bringing up the report be extended to Tuesday 25 October 1983.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE WRONGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G.L. BRUCE: I move:

That the select committee have power to sit during the present session, and that the time for bringing up the report be extended to Tuesday 13 September 1983.

Motion carried.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Sessional committees were appointed as follows:

Standing Orders: The President and the Hons G.L. Bruce, J.C. Burdett, M.B. Cameron, and C.J. Sumner.

Library: The President and the Hons Anne Levy, R.I. Lucas, and Barbara Wiese.

Printing: The Hons G.L. Bruce, L.H. Davis, H.P.K. Dunn, M.S. Feleppa, and Barbara Wiese.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The PRESIDENT having laid on the table a copy of the Governor's Speech, the Hon. C.J. Sumner (Attorney-General) moved:

That a committee consisting of the Hons G.L. Bruce, M.B. Cameron, M.S. Feleppa, R.I. Lucas, and C.J. Sumner be appointed to prepare a draft Address in Reply to the Speech delivered this day by His Excellency the Governor and to report on the next day of sitting.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.30 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 9 August at 2.15 p.m.