

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday 16 August 1983

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. A.M. Whyte)** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Pursuant to Statute—

Department of Labour—Report, 1982.

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

Pursuant to Statute—

Food and Drugs Act, 1908-1981—Regulations—Exemptions.

Lottery and Gaming Act, 1936—Regulations—Draw Poker Machines.

Medical Practitioners Act, 1983—General Regulations.

Coober Pedy Progress and Miners' Association Inc.—By-law No. 1—Motor Vehicles for Hire.

District Council of Mount Barker—By-law No. 28—Dogs.

QUESTIONS

QUEEN VICTORIA HOSPITAL

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about the Queen Victoria Hospital.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: A report in today's *Advertiser* refers to the Queen Victoria Hospital and its future. It quotes comments made by the Minister of Health (Hon. J.R. Cornwall) at an opening of new facilities at the hospital where he indicated that the hospital's future was to be looked at. The article refers to a study by an international firm of consultants and quotes the Minister as saying that it would be unrealistic to expect the hospital to exist without a substantial injection of funds. The Minister is also quoted as saying:

What is being analysed is whether redevelopment of the hospital should occur on this site or whether that capital would be better deployed in redevelopment of the hospital on another site.

A study of the hospital undertaken by the Health Commission in 1980 has already considered a number of the options facing the hospital, one of which was the relocation of services to a central unit of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This option was rejected by the former Government.

The Minister is now saying that there is to be a further study by an international firm of consultants, yet I recall him being quite critical of the former Minister because of the number of inquiries that he said she instituted. I think that this Minister is well on the way to breaking that record by a long street, so we will be counting the number of inquiries he initiates and will, no doubt, remind the Minister of that at the appropriate time. I wonder, also, whether the international firm of consultants is an Australian one or whether, once again, he has gone overseas looking for experts. My questions are:

1. Why has a consultant's report now been seen as necessary in light of earlier studies?

2. Would the Minister support closure or relocation and takeover by another hospital such as the Royal Adelaide Hospital if this was also recommended by his 'international consultants'?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: First, I want to make clear that the consultants are not my consultants; nor are they the Government's consultants. The international firm is Brewer, Maxwell, which have been retained by the Board of Management of the Queen Victoria Hospital—acting with that very substantial independence that we always accord our hospital boards.

I repeat: the consultant's report was initiated by the Board of Management of the Queen Victoria Hospital in consultation with the Director of the Central Sector of the South Australian Health Commission.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: With no prompting from the Health Commission?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: It was initiated by the Board of Management of the Queen Victoria Hospital.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I just wanted—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: The request properly came as a result of the realistic attitude taken by the Board of Management regarding the future of the hospital. There are a number of options: as I was reported as saying this morning, one option is redevelopment on the existing site. Another option that has been canvassed is that the Queen Victoria Hospital could be relocated on the campus of the Adelaide Children's Hospital. That option would result in the sharing of facilities and it may be a cheaper option in terms of recurrent costing. I have not seen the consultant's report, so I am unable to comment specifically in those terms.

Long-term recurrent costing is certainly a matter of great significance which must be taken into account by the Board of Management. It has been suggested that, if we could achieve consolidation, it could be renamed the Princess Diana Hospital. That would be something marvellous that I could leave behind when I finish my third term as Minister of Health. However, I hasten to add that I am not looking for self-aggrandisement. Another suggestion, which was canvassed by the previous Government, was relocation on the Royal Adelaide Hospital campus. Another option, which may be canvassed by the Sax committee, is the utilisation of the not inconsiderable facilities that exist at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

There is no suggestion that the Government has taken a decision in relation to any of the options at this stage; nor has the Board of Management of the Queen Victoria Hospital. They are all options that will be considered by the board in consultation with the Health Commission and, ultimately, a decision will be taken at Ministerial and Government level. In relation to the specific question 'Why was the consultant's report necessary?', I can only say that I believe that the Board of Management wanted an independent consultant's report rather than relying on the previous report and examination which was conducted by the South Australian Health Commission itself. In relation to the question relating to closure or take-over, I think I have answered that question quite adequately. I repeat: there is no intention to close the Queen Victoria Hospital. The question is whether redevelopment should take place at the present site or at any one of a number of other sites.

BARMES REPORT

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about the Barmes Report.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: Page 2 of the Barmes Report—'A Review of the South Australian School Dental Service'—sets out data referred to as 'The situation analysis in figures'. Section 3 of the data is headed 'Subsection 3, Oral Disease

Data'. As far as I am aware, no statistical analysis has been done or reported on any of the data in this section. Therefore, no proper, credible or significant conclusions or results can be taken from the data. I request information from the Minister so that other parties may conduct proper statistical analysis of the results. I ask the Minister to provide the following information: first, what is the 'standard deviation' of all the averages or means in the subsection 3 'Oral Disease Data' or, alternatively, will the Minister supply all of the raw data for the whole of the subsection?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will try to restrain myself and not carry on in a derisory way.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: It would be a welcome change.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: It seems quite remarkable to me that the Hon. Mr Burdett, as we say in racing parlance, suddenly seems to have sprouted another leg. He must have had a very considerable amount of professional assistance with this matter, and I hope it was from the right quarter because, quite frankly, if there is any suggestion that he should set himself or any of his advisers against the chief of the oral health section of the World Health Organisation, he may be venturing into very dangerous waters indeed. Nevertheless, having said that, I am perfectly happy to take on notice those two questions. Naturally, I do not carry the standard deviations in my head, but I would be quite happy to bring back a reply in the fullness of time.

S.G.I.C.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about the S.G.I.C. and Australia Post link.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: There has been much public criticism about the announced link between S.G.I.C., a State Government authority, and Australia Post, a Federal Government authority, in relation to the sale of S.G.I.C. insurance by Australia Post. The criticism focuses on two issues: first, the favourable trading position achieved by S.G.I.C. in carrying on business in private enterprise which is not available to the private sector; and, secondly, the lack of expertise of Australia Post in selling to the public a commodity (namely, insurance) where there are complex questions requiring competent advice before insurance cover is issued. There is also some lack of clarity in the proposed relationship between S.G.I.C. and Australia Post in the range of insurances to be offered and in the level of expertise to be required of Australia Post employees.

First, what are the arrangements between Australia Post and S.G.I.C. for the sale of S.G.I.C. insurance policies by Australia Post? Secondly, what range of S.G.I.C. policies will be handled by Australia Post? Thirdly, will the sale of policies be arranged through one or more specifically designated officers at each post office? Fourthly, what training will be given to Australia Post officers? Fifthly, what remuneration, commission or other fee will be paid to Australia Post or its officers for handling S.G.I.C. insurance? Sixthly, what will be the liability of Australia Post and its officers when negligent or wrong advice is given to a customer? Finally, because Australia Post is a Commonwealth instrumentality, will it be bound by State legislation such as the unfair Advertising Act or the Misrepresentation Act in its dealings with the public and customers?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: That is possibly a question that should have been on notice. I will treat it as such and I will obtain a response to the questions asked by the honourable member. All I can say at this time is that I discussed the matter with representatives of the insurance

industry, and those representations are being considered at present by the Government.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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 corporal punishment.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Honourable members may not know that Victoria has abolished corporal punishment in all Government schools as from 26 May this year. I quote very briefly from its regulations:

Teachers are absolutely forbidden to use any form of corporal punishment on students of any age. This includes:

1. Deliberately striking a student with an instrument (for example, strap, ruler) or deliberately causing a student to be struck by any instrument;

2. Deliberately causing a student unreasonable physical discomfort or pain (for example, requiring a student to stand for excessive periods);

3. Deliberately striking or molesting a student with a part of the body (for example, hand, foot) on a part of the body of the student (for example, head, stomach, knuckles); and

4. Deliberately throwing any object or missile at a student.

The infringement of the prohibition on corporal punishment is regarded seriously and all such alleged infringements will be investigated by the Director-General and appropriate disciplinary action taken.

As well as this, the Western Australian Government announced two months ago that it also intends banning corporal punishment in Government schools in that State. In the light of these developments interstate, and particularly in view of the abolition of corporal punishment in all countries of Europe, with the exception of the United Kingdom, where more and more counties are abolishing corporal punishment, can the Minister inform us whether he has any plans for introducing a similar progressive move in South Australia?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will be pleased to refer that question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: YATALA LABOUR PRISON

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a statement on the subject of Yatala Labour Prison.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I wish to advise the Council that Cabinet yesterday, as a matter some urgency, agreed to the provision of a new low-security prison in South Australia. It has been agreed that a proposal is to go forward to the Public Works Standing Committee. Our intention is to get minimum C division prisoners out of Yatala Labour Prison at the earliest opportunity. This is in line with the clear recommendations of the Swink Report into Yatala management. Recommendation 5.2 of that report suggests we move minimum security C division inmates outside the prison perimeter.

Mr Swink believed, and we concur, that the practice of housing minimum security prisoners inside the perimeter of a high security institution such as Yatala presents a number of problems. Moving C division inmates out is a major step towards our ultimate objective of making Yatala a high security prison. The Government is anxious to shift these people out as soon as possible. We have set a target for completion of the new prison by late December this year.

The new institution will be established in the grounds next to the Women's Rehabilitation Centre, on Correctional Services land immediately east of Yatala. It will provide accommodation for up to 40 low security male prisoners in 10 four-person masonry units. Also, there will be additions to the existing security fencing in the area.

As well as prisoner accommodation, we intend to provide a visiting centre and staff recreation facilities. There will be an outdoor recreation area. As members appreciate, there have been severe pressures on Yatala accommodation after several serious fires this year, resulting in overcrowding and consequent increased potential for friction within the institution.

Upon receiving a favourable report from the Public Works Standing Committee, tenders for the construction work will be let. However, tenders will be called as soon as the necessary documentation is completed, to enable work to begin at the earliest date. The Government regards the decision by Cabinet to push ahead with this project, with such a timetable, as immensely helpful in tackling problems that beset our prisons system. I would hope that this decision by Cabinet will receive unanimous endorsement from all members of this Council as a substantial and very constructive step forward.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICES

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Health a question about psychological practices.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: Some time ago I asked a question about psychological practices in regard to a reasonably well known organisation and, as a result of correspondence with the Psychological Practices Board, it appeared that to advertise intelligence testing and personality testing was not illegal, even though to perform it, whilst not qualified as a registered psychologist, was illegal. I formed the distinct impression that the Psychological Practices Act is serving principally to set up a system of registration and mutual collection of fees but does little to prevent undesirable psychological practices.

In this instance I wish to bring to the Minister's attention an advertisement that appeared in the *Australian* (page 20) on 9 July 1983. This advertisement, which was brought to my attention by a concerned constituent, is headed, 'Tomorrow's sensory classroom can relax and motivate your key personnel today'. Underneath is a drawing of a giant plastic bubble with water, with a human body floating in the water. The advertisement continues:

The relaxation tank by float to relax, is the ultimate environment for subliminal training. No need for relaxation exercises, your brain automatically moves through totally passive relaxation into the hypnotic state ready for visual or audio motivation input.

I emphasise the words 'subliminal' and 'hypnotic'. The rest of the advertisement refers to the great benefits in terms of marketing and leadership that will flow from this treatment. Experiments of sensory deprivation have been carried out, I believe, initially associated with space programmes but, by floating people in water and depriving them of the normal range of sensory stimuli, not only is the subject placed into a so-called hypnotic state but also psychotic-type symptoms can develop.

The question whether members of the public who are particularly vulnerable to that psychotic illness may be precipitated into an illness by this treatment is something that comes immediately to mind. It may be that the treatment is not entirely as described in the advertisement. It may be that there is no so-called hypnotic state involved, but I point out that, apart from my comments about sensory

deprivation, if a hypnotic state does occur, as promised in the advertisement, then it is hypnosis, which is one of the proscribed psychological practices as laid down in the Act.

Will the Minister therefore investigate the nature of this sensory classroom, which either produces a hypnotic state or which involves a misleading advertisement? Will he consult with commission officers and obtain an opinion on whether it is at all harmful or dangerous? If the Minister believes that hypnotic states are achieved, does he agree that, if this is carried out by a person other than a qualified psychologist, it is in breach of the psychological practices legislation? Does the Minister have any view on the need to re-examine the effectiveness of psychological practices legislation?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: The answers are as follows: yes; yes; and I will certainly have the matters investigated and bring back a reply. Regarding the efficacy of legislation, that is a matter I have been troubled by ever since I became Minister. I sought a review of the Psychological Practices Act during my early days as Minister. We have to find the problems involved, and the matter is currently with the senior legal officers of the South Australian Health Commission, who are trying to devise solutions to this problem. I have absolutely no truck with the Church of Scientology or any of its off-shoots. I regard as quite reprehensible what they get up to in these so-called psychological practices. It tends to prey on young and easily led, or malleable minds. These people pose in a variety of ways which are totally reprehensible, and I firmly believe that they ought to be stopped.

One of the real difficulties facing us is to proscribe their activities without unduly restricting a range and class of other people and even, of course, *bona fide* religious organisations. There is a question of civil liberties and freedom of religion involved here which they use quite unscrupulously to further their own ends.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: They use them all the time.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Indeed they do. I believe that this is one matter on which there should be a tripartisan approach. As I have said previously, I have senior legal officers of the commission considering this matter at the moment.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Refer the matter to the Attorney-General.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Thereby hangs a tale. I have already referred the matter to the Attorney's Department, which has assisted us in defining the difficulties but has sent it back for further study so that we might find the solution to this difficulty. This is a problem that we certainly take most seriously and, at the appropriate time (indeed, as soon as my legal advisers, with the assistance of the Attorney-General's Department, are able to devise what they believe may be satisfactory answers), I will attempt to introduce appropriate legislation in regard to this matter into this Parliament.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief statement prior to asking the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Labour, a question about workers compensation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: In a speech last night to the Industrial Relations Society of South Australia the Minister of Labour noted that South Australia's workers compensation system was too fragmented, inefficient, expensive and inequitable. These are sentiments which, I have no

doubt, are shared by most business operations in South Australia, both big and small. However, while indignation about outrageously high and escalating levels of premiums in this State is justified, debate on this matter must not lose sight of the central issues—concern for safety in the workplace and finding means to encourage individuals to be more safety conscious.

The present system does not address either of these matters adequately. One of the basic problems of the present system is that insurers do not determine premiums on the safety records of individual companies and other operations employing people. By determining premiums on an industry related basis, no incentive is provided for companies and employers to improve safety within their operations. The Acting Minister of Labour, in his second reading speech on the Workers Compensation Act Amendment Bill in April this year, advised the Parliament that the provisions of the Act would be the subject of an extensive review later this year. My questions are as follows:

1. Has this review commenced and, if so, who is conducting it; what, if any, are the terms of reference; and are submissions to be sought from interested parties and the public?

2. Will the inquiry be considering the advantageous approach of insurers taking account of individual company's safety records prior to determining premium levels?

3. I recognise that the Minister of Labour, during his previous term as Minister, initiated a move to allow medium size companies to handle their own workers compensation and that, where implemented, this arrangement has been effective in increasing the safety record of those companies and, in turn, reducing their premiums. Therefore, will the current review be considering extending to more private employers, big and small, the right to handle their own insurance, subject to calamity provisions?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I do not believe that the honourable member is correct when she says that premiums are not related to the accident record of individual companies.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I did not say that.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The honourable member said that there was no incentive in premiums for companies to have good safety records.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: When industry based—not individual company based.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I am saying that I do not believe that the honourable member is correct if she says that they are industry based and not related to companies. My impression is that that depends on the company involved. My further impression is that some insurance companies do, in fact, relate premiums to the safety records of their clients. That may not be the universal practice of all insurance companies, but that certainly is my impression of the practice some years ago—at least the practice carried out by some insurance companies.

The review, at this stage, is an internal one. The Minister of Labour is taking a personal interest in this matter, with which he has been concerned for some considerable time. As the honourable member indicated, he set up an inquiry prior to 1979 to investigate the workers compensation system in South Australia. A report was produced which recommended substantial alterations to the system, in particular to the method whereby disputes were litigated. It recommended the establishment of a Workers Compensation Commission, the setting of premiums by that commission and the resolution of disputes not through the courts, as is the current case, but through the commission. That report was not acted upon by the previous Government.

I understand that at present the whole question of workers compensation is open to consideration by the Government.

No formal inquiry has been established, but I will ascertain from the Minister of Labour whether he intends to establish one. The problem is that everyone, I think, recognises the difficulties in this area, just as they recognise the difficulties in the area of third party personal injury claims resulting from road accidents and of escalating awards being made in relation to those cases.

The question of how these matters will be resolved in relation to workers compensation and road accident compensation is currently being considered in this State and by the Federal Government. In relation to the honourable member's specific question, I will ascertain the status of the review to which she referred and bring down a reply. In relation to the honourable member's other question about motor accident compensation, that matter is also being considered by the State Government in consultation with the Federal Government. Prior to the last election, the Federal Labor Party indicated its support for some uniform national approach in relation to accident compensation.

HANSARD

The PRESIDENT: On 10 August the Hon. Ms Levy asked a question about the clairvoyance of *Hansard*. Just as I was about to see whether *Hansard* could supply me with Saturday's race results on Friday, the Leader of *Hansard* supplied the following information:

As only one sitting day was involved, the Government Printing officer concerned and I originally agreed that the report of proceedings on Thursday 4 August should be included in the *Hansard* volume for the sitting week 9 to 11 August, and a draft cover for the volume bearing the dates 4, 9, 10 and 11 August was accordingly forwarded to the Government Printer. However, this decision would have meant that members would not be able to refer to the *Hansard* report of debates on 4 August until next Tuesday 16 August.

For the convenience of members, it was therefore decided on Tuesday morning of this week (9 August) that the *Hansard* report of 4 August be published as a separate volume. However, the draft cover, containing the heading for the four sitting days, which the Government Printer had already received for preparation, inadvertently remained unchanged, and this oversight was not discovered until the volume for 4 August was distributed on Tuesday of this week, when it was too late to make the necessary correction.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS POWER

The Hon. R.C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about the recent High Court decision on the external affairs power.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.C. DeGARIS: The Hon. Trevor Griffin previously asked the Attorney-General a question about this matter. However, I would like a little more information, and I would like to touch on a point that was not fully covered in the Hon. Trevor Griffin's question. It could be said that it was not the High Court but the Federal Government that stopped construction of the Franklin Dam, as that Government had the power to stop construction if it so chose. Construction of the Franklin Dam could still proceed if the Federal Government decided to allow it to proceed. However, that judgment has extended the powers of the Commonwealth Government over the States. We do not know the exact extent of those powers.

It appears to me that one of the first steps that the States should take is to define the extent of the danger by finding out what treaties and conventions exist and what effect they may have on the powers of the States and whether any more treaties or conventions are contemplated. When con-

sidering the Hon. Mr Griffin's question, will the Attorney-General undertake an inquiry into this matter and report to Parliament?

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Inquire into what?

The Hon. R.C. DeGARIS: The treaties and conventions that exist at the moment and their effect on the existing powers of the States. The important thing to me is that no-one knows exactly what treaties and conventions exist, nor do we know about their effect on State powers. It may be that this question should be raised with other State Attorneys-General, but I believe that a close study should be undertaken and the information provided to State Parliament.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I substantially answered this question on 4 August in reply to a question from the Hon. Mr Griffin. I said then that I would obtain information from the Commonwealth Government about the current situation in relation to the negotiation of treaties. The Hon. Mr DeGaris is now asking whether I will also examine the question of existing treaties and their effect on State powers as a result of the interpretation of the external affairs power in the Tasmanian dam case. The whole question of the external affairs power is currently the subject of an inquiry by the Standing Committee of the Constitutional Convention, which received a reference from the convention in April. Work on that topic is being pursued by a subcommittee of the Standing Committee. Indeed, the Hon. Mr Griffin may well be a member of that subcommittee. South Australia is represented on that committee, participation being divided between Opposition and Government members. In fact, I now recall that Mr McRae is a representative of the South Australian Parliament on that committee. I suggest that the Hon. Mr DeGaris should speak to Mr McRae about this issue. Nevertheless, I have no objection to taking up this issue, along with the other matters raised by the Hon. Mr Griffin, and putting it to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, and I will do so.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

The Hon. H.P.K. DUNN: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, a question about Aboriginal affairs.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.P.K. DUNN: Honourable members would be aware that I have raised previously in this place the problem of petrol sniffing in a number of Aboriginal communities in the North of this State. On a recent visit to Aboriginal communities with a number of my colleagues I again witnessed this serious problem. It is particularly prevalent amongst teenagers and some young parents; who carry soft drink cans containing petrol around their necks, the fumes of which are inhaled.

As honourable members would be aware, this is a very dangerous practice that can cause long-term health deterioration. The Minister, in response to an earlier question from me on this subject, indicated that he was aware of the practice of petrol sniffing and he considered it to be dangerous. He gave a commitment to follow up this matter and indicated that he was to have specific discussions with the former Federal Ministers for Health and for Aboriginal Affairs. Since then, of course, the Federal Government has changed. However, the problem remains acute.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: It's spreading.

The Hon. H.P.K. DUNN: It is indeed. First, what steps has the Minister taken to solicit Commonwealth financial support to correct this problem? Secondly, when will the Minister make an announcement about the upgrading of

Aboriginal health services which he said would be done in 'the near future'?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Mr Charles Perkins sent me a telex yesterday in which he also raised this matter. It is nice to see that the Hon. Mr Dunn's concern is shared by Mr Perkins in this matter: they are both acting most responsibly. Petrol sniffing is recognised, and has been recognised for some considerable time, as a major problem among Aboriginal communities throughout the North-West of this State. It is recognised as a major social problem. Unfortunately, advice I have received indicates that it is impossible to solve the problem through health education.

The problem is primarily (in fact, almost exclusively) that children between the ages of eight and 16 years are involved, according to the advice I have received from Elliott McAdam, the Director of the Aboriginal Health Organisation. Anyone who wishes to contest that advice has the democratic right to do so and is welcome to contact Elliott with my full support. This problem tends to be associated with low self-esteem and feelings of powerlessness, and is very much part of a conflict of cultural identity. I am advised that the resolution of the problem would involve expanding the focus of thinking to the individual and his or her environment and social setting. I am further told that this problem does not occur in isolation: it tends to be a group activity.

Programmes aimed at addressing the broad developmental needs have been examined. The South Australian Aboriginal Health Organisation is currently conducting an education programme aimed at youths and parents. The programme will be conducted jointly with the Indulkana council. The present services, however, I would admit quite clearly tend to be structured in an *ad hoc* sort of way. One of my principal goals during the nine months I have been Minister of Health has been to establish the so-called Nganampa health service, an independent health service for the Pitjantjatjara people in the North-West.

If I had been able to control the whole business, that programme would have been in place some months ago. I was negotiating from early January with the previous Federal Minister for Health, and since mid-March I have been negotiating, of course, with the present Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, in particular. It was my understanding that we were pretty close to resolution. I went to Canberra to see Clyde Holding, and we came, I believe, fairly close to a financial agreement under which we would put in what was considered to be a fair and reasonable amount of State money *vis-a-vis* the amount of input from the Commonwealth.

A difficulty arose, however, in that the National Aboriginal and Islanders Health Organisation tended to take over the project, and the amount of funding that it claimed was immediately doubled. That caused a fairly severe hiccup in the negotiations. The matter is now back firmly in the court of the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and it is anticipated that some funding, but not as much as NAIHO would want, will be available from the Federal Government in the August Budget. We had already set aside money in the Estimates for 1983-84.

The State Government and I are very anxious that this community-based and community-controlled Aboriginal health and medical service is in place as soon as possible. We have a complete commitment, as the Aboriginal organisations (particularly the Pitjantjatjara people) know, to the Nganampa Health Service, and we hope that that service is in place as soon as reasonably possible. However, on the present timing it looks as though that may not occur until early in the new year.

PAROLE BOARD

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Chief Secretary, a question about the Parole Board.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: An article appeared in yesterday's *Advertiser* regarding the discussion paper on the Parole Board system in South Australia. The article purported to indicate the current composition of the Parole Board and the suggested composition of the Parole Board as set out in the discussion paper, but in both cases the writer of the article got it wrong. Regarding the current Parole Board, the article states:

... the Chairman must be a person with extensive knowledge and experience of criminology, penology and related science. One member must be a legally-qualified medical practitioner with extensive knowledge and experience of psychology or psychiatry; another must be similarly credentialled in sociology, and three more, including a woman, must be appointed by the Minister.

Regarding the proposed new Parole Board, it states:

The new proposal also suggests six members, but provides a judge as Chairman and requires as members a legally qualified medical practitioner with psychiatry experience, a sociologist, the Executive Director of the department and two nominees of the Minister, one a woman and the other an Aboriginal.

In both cases, the article is incorrect. The Act in regard to the existing Parole Board states that one member must be a woman, but in no way does it state that the woman must be one of the people who are appointed by the Minister: she could well be the person with extensive knowledge and experience of criminology, penology and related science.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: She was at one stage.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Indeed. She might well be the psychiatrist or the sociologist. Likewise, the new proposals do not state that of the two nominees of the Minister one must be a woman and one an Aboriginal. It is stated that, of the six members, one must be a woman and one an Aboriginal, but the woman and the Aboriginal member could equally well be the judge, the medical practitioner, the sociologist, or the Executive Director of the department.

I feel it is a rather serious matter when a senior reporter of the *Advertiser* can so misread both the existing situation and the suggested changed situation, and I would suggest it is rather insulting to women and Aborigines that the new proposal has been interpreted incorrectly in this way. Will the Minister confirm that this error was made by the *Advertiser* and ensure that the *Advertiser* is adequately informed of both the existing situation and the proposed changes so that this rather derogatory interpretation is not given any further currency?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I appreciate the information that the honourable member has provided to the Council. I suspect that the matter has now been publicly aired by the honourable member and that the representatives of the fourth estate who were responsible for this situation have been informed. I have no doubt that they will now take whatever corrective action is necessary. I thank the honourable member for drawing this matter to the attention of the Council.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about public hospital beds.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: The Sax inquiry position papers included reference to the number of hospital beds in metropolitan Adelaide and listed possible options which, if

adopted, would lead to a significant reduction in the number of beds at major public hospitals, such as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or the Flinders Medical Centre. In reply to my question on 4 August 1983, the Minister of Health indicated that he would guess that there would be no more than an increase of 3 per cent to 5 per cent in demand for beds at major public hospitals in Adelaide resulting from the introduction of Medicare early in 1984. However, I have been advised on good authority that the Federal Government is estimating that the introduction of Medicare will lead to a 10 to 15 per cent increase in demand for hospital beds. Therefore, my questions are as follows:

1. Will the Minister advise the Council whether the Federal Government is forecasting a 10 to 15 per cent increase in demand for public hospital beds following the introduction of Medicare? If so, why is there such a variation between the Federal estimate and his estimate as to the likely impact of Medicare?

2. When will the findings of the Sax Inquiry be made public?

3. Given the introduction of Medicare early in 1984, will the Minister assure the Council that he will allow a significant period in which to fully assess the impact of Medicare before adopting any of the recommendations of the Sax Inquiry, which will result in a significant reduction in the number of beds in public hospitals?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: The honourable member appears to be making some claim to clairvoyance; he seems to know what the Sax Inquiry will recommend. The Sax Inquiry was asked to examine and comment on the metropolitan Adelaide hospital planning framework—the so-called master plan which was prepared by the Health Commission during the period of the State Liberal Government. However, that should not be taken as any sort of adverse reflection on the work: by and large, it was a very good piece of professional work. It was given to the Sax Inquiry for assessment so that there could be a genuine, external independent review, and the Sax Inquiry will make comments and, I believe, a series of recommendations based on its examination of the hospital planning framework.

As to when we are likely to have the report, I think that I said only last week that I anticipated that it would be in my hands by the end of this month and that it should be available as a public document by about the middle of September.

To the question as to whether I am aware that the Federal Government is anticipating an increase in utilisation of public hospital beds of the order of 10 to 15 per cent, the simple answer is, 'No, I am not aware of that.' Indeed, I would query where the member got his information from. He calls it a 'reliable source', which is synonymous, I understand, with an anonymous source and, frankly, it has never been my policy to give any credence to anonymous sources.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: When you were in opposition you quoted all the time from stuff that had fallen off trucks—every day of the week.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: Never anonymously. I do not deal in anonymity.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: Will you check that point out, though?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: It is not my intention to check out something which is based simply on rumour from an anonymous source. If the member produces some sort of documented evidence, I will be pleased to look at it. I have had no indication whatsoever from the Federal Government, or from the Federal Minister (who, as members know, is also a South Australian and, I am proud to say, is a friend of mine), of this 10 to 15 per cent which the honourable member seems to have got into his head during a bad dream. As far as I am concerned, there is no variation. I stick to the original estimate of 3 to 5 per cent, but I say

again, as I said last week, that I would not stake my life or political reputation on the dead accuracy of that.

In relation to the impact of Medicare and giving the Council all sorts of assurances as sought by the honourable member, I have always seen it as my duty to look after the interests of South Australians. The honourable member need not worry himself about it. As a certain wellknown Premier in a northern State might say, I will do what is right for the people of South Australia.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I wish to ask a supplementary question, Mr President. Following that reply to my question, will the Minister of Health undertake to ascertain what the Federal Government's estimate of the impact of the introduction of Medicare will be on the demand for beds in public hospitals?

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I have already made it clear to the honourable member—and I have made it clear to the Council on other occasions—that the best estimate available to me is 3 to 5 per cent. I do not see the point in wasting taxpayers' money or professional officers' time in taking the matter any further. I have said it in this Council on at least three occasions, in a way that even the Hon. Mr Davis should have been able to understand. The estimate is 3 to 5 per cent.

PUBLIC FUNDING

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Has the Attorney-General an answer to my question of 10 August in regard to public funding?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Last Wednesday, 10 August, the honourable member asked the following questions:

1. Will legislation on public funding and public disclosure be introduced by the State Government in this session?
2. Does the statement by Michael Jacobs, the spokesperson for the Attorney-General, reflect State Government policy?
3. Will the Government be legislating to limit the size of donations to political Parties in South Australia?

A package of electoral reform measures will be introduced during the term of office of this Government. A number of things will be considered for inclusion in that package. First, there is the Labor Party platform, which is a public document and which refers to optional preferential voting for Legislative Council elections, compulsory enrolment and voting at all State Parliamentary elections, public disclosure of the sources of all political funds and the limiting of the size of donations, political campaign expenses being monitored and publicly funded through an independent statutory body, the position of candidates on ballot-papers for the House of Assembly being decided by lot, the political Party of candidates being indicated on all ballot-papers, and ballot papers and how-to-vote cards appearing in polling booths being printed in the major languages spoken in the community.

In the policy that was released prior to the last election, some of these issues were specifically taken up: in particular, the question of optional preferential voting, and some issues relating more specifically to constitutional electoral reform (namely, simultaneous elections and fixed terms, about which I have answered questions on previous occasions). All those matters will be considered by the Government prior to the introduction of an electoral reform package. In addition, the Electoral Commissioner is preparing a report on the last State election and will, I understand, make certain recommendations to amend the Electoral Act. That report has not been completed at the present time, as honourable members will appreciate that the Electoral Commissioner has certain other priorities which may not be very dear to the hearts of honourable members here, but I can assure them that those priorities are a great preoccupation for honourable

members in another place. Until I have that report from the Electoral Commissioner I am not really in a position to take any action. No firm decisions have been taken at this time. A package of electoral reforms will be introduced, the parameters of which are those which I have discussed.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Not in this session, though?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: It may be in this session, but I am saying that a package of electoral reforms will be introduced during the term of office of this Government. I want to do it as a package, and I want to take into account the submissions placed before the Government by the Electoral Commissioner, as well as the items that I have mentioned today as part of the Labor Party's platform that will be considered for introduction as part of that.

FENCES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Fences Act, 1975. Read a first time.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It proposes a single amendment to the principal Act, the Fences Act, 1975. The Statutes Amendment (Jurisdiction of Courts) Act, 1981, effected alterations to the jurisdictional limits of district courts and local courts. Section 13 of the Fences Act contains references to pecuniary amounts that are based upon the old jurisdictional limits. The purpose of the present Bill is to bring section 13 into line with the jurisdictional limits that presently apply to local courts. Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 effects the necessary amendments to bring section 13 into line with the jurisdictional limits prescribed by the Statutes Amendment (Jurisdiction of Courts) Act, 1981.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 11 August. Page 160.)

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I support the motion. I take this opportunity of reaffirming my allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen. I thank His Excellency the Governor for the Speech with which he opened this session of Parliament, and I join with my colleagues who have spoken before me in this debate in extending my sympathy to the family of the late the Hon. John Coumbe. I cannot claim the same degree of closeness with the Hon. John Coumbe which the Hon. Mr Lucas was able to claim but, nonetheless, I do remember him with great kindness.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Once again, I have to call the attention of members to the fact that there is much audible conversation within the Chamber, making it very difficult to hear the member with the call.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: When I first came into this place I recall that the Hon. John Coumbe was very kind and helpful to me in a fatherly way, and I had quite a lot to do with him after that. I particularly pay a tribute to his service on the council of the Institute of Technology. My wife and I had three children who have been to the institute at different times and we remember his service to the council of that institute most kindly. I had discussions with him about the policies of the institute and I join with other members in expressing my sympathy to his family.

Today, I intend to speak on the concept of volunteerism in our society, with particular reference to the St John organisation, which is topical at present. The concept of individuals or groups of people who volunteer their services without pay to help other people in the community who need some sort of assistance is no new one. One wellknown example is that of the Knights Hospitalers of St John of Jerusalem who gave assistance to pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land. The spirit of their work today is of course continued by The Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem and its various foundations, the best known of which is the St John Ambulance Brigade and I will deal with the history of this organisation in detail shortly. The Society of St Vincent de Paul, the Red Cross, the Country Fire Service and the excellent services performed by the auxiliary of Flinders Medical Centre, which were recently very justly praised by the Minister of Health, are other notable examples, but there are hundreds of others, both small and large. Some are in the health field, some in the welfare field and some in other service areas. It would be churlish not to mention the great religious orders of full-time 'volunteers' who give their services to the sick, the poor and other needy people without any personal monetary reward. However, in this speech I intend to refer mainly to the secular person who donates some of his spare time to helping others, usually through one of the many organisations which exist for this purpose.

While, as I have said the concept of volunteerism is not new, there have been two aspects of it which have made their impact in comparatively recent times; one is that, while formerly most volunteer groups were entirely, or almost entirely, self-funding, now it is common, even usual, for Governments to provide some funding, sometimes massive funding, to meet the expenses of volunteer activities. The other is that generally in the past everyone in the organisation was a volunteer. Perhaps co-ordinatory and administrative staff were paid but, in the field, everyone was unpaid. We did not, usually, have the phenomenon of the volunteer working alongside the paid professional. Now we do. For example, in St John both volunteers and paid staff man ambulances. In the welfare field, professional social workers work in co-operation with voluntary community aides and other volunteers. The co-operation should be and often is a happy and co-operative one. No-one suggests that volunteers are a substitute for professional staff. Rather, they complement the work of the professional.

Any suggestion that to support the use of volunteers is to try to get welfare health or other services on the cheap is rubbish. The community has the right and the duty to be involved in the care of its sick and disadvantaged members. The driving motive of the volunteer is summed up in the well known statement of Etienne de Grellet more than a century ago:

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.

The volunteer who offers his services to those in some sort of need, either directly or through one of the many worthy charitable and service organisations, is simply acting in the spirit of this quotation. I might mention that a 'volunteer centre' has recently been set up at 82 Franklin Street, Adelaide. One of its objects is to advise and assist those who wish to give their services to the community as to how best to go about it. To many of us who wish to help others it will be obvious how we should go about it and, if we wish to work through an organisation, which organisation is appropriate. But for those who seek help in deciding how they can best serve, contact with this centre should prove most helpful.

Unfortunately, we find today some who see the volunteer as a threat to their employment. There are others who seem to want to destroy the concept of service to others without any thought of reward. I intend later to speak at some length on what I see as attempts to whittle away, and in the long term destroy, South Australia's voluntary ambulance service. The Minister of Health, in his Ministerial statement on Thursday, said:

Furthermore I reiterate my undertaking on behalf of the Government that there is no intention in the foreseeable future to proceed with a fully professional ambulance service in South Australia. Apart from any question of philosophy, the cost of introducing a fully professional service would be prohibitive.

However, on the Phillip Satchell show today he did say, and I acknowledge that the Minister did go on to affirm, that:

The professionals for their part, I have no doubt, would ultimately like to see a fully professional service. I do not think anyone who was reasonably honest would say otherwise.

The volunteers, on the other hand, have a notion of dedication to service which is commendable and they see every last move as making inroads in the services which they have given over the decades. The truth lies somewhere in between, as it usually does in these things. Later, during the interview he stated:

The St John Council, on the other hand, also wants to keep up the notion of community services and so forth. Again that is commendable, but you know in the 1980s you cannot run health care systems on chook raffles, charity and chance. You have got to do it a bit better, so there has to be obviously some highly professional input for the overall conduct of our ambulance services.

I acknowledge that the Minister went on later to say, as he said before, that there is no question that the volunteer ambulance service will not disappear in the foreseeable future. But the Minister seems to be blind to the fact that the moves proposed are not acceptable to the volunteers—the people who obviously make a volunteer system work.

The volunteers are not prepared to accept the proposals and have never agreed to them. They consider that the present moves are an attack on volunteerism in the service, and they are in a position to know. They know what their own reactions are to the moves. There have already been rumblings about the status of volunteers in the Country Fire Service and the status of community aides working with the Department for Community Welfare. There seem to be some who want to stop anyone from performing service to others simply because they want to give service. Some people seem to be so mean by nature that not only will they not give voluntary service themselves but they cannot bear to see other people do it. Will we get to the stage where there will be a clamour to have paid lifesavers on our beaches?

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem from which the St John organisation as we know it is derived has a history which extends nearly 900 years. The Order found its roots during the accelerated growth of hospitals in the 11th century as a result of the Crusades. Naturally during those times religion was a dominant influence in the establishment of hospitals. The Crusaders faced potent enemies in disease and famine—not just in the Saracens—and military hospitals developed along the routes travelled by the Crusaders. The Order of St John, unlike some others which banded together as military groups to defend Pilgrim routes, had its origins in a hospital for sick pilgrims in Jerusalem maintained even before the city was captured by the Crusaders in 1099. That hospital was dedicated to St John the Almoner and became known as the hospital of St John of Jerusalem. Today the Order perpetuates this by the foundation known as the St John Ophthalmic

Hospital in Jerusalem, which it considers to be its first foundation.

After the crusaders' conquest of Jerusalem, the hospital's superior, a monk called Gerard, expanded the Order's work in Jerusalem and also founded hostels in several French and Italian cities on the route to the Holy Land. It became an increasingly powerful and wealthy order and, after the middle of the 12th century, it had almost as markedly a military aspect as the Templars, although it continued its task of caring for the sick and the poor. After the fall of Jerusalem in 1290 and the fall of the crusader principalities, the Order went first to Cyprus and then acquired Rhodes and made it their headquarters in 1310. When the Templars (with whom the Hospitallers were frequently at odds) were suppressed in 1312 the Pope transferred most of their possessions to the Hospitallers, who were driven from Rhodes by the Turks in 1522.

After a brief sojourn in Crete and Sicily, Emperor Charles V gave them possession of Malta, which became their principal seat. Here they reached the peak of their power, withstanding fierce Turkish attacks, increasing their naval strength in the Mediterranean, and maintaining a fine hospital. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Order declined in strength and importance and in 1798 they lost Malta to Napoleon. It became simply a charitable religious institution with its headquarters established at Rome in 1878. The English Order of St John of Jerusalem, with headquarters at Clerkenwell, London, ascribes its origins to the Hospitallers. It is, however, a purely secular and philanthropic institution. It organises hospital and Red Cross work and its distinctions are awarded for services in the cause of humanity.

The Order of St John in Australia is a companionship of which the St John Ambulance Association and the St John Ambulance Brigade are foundations. The third foundation of the Order is the ophthalmic hospital section which collects moneys for the St John Ophthalmic Hospital in Jerusalem. Essentially the brigade provides a voluntary first-aid service at public functions and sporting events, except in South Australia and the Northern Territory, where the brigade also provides volunteer ambulance transport services for the ambulance transport service, the detail of which I will expand upon shortly. The other foundation, the Association, trains men and women in first-aid and home nursing.

In Australia, both the association and the brigade are governed by the Priory of Australia of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, which is in turn responsible to the headquarters of the Order at St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, London. The St John Ambulance Association interestingly held its first meeting in Australia 100 years ago. This was held in 1883 in Melbourne. The first meeting in Sydney was in 1887. The association was established in South Australia in 1884 (although the St John Ambulance Service report issued by the General Manager in September 1982 incorrectly states 1885).

Since these initial moves, the association and the brigade have been established in all States and also in New Guinea. The St John Ambulance Association, consistently motivated by the notion of good works and the value of voluntary endeavour, pioneered ambulance transport services throughout Australia. A branch of the St John Ambulance Brigade was first formed in 1902 (in Sydney) but in 1919 the New South Wales Government decided to organise its own service. Only in South Australia and the Northern Territory does the Brigade now involve itself in transport service, with Western Australia and Tasmania having phased out St John involvement in recent years.

During the Second World War the association and the brigade were responsible for the training of first-aid personnel and the equipping of first-aid posts under the National Emergency Service Scheme. The association and the brigade

have served the community extensively and in 1947 the Australian Commandery was elevated to the status of a Priory at the recommendation of the Duke of Gloucester (the then Grand Prior of the Order).

It should be understood that the Brigade in South Australia no longer operates the ambulance service as such. This responsibility is carried out by the St John Council (the St John governing body), which co-ordinates paid personnel with the volunteers provided by the Brigade.

Naturally, because of the origins of the brigade, the association, and the governing role of the council there is overlap in personnel and responsibilities. The St John organisation in South Australia is complex. This, too, is a result of origins.

Turning to the provision of ambulance services, we find that prior to 1952 (when a more co-ordinated service was finally provided) a number of independent bodies—private and civic—operated ambulance services in both the metropolitan and country areas. Throughout the 1940s it became increasingly clear that this provision was fragmented and haphazard with little planning for expanding future needs.

In the late 1940s, a committee of inquiry into ambulance services was established. Following that inquiry, which highlighted the need for a much more co-ordinated provision of ambulance services, it was agreed between St John and the Government that St John would organise an ambulance service for South Australia. The terms and conditions of the arrangement were set out in a minute from the late Sir Edward Hayward, who passed away recently. I express my condolences to Sir Edward's family. The minute addressed to the then Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, was dated 12 July 1951. Certain points were agreed to (although it should be stressed that there appears never to have been any legislation passed to legally formalise the arrangements). The minute of 12 July 1951 is interesting. Signed by the late Sir Edward Hayward and addressed to the Premier, it states:

(1) The Council of St John will undertake to organise an efficient ambulance service for South Australia, starting in the city and gradually expanding to suburban and country centres.

(2) The South Australian Government will recognise the Council of St John as the authority to maintain and control the ambulance service in South Australia, and the St John Council will be responsible to the Government to carry out this work faithfully.

(3) The service will, wherever possible, be worked by voluntary labour and only paid personnel will be used where absolutely necessary to maintain an adequate service.

(4) Finance will be by public subscription to St John, with the help of grants from the Government.

(5) The Government will make available a central depot to be used by St John for the operation of the ambulance service.

(6) The Police Department and St John will work together in the operation, control and maintenance of the service.

(7) The St John Association will undertake to train in first-aid all the personnel that will be employed in connection with the operation of the service.

(8) The police will have the right to charge for the service in circumstances where there will be no hardship. This money would go towards the maintenance of the service.

(9) St John Council to organise an auxiliary ambulance service for special emergencies . . . this to consist of private commercial vans fitted so that they can be immediately converted into use as ambulances.

(10) Private Ambulance Services: private ambulance services should be allowed to carry on the good work that has been done in the past, but should work in with the Police Department and St John's for the general benefit of the community.

(11) St John would be prepared and willing to absorb any ambulances or ambulance services already operating in the State of South Australia, and they would then become part of the St John Ambulances.

It is interesting to note that, as the very basis of the St John organisation was volunteerism and the brigade was under its rules not able to employ paid staff, the St John Council of S.A. Inc. had to incorporate as a separate body in 1952 to hire staff, oversee metropolitan services, and disburse finances.

Since 1952 the situation has remained significantly the same; the St John Council has used both paid staff and volunteers in the provision of an ambulance service. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s the service expanded with country ambulance services provided by local brigades, councils and service clubs in individual towns and metropolitan services by the St John Council. Each country service was a separately incorporated body so that the St John Council's authority over them was not direct. Nevertheless, there was very strong liaison and consultation through the Country Ambulance Services Association, which brought together the country services.

Increasingly, St John has suffered as a result of industrial discord. Until late 1976, the relationship between the volunteers on the one hand and paid staff on the other was generally amicable and supportive. Indeed, up until the mid-1960s a person taken on as a paid staff member was required to be a qualified officer and an active volunteer member of the brigade. So, the transition was from volunteer to paid employee. Paid staff were also members of the brigade. This situation changed in the mid-1960s and paid staff were no longer required to be brigade members. At the same time paid officers who previously had little industrial representation joined the St John Ambulance Officers' Association as a branch of the Australian Government Workers Association.

In 1978 the A.G.W.A. sought the introduction of a fully paid ambulance service in the metropolitan area. This move pursued through the Industrial Commission failed. Shortly after, the traditional coverage of ambulance officers by the A.G.W.A. (which also covered some middle management and other personnel) was challenged by a group of employees who sought recognition of a separate Ambulance Employees Association (A.E.A.). This was opposed by the A.G.W.A., but finally in 1981 the A.E.A. was registered by the Industrial Commission (having existed on a different basis before that). As at 1 January 1983, pay-roll records indicated that 122 ambulance officers were members of the A.E.A. and 25 of the A.G.W.A. The St John Ambulance service began with 12 ambulances in 1952 and by 1982 operated 262 ambulances and three aircraft from some 13 metropolitan and 80 country centres. In 1982 St John Ambulance dealt with 217 124 cases and carried patients over 5.5 million kilometres. It employed 150 paid ambulance officers and utilised nearly 5 000 volunteers who contributed over 580 000 man hours to the community in one year.

I turn from this history to the present dispute. While there had been rumblings before, the present rift between the volunteers and some of the paid staff really occurred in 1977. I hasten to repeat 'some of the paid staff'. The Minister last Thursday suggested that only a 'small minority' of the volunteers opposed the proposals. This is not correct, as I believe he will very quickly find to his detriment. I think, however, he will find that among the 140 to 150 paid staff in the metropolitan ambulance service many also disapprove of the proposals and that, on his figures, of the 740 to 750 ambulance officers involved in the metropolitan part of the St John Ambulance Service, voluntary and paid, he will have few friends. Quite a number of the paid staff are also volunteers in their so-called spare time.

In 1977 a series of resolutions were passed in the A.G.W.A. (St John Branch) which at that time was the relevant union for the paid staff. One such resolution sought a 24-hour fully-paid service in the metropolitan area. There were many other demands all of which were eventually met, except the one about the 24-hour service. The union action led to the headline in the *Advertiser* in June 1977 'Axe St John Volunteers'.

I refer to the editorial in the *News* of 28 June 1977, headed 'Keep it Voluntary', which summed up the matter, as follows:

The St John Ambulance, as it now stands, is a unique organisation, and one of which South Australia can be extremely proud. But now this organisation with its magnificent record of community service is in danger of being ripped apart by yet another union wrangle.

The staff of 150 full-time drivers is boosted by almost 1 500 voluntary ambulancemen throughout the State. They help with the 200 000 sick and injured people which the service transports every year.

And they give more than 500 000 unpaid hours of their time every year in the service of others.

It was further stated:

The South Australia Ambulance Officers' Association says that the reason behind the move to end the volunteer service is to create a better ambulance service.

The association's spokesman said that full-time drivers would be better trained than volunteers. He may have a point, but on the opposite side of the argument an even better point can be raised—that the service has worked wonderfully in the past, is working wonderfully now, and shows every sign that it will work wonderfully in the future.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: Is the Minister of Health listening to this?

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: No, he is not. He may be listening in some other place. It is further stated:

There are other points in favour of retaining the service in its present state. Volunteers have said that a change would mean a big reduction in the number of ambulances in service at any particular time, especially at night.

And the cost to the community of phasing out volunteers would be considerable. At present the St John Ambulance organisation costs \$2 500 000 annually to run. Fully paid staff could cost \$3 000 000 extra each year. The South Australian public would be poorer in all ways if our volunteer ambulance service came to an end.

As a result of representations to the Government, no action was taken at that time and the demand for the 24-hour ambulance service abated. In 1979 the union tried again. This time it sought the inclusion of a clause in the award that would not allow volunteers to be used for any position that was defined in the award. This attempt was again unsuccessful. The militants in the union then formed a new union, the Ambulance Employees Association, which has continued on a course which, if successful, will destroy the volunteer ambulance service. Other paid staff remained within the A.G.W.A., which has since pursued a generally moderate and reasonable course. At the State Convention of the A.L.P. in June 1982, the following motion came forward:

That the State Government run a fully professional ambulance service funded out of a comprehensive national health scheme.

The now Minister moved a successful amendment which deleted the original motion and read:

That a State Labor Government will establish a public inquiry into the St John Ambulance Service. The inquiry should have particular regard to—

- The organisation, business management and financing of the State's ambulance services.
- The legitimate career aspirations of professional staff.
- Standards of training and service.
- The extension of advanced casualty care ambulance services, particularly in strategic country areas.

This has led to the Opat inquiry. I might here mention that the submission of the F.M.W.U.-A.G.W.A. branch of St John Ambulance employees set out its first recommendation as follows:

That no changes be made to the general overall structure and operations of the St John Ambulance framework.

The whole submission of this union is in this spirit and is characteristic of what I have referred to before, namely, the moderation and reasonableness of the F.M.W.U.-A.G.W.A. branch since the split, that is, since the more militant members hived off and formed the Ambulance Employees Asso-

ciation. The submission of the Ambulance Employees Association is much more demanding. At page 15 it says:

Since the introduction of the two paid crews on night shift Monday to Friday, it has been suggested by professional officers that the vehicle of integration could and in fact should be used as a means of extending their working hours and achieving part of their goal of a fully-paid service 24 hours a day.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: That means total elimination of volunteers.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: Yes.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: Is that their policy?

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: Exactly. It is clearly and quite frankly stated by the A.E.A., even in its submission to Professor Opit, that a fully-paid service—that is, dispensing with the volunteers—is still the ultimate objective of the A.E.A.

The Minister has repeatedly stated that his concern is the life and care of the patients. So, it is my concern and certainly it is that of the volunteers, as is demonstrated by their over half a million hours of voluntary service in one year. But concern for patients' lives and care is not synonymous with going part of the way with the A.E.A.'s demands. Because the Minister is concerned does not mean that he has made the right decision, and it does not mean that other people are precluded from expressing an opinion.

The history of the actions of the A.E.A. demonstrates a single-minded goal of doing away with the volunteer ambulance officers. This is demonstrated again in their submission, and it will undoubtedly continue until they succeed in their goal. The A.E.A. in its newsletter of 21 June says that its members can 'consider themselves to be well served by the Opit inquiry'. The Minister, with respect, seems to have overlooked that the A.E.A. is pressing on to its goal of eliminating the volunteers. He has expressed commitment to the overall present situation with modifications and has referred to the financial aspects of eliminating volunteers. But he seems to ignore the fact that his proposals are *de facto* moving towards that objective.

Both the A.E.A. and the volunteers from their different points of view clearly regard these moves as being the thin end of the wedge. The volunteers see themselves as having given ground over a long period, and they claim that since 1977 they have been subjected to considerable harassment in the course of their duties by some A.E.A. members. They see the volunteer system as being close to being dismembered by the moves now being undertaken.

A most important aspect is the contractual agreements between the volunteers and the St John Ambulance Service. I asked a question about this last Thursday, concentrating on what valuable consideration would flow from the ambulance service to the volunteer. The Minister made a great song and dance about my allegedly having neither listened to him nor read his statement.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: He is not listening to this.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: Of course he is not.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: Where is he?

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I do not know. He reiterated that the contractual agreement was to be with the St John Ambulance Service, not the Health Commission. But he entirely missed the point of the question. I was asking about the valuable consideration, not the parties. In fact, I referred to the consideration flowing from the ambulance service—note 'from the ambulance service'—not the Health Commission. The signing of a contractual agreement can have most sinister connotations. If it is to be enforceable, there will have to be valuable consideration.

I understand that the volunteers are already paid some expenses such as travelling in connection with each call. It may well be that this could constitute valuable consideration. At present, there being no contractual arrangement, the

volunteers fall outside the ambit of the Industrial Commission. As soon as they sign a contractual agreement, it does not matter with whom, they move outside the charitable umbrella and come within the ambit of the Industrial Commission. One wonders (and I wonder very much if this happens) how long it will be before the Ambulance Employees Association makes an application to the Industrial Commission concerning the volunteers and what the nature of that application will be.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: I think it will take a split second to happen.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: Yes. They might be more charitable, but it will not make much difference. Professor Opit at page 47 says that the agreement would relate particularly to command priorities and the need for continuing experience. What makes me particularly suspicious about the requirement of a contractual agreement is that the conditions referred to by Professor Opit and other conditions could easily be imposed, as indeed they are, without a contractual agreement. There is nothing to prevent the St John Ambulance Service or the St John Council from stipulating these conditions as conditions necessary to become, or to continue as, an ambulance officer. Non-compliance would result in removal. There are some conditions applying already, for example, as to continuing training. But, one cannot become a volunteer St John Ambulance worker until one has undergone continuous training and has passed the examinations; otherwise one is removed.

These conditions could be imposed in the same way. There is no need to sign a contractual agreement. Doing what I have suggested would effectively achieve all that Professor Opit says he wants to achieve, without bringing the volunteers within the ambit of the Industrial Commission. I believe that the volunteers will accept those terms. I quite sincerely urge the Minister to reconsider this matter. Its implications may not have occurred to him—it appears from last Thursday that they have not—but, if he reconsiders this matter, the complaints of the volunteers would be considerably ameliorated. They do not complain about the conditions themselves: they complain about coming within the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission and being the subject of applications to that commission when they are in fact charitable volunteers.

I said at the outset that this speech was about volunteerism and St John, as being topical, in particular. I also mentioned that attacks on volunteerism were spreading in the Department for Community Welfare. There is a healthy band of volunteers in that department. In June 1982, the date of the last annual report, there were 517 registered community aides (who are voluntary) and 393 volunteers. When I was Minister, I was proud to be supportive of these dedicated volunteers, and I saw their role not as being substitutes for the professionals but as fulfilling the right and duty of every member of the community to involve themselves in the welfare of the community.

On 5 August 1983 a general meeting of Public Service Association members in the Department for Community Welfare passed a number of resolutions. Resolution 4 read:

This meeting condemns the department practice on the use of volunteers and students to do the work of paid employees. We call on the Government to honour its commitments to the unemployed and to restore dignity by offering paid employment. This meeting resolves to ban the use of volunteers and to refuse to work with volunteers unless prior agreement has been reached with the P.S.A., in accordance with P.S.A. policy. We do, however, accept the 'normal' use of community aides, work experience placements and student placements, provided they are not required to perform work otherwise performed by a paid employee and provided no vacancies exist, and remain unfilled.

I have a pamphlet notifying all P.S.A. members in the Department for Community Welfare of a stop work meeting

at 12 noon on Friday 19 August. The pamphlet says in bold letters 'Strike action to be considered'. It also says, 'This is the most vital meeting of the campaign. Your attendance is critical.' I hasten to add that, looking at the pamphlet, I make no suggestion that the volunteer issue is the major one among the many issues that are raised, but it is one of them, and this meeting is to be held at which strike action will be considered.

I affirm my strong support for volunteers and the service that they give freely to their fellow men. I think that it should be a matter of concern to this Council and the community that at the present time the role of volunteers appears to be under attack. I support the motion.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I also support this motion and, in doing so, I commend His Excellency the Governor on the manner in which he opened the Parliament in this Chamber on 4 August. I join with other honourable members and His Excellency in extending the deepest sympathy to the relatives of the late Hon. John Coumbe. John was a member of this Parliament when I was elected in 1965, and after my election I worked very closely with him. He was an extremely conscientious and hard-working member. He was a very loyal Ministerial colleague. John Coumbe was what one might call a splendid all-rounder as a politician, and by that I mean that out in his electorate he served his constituents very well while, at the same time, within the House of Assembly he was a shrewd tactician, an excellent debater and a splendid member of this Parliament. His passing was a great loss not only to his family but to all who knew him over the years.

I commend His Excellency on mentioning the tragic loss to people occasioned by the Ash Wednesday fires, and I join in the expression of deep sympathy to such people that was recorded in His Excellency's Speech. I commend him also for recording the exceptional generosity of the people of this State in raising \$11 500 000 through the various appeals that followed both the tragedies of fire and flood to which this State was occasioned early this year.

I condemn the Government for the manner in which it has broken promises since it was elected to govern in this State in November last year. The Government's actions have been quite blatant and, indeed, have not been denied, but it has not brought any credit at all on the Government, nor on the institution of Parliament. Before the election, on the subject of State charges, the then Leader of the Opposition and now the Premier said:

We will not allow State charges like transport fares, electricity and hospital charges to be used as a form of backdoor taxation.

Yet, only 28 days after assuming Government, two of the three specific charges referred to by the Premier in that pre-election policy speech had been increased substantially above the rate of inflation. In the past eight months, bus, tram and train fares have been increased by the present Government by an overall average of 47.6 per cent, with those who travel to work being the most savagely hit; water and sewerage rates have leapt by between 22 per cent and 26 per cent; Housing Trust rents are set to rise by October; and a considerable number of other charges and State payments have increased since the Bannon Government assumed office.

I have already mentioned bus, tram and train fares, water and sewerage rates, Housing Trust rents, electricity and hospital charges. Here are some others: E. & W.S. Department fees for certificates to land brokers and land agents up 33 per cent; fees for well drillers licences up 100 per cent; fees for supply of water under the Irrigation Act up 28 per cent; veterinary surgeons registration fees up 5 per cent; hairdressers registration fees up 5 per cent; waste management fees up 25 per cent; architect subscription fees up between 8 and 10 per cent; Hairdressers' Registration

Board fees for sitting members up between 11 and 13 per cent; pastoral lease rentals up 50 per cent; Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Act licence fees up 18 per cent; drivers permits up 82 per cent; Racing and Trotting Control Board fees, a wide schedule of fees increased between 7 and 71 per cent; and number plate fees involving an increase of 10 per cent.

So the list goes on and on, but I think that it is proper that they should all be recorded. The fees of government supervisors at race meetings, up 67 per cent; trotting stewards fees up 15 to 30 per cent; nursing registration fees up between 400 and 1 400 per cent; chiropodists annual licence and subscription fees up 13 per cent; and fishing licences up between 33 and 50 per cent.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: 33½ per cent.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I am sorry: between 33½ per cent, if that is what the Minister wants, and 50 per cent. Physiotherapy licence fees have increased by between 11 per cent and 20 per cent.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: How long since those fishing fees were last altered?

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I would like to hear the Minister on that. He is the new expert in regard to fishing.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You are misleading the Council.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: For me to say that the Minister is the expert suggests that he is an expert. However, time will tell how the Minister measures up with the fishermen who have already expressed grave concern as to the holding of his new portfolio. Further, sitting fees for members of the Food and Drugs Act advisory committee have increased by various amounts, as have pilotage fees. A wide range of Government forms and publications have increased in price, but, last but not least, as if to sound the death knell of this Government, has been the increase of post mortem fees by up to 30 per cent.

In the past eight months, at least 27 State charges for cost items have increased. These increases have been levied during a period when most South Australians have been subjected to the wage pause. As if those increased charges were not enough, the Premier last week announced a new range of tax increases on tobacco products, petroleum and other products, liquor licences (which pushes up the cost of all alcohol-based drinks), and stamp duty on general insurance. The Premier also announced a new financial institutions duty. A further comment by Mr Bannon before the last election was as follows:

The A.L.P. would not introduce succession duties and will not introduce new taxes nor increase existing levels of taxes during our term of office.

The taxes announced last week alone will increase by \$6 a week the weekly costs of an average family of five. The major increases in charges imposed over the past eight months—water and sewerage rates, electricity charges, bus and train fares, gas charges and hospital fees—will all add a further \$6.50 a week to the average household running costs, making a total of \$12.50 a week.

This savage increase in taxation and charges has been introduced by a Government pledged not to increase taxes and to keep charges to a minimum. I remind the Council of that fact. Perhaps the most repugnant aspect of these increases is that they hit hardest at those sections of the population who can least afford them—the little people, as we call them sometimes in this Council. The little people, whom the Government now falsely claims to represent, are the ones hardest hit. Certainly, the impact of these tax and charge increases will cause tremendous and growing hardship and difficulty for tens of thousands of South Australians.

The recent tax increases will mean an extra \$86 000 000 to the Government in revenue in a full year, and the

increased charges will cost South Australians a further \$90 000 000. Under the previous Liberal Government, the relative State tax position of private companies and individuals improved dramatically. Recent figures have shown that South Australians have been paying the lowest State taxes of any citizens in Australia. In the 1981-82 financial year, the latest period officially assessed through the Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of State Charges, State charges actually fell by 5.4 per cent, an achievement not matched by any other State.

The fall in the level of State taxation under the previous Liberal Government was planned by a Government that believed in low taxation and low charges. We achieved that result with the abolition of death and gift duties, by significant exemptions for stamp duty and pay-roll tax and by the scrapping of land tax payments on private houses. In the same way that these reductions improved South Australia's competitive position, the new taxation levels and higher charges imposed by the Bannon Government in the last few days and over the past 18 months will erode the critical competitive edge which was established by the previous Tonkin Government.

Therefore, as I said, the Government stands condemned not only for breaking its promises (as if that was not bad enough), but also for the very harsh and cruel increases which it has introduced in these recent measures. One of the key reasons for this Government's breaking its promises in this way has been its inadequate control over its expenditure. It has not approached its task of financial administration in a business-like way at all. Instead of applying itself to reduce expenditure (as everyone must do, as every corporation must do, as every family must do, and certainly as every State should do when times are tough), the Government has not applied itself to reducing expenditure at all.

I go back into history because it is proper that we should make comparisons in times such as this. Under the former Liberal Government 4 000 public sector jobs were abolished without a single retrenchment, providing a saving to the South Australian taxpayer of about \$90 000 000 a year.

However, since this Government came to office eight months ago, taxpayers in South Australia have been asked to meet the cost of employing an additional 2 000 public servants, and that figure is taken from a A.B.S. publication. In December last year, the first full month of the Bannon Labor Government, we had 98 100 State Government employees. By April, for which the latest figures are now available from the A.B.S., that number had increased to 101 100 employees, an increase of 3 000. The cost of employing these extra people will be about \$45 000 000 in a full year.

It is of interest to record that a staggering 17.4 per cent of the South Australian workforce is employed by the State Government compared with only 14.8 per cent in New South Wales and 15 per cent in Victoria (those figures are taken from the A.B.S.). I suggest that the Government should place an immediate freeze on the creation of any more Public Service positions. The previous Government was able to reduce the size and the cost of the Public Service by attrition and by improved efficiency in a way that maintained all necessary services at adequate levels.

The erratic and unsatisfactory performance of the present Government has been caused in part by indecisive leadership but also, I suggest, not only in failing to apply itself to restricting its expenditure but also in the inability of some Government Ministers to meet the challenge and responsibility of their portfolios.

I will give two examples in regard to that latter point. The first deals with the Minister of Local Government. I

must say, frankly, what a failure the Minister of Local Government has been. He introduced to this State the precedent of compulsory amalgamation of local councils, which will prove to be one of the most damaging things that this Government has done. Certainly, with the passing of time, all kinds of problems will emerge.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: They already are emerging.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: True, they have emerged, but there will eventually be an opening of the flood gates of criticism from local government about this present State Government for the manner in which it forced the small District Council of Port Wakefield to amalgamate compulsorily into the new Wakefield Plains Council.

That small local council did not wish to lose its identity, autonomy or its own history and heritage. I am proud to belong to a Party which went to the people at the last election with a clear policy enunciated in its written policy document which said that the Liberal Party opposes the compulsory amalgamation of local governing bodies. I am not talking about the question of readjustment of boundaries. On several occasions during the term of the previous Government (through the vehicle of select committees) boundaries of councils were compulsorily adjusted. However, that was a totally different matter from this issue and question of compulsory amalgamation of councils, which brought to complete oblivion the council that became merged with its big brother or brothers in neighbouring areas. This is something that the Labor Government has brought on its own head. It has done this by giving the leadership of local government affairs to the present Minister.

I not only criticise the Minister and the Government about this question of compulsory amalgamation but also have some criticism of the Local Government Association, whose voice I would have liked to hear on behalf of its member councils saying that it, as a union of local government bodies and as an association of local councils, was very opposed to compulsory amalgamation. As if that were not enough, the Minister of Local Government has lost complete control of the chairmanship of local government select committees. I think that it is the first time in the history of this Parliament that a Minister in one House has initiated the creation of a select committee in regard to his portfolio to work in the other House.

The Hon. Anne Levy: It was done so that you could be on it.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: It was a compliment to this Chamber and to the work it had done in the previous three years. It was a recognition of the system that applies here and a recognition that there are no local members here.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. Frank Blevins: The Minister should be congratulated. What the honourable member said was grossly unfair.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. HILL: There might have been some recognition there.

The Hon. Anne Levy: It was recognition of what you could contribute.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: Never mind what I can contribute. If it was a recognition of how well we work in this Chamber, it was certainly in stark contrast to the mess the Minister made on the first select committee he chaired, so why were all the compliments now pouring across the Chamber not felt initially when the first local government select committee was set up within the Parliament? Did Government members come then to this Council with this unusual precedent? Of course they did not! Honourable members opposite came into this matter after the mess that was created during the first select committee. They came into it because they have

a Minister who is completely inept in local government matters—let us be quite frank about that!

The Hon. Frank Blevins: An ex-Mayor of Elizabeth?

The Hon. C.M. HILL: What does that mean?

The Hon. Frank Blevins: What is wrong with Elizabeth?

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I am not saying that there is anything wrong with Elizabeth. I say, again, that this is a quite remarkable situation—a Minister not chairing his own select committees on matters that are so vital to his portfolio. It is evident that after the first select committee he lost control of his portfolio and his Party tried to set the position right. The two matters I have just raised, perhaps, in some respects, might be forgiven, but the appalling blunder is that in His Excellency's Speech on 4 August there is no mention of Local Government Act revision legislation being brought into this Parliament. What did the Minister say at the last annual general meeting of the Local Government Association?

He said, 'I will have the Bill in in August.' What has the Minister done over the past nine months? When the present Government came to office in November of last year after two years of wrangling, consultation and debate in the public arena and with the Local Government Association and councils—

The Hon. J.R. Cornwall: You had more than your share of trouble with the Local Government Association.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I did not have trouble with the Local Government Association; I got on very well with its members. We had our differences from time to time, but that is not 'trouble'. The Minister is so engaged with the troubles within his Health portfolio that he thinks that I had trouble when I was a Minister.

The Hon. J.R. Cornwall: What about—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I do not wish this to develop into an across-the-Chamber argument. If the Hon. Mr Hill addresses the Chair I shall keep members on the Government side in order.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: Thank you, Mr President. The Minister said at the annual general meeting that that legislation was to be introduced. All those involved with local government have been waiting and expecting its arrival in this Parliament. It was practically all set to go in November of last year. There was, indeed, an interjection across this Chamber earlier this year that legislation would be ready towards the end of this year, the 1983 calendar year, yet there is no mention of it in the Governor's Speech, which is, of course, prepared by the Government and which lays out the Government's programme for this session. I ask the Government just where this Bill has gone. Is it in the 'too hard' basket? It would not surprise me if it was, and I will go back a distance into the history of the Local Government Act to explain why.

Let us be under no misunderstanding about the need to revise the Local Government Act. It is an outdated Act, one which brings great problems and difficulties to those administering it. All sections within local government and this Parliament have been in agreement since 1967 that it should be revised. The usual practice of Labor Governments when they have a very difficult problem is to hedge it off and give it to a committee to investigate. In 1967 they did just that. That committee was a large and important body, and the inquiry looked deeply at the whole matter. In 1970 the final report was brought down and printed.

When the Labor Government took office in 1970 and looked at the question of local government revision it had all the machinery and recommendations before it. It had this very comprehensive report to follow and be guided by. What did it do for the next nine years? It turned its back on the question of major revision because it was too hard for it to handle. Therefore, for nine years local government

just blundered on without an Act from the State Parliament of the kind it deserved.

If I might just touch on the comments made by the Hon. Ms Levy by way of interjection a few moments ago, I point out that I am proud of the fact that the Tonkin Government of 1979 to 1982 set about preparing legislation to revise this Act. It is true that it took some time to forge and that the fashioning process took a little longer than I had hoped it would. Nevertheless, I am not complaining about that because, at the time the Government changed, the first of the series of Bills planned was almost ready to bring into this Parliament. Now it has either, as I said a moment ago, been put into the 'too hard' basket, been lost, or this very efficient Government has simply omitted, by error, to include it in its programme.

If the latter situation is correct, it is a serious reflection on the Government as a whole. The Minister of Local Government cannot hold his head high in this State at the present time. No-one, apart from the Minister and his officers, knows what the present situation is. It appears that the Minister has done practically nothing in his portfolio for nine months. There is a total mess in relation to the election and the setting up of select committees relative to local government matters. In its reply to this debate the Government should inform the Council about the situation in relation to the revision of the Local Government Act. The Government should be totally honest and say whether revision of the Act is too hard and that we will have to wait a few more years; alternatively, the Government should provide truthful reasons for the procrastination, delay, ineptitude and the failure of the Minister and the Government in this area.

The second and final Minister whom I wish to criticise is the Minister for the Arts, Mr Bannon. I believe that this portfolio is another example where Ministerial control is not being properly exercised. The Minister for the Arts is quite capable of doing his job, but he just does not have the time to do it. It grieves me to hear of so much staff unrest in the arts area. Inquiries are being instituted left, right and centre whenever unrest is reported. At the moment, according to the press, an inquiry is being conducted at the Art Gallery, there is one in relation to the Festival Centre Trust and there is an inquiry into the South Australian Museum. Although it has not been confirmed, I heard yesterday that there might be an inquiry into the South Australian Film Corporation. All this unrest has developed since the present Minister took office in November last year. I am not a lone voice crying in the wilderness in relation to this question: questions have also been raised in the press.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: He should give the job to someone else.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: That is the only answer to this problem. The Minister might have some difficulty in finding someone else, but that is his Party's worry. This situation cannot continue because great damage will occur. Administration of the arts in this State going back to 1970 (and I give credit to the Dunstan Government of the 1970s) has been kept on a high and successful plane. However, when I see it slipping, I have no alternative but to make my voice heard. The arts editor to the *Advertiser*, Lance Campbell, stated recently:

The Premier, Mr Bannon, did not consider it 'appropriate or productive' to become involved in staff differences at the Art Gallery of South Australia, a Government spokesman said.

A Minister in charge of departments and in control of institutions who, on knowing of staff unrest within his areas of responsibility, simply turns his back and says, 'I do not really think that it is any business of mine,' must be ultimately branded as a person who is either lacking interest

or is incapable. Mr Bannon is not lacking interest and he is not incapable. One must assume that Mr Bannon just does not have the time to devote to this area.

The *Advertiser* was even more emphatic in its critical comments on Thursday 4 August. Referring to troubles in the arts at the present time, the *Advertiser* leader of that date stated:

That the current troubles are mostly the results of personality differences is becoming more and more obvious as people are talking. It is more than a mere pity that these personality clashes have been allowed to reach the proportions they have. It is a shame. Some of them run dangerously close to undermining the credibility of arts administration in South Australia, let alone its efficiency.

There is no questioning his understanding of the arts. But with the demands of the office of Premier, has he enough time to hold his arts portfolio? It appears that he had to be dragged into a public statement on the Art Gallery dispute, after saying it was an internal matter, only because the press left him with no choice.

Adelaide is an arts centre, and proud of it, and it needs Mr Bannon leading the way. If he cannot, someone must be found who can devote the time and energy to this vital slice of life in South Australia.

They are messages from the media. No doubt those messages have been gleaned from the staff and administrations of the various institutions in the Minister's department. Therefore, it can be seen that all is not well. The Minister must improve his record as Minister for the Arts. If the Minister does not have the time to fulfil his role he should pass the responsibility over to someone else.

When I spoke in the Estimates debate in this Chamber last May, I gave an early warning that there were signs that people in the arts area were becoming unsettled because of the possibility of reduced funding for the arts. I also made some detailed comments about fears in relation to deferment or delay in construction of the museum redevelopment scheme. I have asked questions in this Council about that project and I expected to receive a comprehensive reply, because the people who had approached me with their concerns wanted me to obtain replies. However, when the Hon. Mr Sumner replied to my question on 12 May 1983 he simply said:

In regard to the museum, which was referred to by the Hon. Mr Hill, I indicate that that project has not been stopped and that the contract is in progress, with \$23 500 000 in cash terms to be spent on constructions in the next four years.

On the face of it, that information is quite helpful, but what does it really mean? It means that the Government could plod along with little work being done on the project for the first three years and then it could make an effort to find the balance of the funding in the fourth year. However, the present Government may not be in office in the fourth year. Appropriation in the 1982-83 Budget for work on the museum redevelopment was \$1 680 000. That appropriation was in the Arts Department lines and was transferred from Public Buildings. Quite clearly, in the 1982-83 financial year an amount of \$1 680 000 has not been spent on museum redevelopment. Some work has been completed, but very little and not enough. I ask the Government to provide more details about its stage plans and its stage expenditures for museum redevelopment.

Is stage 1 going ahead according to the original plan? If not, why is it not going ahead, and what is going ahead? Last May I stated that I had read that stage 2 was to be deferred for 10 years. Is that true or is it not true? I am entitled to replies to these questions, because this is the proper place for me to ask such questions. I ask the Minister when he replies in this debate to give me a comprehensive answer to the matter I raised last May and particularly to the matter I raise today.

I want to compliment the Government in regard to this issue, because I heard that, after I concluded my speech last May on the problems that the Police Historical Authority

was experiencing in its plans to occupy the old police barracks, which form part of this redevelopment, some of the fears which had been expressed to me and which I raised were put to rest by the reversing, I understand, somewhere within the departmental structure, of a previous decision. When these people spoke to me some months after I made that speech, they said that they had been making more progress after that occasion than they were making prior to last May. Perhaps some changes might have resulted from what I said. I believe that the place where the Minister should have informed me was on the floor of this Council when I asked the questions.

Again, I make particular reference to the museum redevelopment, and I want to know just what the Government is doing about it. The museum redevelopment is only one facet of the arts in regard to funding. There are grave fears that the arts are to face cruel cuts in funding as a result of the forthcoming Budget, and I appeal to the Government, if it is not already too late, to allocate its available funds so that this will not happen. One hears forebodings about reduced funding from many of the institutions and administrators in the arts throughout the State.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: We didn't do that to them.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: No, we were very generous and we kept our promise that we would maintain our thrust in the arts. It is a question of maintaining promises and acting honourably, and doing what people expect, and that involves keeping one's word and one's Party's word. Since, as I mentioned earlier today, all the Labor Party's promises in regard to taxation, charges, and fees have been broken, people have the impression that the Government's word in regard to arts funding prior to the election must be suspect. Great damage will be done if the Government cuts the allocations to the arts.

It is well to remember that in times of economic recession, when psychologically people are depressed by the unemployment situation and by other problems, when belts are being tightened, and when great concern is being felt for the future of this State, the arts stand out like a beacon. The arts provide and maintain creativity. The arts provide a means for the people to enjoy their culture as a release from the worries and material problems around them. In this State, the arts serve the people at all levels, from hobby crafts and community arts on the one hand to peak professionalism in a wide variety of areas on the other hand.

Let us remember (and let the Government remember) that the arts create employment and tourism and, indeed, in some areas, such as film making, the arts can create revenue. Over the past 13 years the arts have become the very soul of this Festival State. I say to the Government, 'You will damage the arts now, after those 13 years, if you reduce funds, and you will not only damage the arts but also you will damage the State.'

In summary, I believe that the Government has lost much of its support by its broken promises and by the increases in taxation, rates, fees, and charges that have been announced over the past eight months. The Government has only itself to blame. If one tells lies and gets into government under false pretences, one must suffer the consequences. For heaven's sake, the Government should get the local government revision legislation out of the 'too hard' basket, or from wherever it has been lost, and provide up-to-date legislation for the third tier of government in South Australia. Lastly, the Government should give the whole story regarding the museum redevelopment to this Council and it should give an assurance now that the arts will not suffer funding cuts in 1983-84. I support the motion.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: I thank His Excellency, as I support this motion, for the way in which he opened Par-

liament. I reaffirm my loyalty to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia, and to His Excellency, Sir Donald Dunstan, the Queen's representative in this State.

It was with regret that we noted the death earlier this year of John Coumbe, a former Minister of this State, and a man who devoted so much of his life to public service. I join with other members in expressing my sympathy to his relatives and my appreciation of the service he gave. It is traditional in the Address in Reply debate that members speak in many ways on all manner of subjects, and I wish to do two quite different things today.

First, I will address some of the political problems that face this State and this nation, and I will analyse the effect of the advent of Labor Governments upon our society. I will also take the opportunity to raise a matter of practical importance that has very little to do with political philosophy or Labor versus Liberal but everything to do with the rather acute situation that arose this afternoon. It was a matter of some disappointment that the Minister of Health was absent for the entirety of the Hon. Mr Burdett's speech.

One of the matters I wish to deal with is the safety, welfare and lives of people who are engaged in diving in South Australia. They are few in number compared with the numbers in other States and in other parts of the world, but they are at least as entitled to access to basic safety measures as is any other human being.

I will in the latter part of my speech raise that subject in relation to an event which occurred this afternoon. Perhaps the Government will not be refractory in taking note of what I will say about this.

On the political scene, of course, we now enter the post-honeymoon phase of Labor Government in Australia. It is important for us to reflect on the consequences of Labor government because both the State Government and the Federal Government were elected in an atmosphere of euphoria, of popularity and of television image. In many cases it was a question of which Party's commercial production was better than the other's. The people of South Australia believed that they were voting into office both at State and Federal levels a moderate Liberal Democrat-type Government.

An honourable member: How wrong they were.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: They did not know, did they?

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Social Democrat.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: That is a problem that members opposite can work out among themselves.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You were wrong. You said 'Liberal Democrat'. They are Social Democrat.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: The Minister has a couple of Liberal Democrat members in the Party who, I think, made a mistake and joined the wrong Party. But they are there.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Who are they?

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: One of the biggest examples is occupying the Chair in another place. What the people saw and what the people got was entirely different. The people saw the moderate—though 'moderate' is an awful word to use.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: Why do you not say 'arguably moderate'?

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: Arguably moderate: Mr Bannon in a business suit. They saw happy-go-lucky, jolly Mr Hawke. They did not see Senator Susan Ryan sitting there with a heap of Marxist policies, about to cut down the tall poppies by cutting spending on private schools. That was not in the bright shiny commercials in the election campaign. They did not see all the taxes that the Hon. Mr Hill just enumerated. That was not their fault; that was not a lack of perspicacity on the part of members of the public, because they were told the opposite. They were told by Mr Bannon

that there would be no taxes increased; they were told by Mr Hawke that there would be tax cuts. How about that?

It has always been a characteristic of Labor Governments when elected that they have been Governments of high taxation and high welfare spending. Those who can remember the Whitlam disaster will remember that that was a characteristic of that Government, too. That always will be so in the future. The capacity of a State or a nation to withstand such policies, of course, depends on the production base. If a society is producing a great surplus of wealth and goodies then, of course, the high taxation and high expenditure approach can be afforded, but there has to be a proportion struck—a balance, as it were—between both things. As I said, Labor Governments always unbalance these factors. They do nothing about the production base, or positively damage it in the ideological pursuit of their habitual policy of high taxation and high welfare spending.

When one peruses His Excellency's Speech, which essentially outlines Labor Party policy, one finds that, of the 40 or so points in the Speech, approximately one-third are formal; of the remainder, all but four or five deal with expenditure (by the expansion of the Public Service or some other form of expenditure), taxation or social engineering. The only mentions made in that document of the production base are the mentions of aspects which certainly have nothing to do with A.L.P. policy. They mention the natural disasters which befell this State; they mention the up-turn in the agricultural sector which is to be expected this year, that up-turn certainly being no product of any Labor Party policy; they mention the oil that is flowing from Moomba to Stony Point—certainly the product of Liberal Party policy; they do not mention the uranium which will not be sold from Honeymoon or Beverley. Certainly, the references to the production base equal a reference to our policy, which has been watered down by the Labor Party, thereby reducing production. So, the whole balance of the State Government's policy is one which leans toward high taxation, high welfare expenditure, lots of social engineering and little or nothing done about our production base and, certainly in terms of confidence in the mineral exploration field, a great deal of damage done to our production base.

On the Federal scene, of course, the same sort of comments apply, except that the radical Marxist left is somewhat stronger in certain parts of the Cabinet, headed by the Susan Ryan phenomenon. One of the reasons for the attack on private education, and one of the criteria for withdrawing support in the past, is based on student-teacher ratios, so that a school which has a higher number of teachers for a given student population is penalised more—in other words, a tax on excellence, averaging downwards towards the grey mediocrity of socialism. Of course, Uncle Bob Hawke is not like that: he is more of a pragmatist. I will read the text of a cartoon which appeared in the *Weekend Australian* of 18 June 1983, which says it all. The scene is a little dicky bird with the face of one Robert Hawke flying to meet President Reagan of the United States, and the dialogue is as follows:

Hawke: Giddy, mate.

Reagan: Howdy, pardner.

Hawke: Bit o' bother on the way over, mate—sorta lost me foreign policy.

Reagan: No worries, pal—you can borrow mine.

Hawke: Aw, gee, ta, mate.

Reagan: Anything else?

Hawke: Yair, well, as a matter of fact I kinda lost me economic policies, too.

Reagan: No worries—anything else?

Hawke: Come to think of it, I haven't seen me navy for a while.

Reagan: What's mine is yours—how you off for socks and underpants?

Hawke: Aw, cripes, whacko—thanks mate.

Reagan: I gotta say you don't seem the usual bolshy type.

Hawke: Not me, mate—I don't go for that 'ideological purity' claptrap. The object of politics is to win. All those ridiculous A.L.P. policies—the people didn't want 'em.

Reagan: Then how come they voted for 'em?

Hawke: Cripes, mate—where've you been—they voted for me, not policies.

Reagan: Sorry.

Hawke: I knew when I promised 'em tax cuts they didn't want 'em; that's why they're not getting any.

Reagan: They won't be upset?

Hawke: Too bad if they are, greedy bunch of bastards. Well, thanks mate but I must fly.

Reagan: Nice talking to yuh digger.

I hope that some of the several *Hansard* readers read that much at least, because it is a case of what one sees one does not get. When one votes for Labor one does not get what one does not see: one invariably gets high taxation and high expenditure. Perhaps people in Australia need a short dose of practical experience for a year or two every decade just to remind them.

I want now to turn to a practical matter which is not a question of politics at all, namely, the question of diving safety in South Australia. I would not use the Parliamentary forum but for what happened today. In this State there is a decompression chamber sited at North Haven that has certain capabilities for treating divers who suffer injuries because of pressure during their work. At Royal Adelaide Hospital is a small pressure chamber, which does not have the capability for treating divers safely for dysbaric illness but which is perfectly satisfactory for the purposes for which R.A.H. acquired it; namely, for the provision of medical treatments to certain of its patients. However, that is quite a different thing from the provision of a facility that can act as a safety back-up for all the people who work under water in this State and treat properly the range of illnesses that can arise. These are two different things.

The R.A.H. chamber was acquired for the administration of certain medical treatments. The North Haven chamber was acquired by private enterprise specifically to enable its operator to have the greater capability to compress to higher pressures in order to treat the types of illness that can be encountered in the case of certain types of diving accidents. The company owning this chamber has recently gone into receivership and the liquidator naturally has but one duty—to dispose of the chamber on an economically viable basis.

In response to requests for representation, I have been involved in correspondence with the Minister requesting the State Government to buy this chamber and site it at R.A.H. Many technical factors are involved, and the Royal Australian Navy has been in consultation and written a report which finds that the R.A.H. chamber is dangerous and inadequate for treating pressure injuries that divers may encounter, giving additional strength to the view that the State Government ought to purchase and operate this chamber.

The price of the chamber is about \$26 000, and it would cost about \$10 000 to update it to a state of near perfection. There is some argument about its annual running cost. However, I am told by people who know the chamber well and who have been operating and maintaining it that \$5 000 a year would cover that cost, so it is a fairly small expense, although possibly there may be other costs that I have not taken into account. I must say that the Minister has been most courteous and prompt to me in his replies to my correspondence, and I would continue the process of correspondence with him but for the fact that today a private individual purchased the chamber for his wife.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: What?

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: Yes. There is some literature which indicates that the treatment of multiple sclerosis may be advanced by the use of such a chamber. In fact, treatment for multiple sclerosis does not require anything like the higher pressures of which this chamber is capable and which

make it so useful for the treatment of certain kinds of diving accidents.

A number of people in South Australia who have read some overseas literature describing experimental work have gained some hope that somehow multiple sclerosis may be ameliorated in this manner. I am not willing to say whether the scientific evidence is conclusive. Really, one would need to attempt to reproduce some of the overseas results in a controlled manner with double-blind trials. I do not know of any medical practitioners in South Australia who are presently conducting such a project. So, today this chamber is being purchased by a very sincere man, but it is being purchased with no real immediate prospects of full-scale scientific trial of its use for this project.

My information is that the purchase of this chamber by a private citizen would not deny divers the use of the chamber should they be injured, and that the chamber's new owner would be willing to lend it to the Government if the Government wished to install and maintain it as a State facility. Furthermore, if the Government should ultimately decide that it ought to have bought it, the new owner would be willing to sell the chamber to the Government.

This situation has evolved rapidly in the past day or two, and it is undesirable that this chamber should remain in private hands. It is desirable that the Government should purchase it and that the chamber should then be available as a Government facility, first, for the provision of an essential piece of equipment for divers and, secondly, for the provision of other medical treatments, which would naturally include the treatment of multiple sclerosis if a physician with an interest in this matter wishing to develop a project along these lines could be found to lead that work.

I cannot emphasise enough that, even though we have only a handful of divers at any one time working at great depth in South Australia, each of those divers taking such risks is entitled to the basic industrial safety of having an adequate decompression chamber available within the State. The Minister of Fisheries will discover, when he receives advice on the question that I asked him on this subject recently, that there are some people working at the very limits of human endurance in what can be described only as a hazardous diving operation.

There are only a few of them, but this facility is so cheaply available in terms of Government expenditure that it certainly would be a much cheaper service than the recent St John Service, which cost \$200 000. I have elevated this matter to a Parliamentary forum today for one reason only, that because of the purchase of this chamber by a private individual the way is still open for this matter to be sorted out and put on a scientific basis. If the Minister has good will towards this project, which he has exhibited in correspondence to me, all that is needed is for the wheels of Government administration to be greased a little so that they might turn rapidly enough to enable this chamber yet to be acquired. I support the motion.

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

SENIOR SECONDARY ASSESSMENT BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 11 August. Page 161.)

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Liberal Party supports the intention of this Bill and does not wish to unduly delay its passage through this Council. We believe that the establishment of a Senior Secondary Assessment Board is most

important for the education system and it is wholeheartedly supported by the Liberal Party. However, as was indicated in the debate on the parent Act, there are likely to be problems during the transfer period from the present P.E.B. to the new Senior Secondary Assessment Board. I do not say this as a criticism. This is to be expected, just as with any major change in the education system there are likely to be transfer problems.

I am informed that, although the parent Act (the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act) has been assented to, it has not been proclaimed. There is some discrepancy in the statements made by the Minister in the Lower House regarding when this Act will be proclaimed. When introducing this Bill, the Minister said that the Act would be proclaimed in September of this year. Then, when closing the second reading debate, he indicated that he had a change of mind and said that the proclamation of the Act in September was not the soundest proposition. The Minister stated:

I want to advise the House that I have had put to me propositions, which I have to consider very seriously, that the proclamation of the Act in September is not the soundest proposition and that the board should be structured as a Ministerial committee in the early days, with the chief executive officer being the chief executive officer-elect, subject to its proclamation early in 1984.

The Minister has therefore taken advice about when the Act will be proclaimed. We perceive that there are transfer problems. He said first that the Act would be proclaimed in September and then that it would not be able to be proclaimed until early next year.

I understand that the major reasons for the delay in proclaiming the Act relate to the operation of the present Public Examinations Board. I think that section 5 of the parent Act provides that as soon as the new board is proclaimed the P.E.B. legislation will be repealed and the board will therefore cease to exist. Therefore, its operations cease to have any legal status; the preparations for the 1985 year, the assessment of the 1983 school year examinations and the final assessment in the latter part of this year and the early part of next year, could not be completed under the P.E.B. That is the problem under which the Minister and the Government are labouring.

We can see the problem of this transfer period. Liberal members do not wish to unduly delay the passage of this Bill. We agree with the Minister's statement that we ought not delay the work of the intended new board until February next year, which is nearly six months away. Therefore, we support the Minister's intent in trying to get things up and going before next February. To get around this problem the Minister has undertaken a number of courses of action.

I would like to refer to two of those courses of action in relation to the amendment before us this afternoon. I take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to the Minister for enabling discussions to take place between his officers and me. They have, in fact, explained that prior to the proclamation of the Bill the SSABSA Board will act in a *de facto* sort of way and, possibly, under the guise of a Ministerial committee because, as I have said, of the problem, if SSABSA is enacted, of then not being technically able to have a P.E.B. in respect of the assessment for the 1983 year and the preparation of the syllabus for the 1985 calendar year.

I have no opposition to the Minister's bringing forward the intent of the SSABSA legislation in a *de facto* sort of way by way of this *de facto* Ministerial committee, if that is to be the way in which it is done. However, I have some questions of the Minister. First, will the Ministerial committee mirror in every way the exact composition of the SSABSA board? That board will have 29 members covering a wide range of groups, and its membership will increase to 30 with the inclusion of the Chief Executive Officer, to

whom I will refer in a moment. I hope that the Minister's answer is that it will mirror the SSABSA Board in every way if it is to be in operation as a *de facto* board, because then all people will be represented. I am led to believe that that is the case, but seek an assurance on this matter from the Minister in charge of the Bill in this Council.

My second question is: will the Ministerial committee (in effect this *de facto* SSABSA board) be appointing syllabus committees for the 1986 calendar year, and will they be operational prior to the proclamation of the new board possibly in February next year? If we are to have this Ministerial committee setting up syllabus committees prior to the proclamation early next year, will the syllabus committees, and therefore the Ministerial committee, be making any final decision in relation to the 1986 calendar year?

I am also informed that it is possible, although unlikely, that some decisions in a limited number of syllabuses with respect to the 1985 calendar year may also be looked at by the new SSABSA board. They will possibly be syllabuses which are some way down the track and on which work has already been done by syllabus committees under the P.E.B. set-up; they will then be refined by the syllabus committee set up under the new SSABSA board.

I seek answers from the Minister about the precise operations of the Ministerial committee and its composition, particularly in respect of the 1986 calendar year and possibly a limited number of syllabuses with respect to the 1985 calendar year.

The second general way that the Government and the Minister have sought to get themselves out of this transfer problem is the major nature of the Bill. The Bill seeks to allow the Minister to appoint the first Chief Executive Officer for a period not exceeding five years. The Chief Executive Officer will also be a member of the board. Once again, we have the unfortunate side effect whereby the board continues to grow like topsy. In fact, the board has grown from 26 members to 30. My Party does not oppose that position. The board is growing, and it now has four members more than the original PEASA board.

The Bill provides that further appointments to the board will be made by the board and be subject to Ministerial approval. Therefore, the Minister will make the first appointment, and from then on the board will make the decisions, although those decisions will be subject to Ministerial veto.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Ministerial approval.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Yes, 'approval' might be a better word. The Minister of Education summarised his justification for this Bill during his second reading speech in another place, when he stated:

However, several tasks should be accomplished this year if the intent of the SSABSA Act is to be properly achieved in 1986 and thereafter. Such tasks must be carried out under the authority of a Chief Executive Officer of high competence and repute.

Later in his explanation, he also said:

If the Act is not amended in this way it is unlikely that the position of Chief Executive Officer could be satisfactorily filled in 1983. The absence of an appropriate chief would prevent the formulation of criteria upon which Year 12 subjects will be developed and assessed for 1986. Such an eventuality would seriously undermine the credibility of SSABSA as 1986 could be little different from 1983 as far as many students would be concerned.

The Minister of Education referred to the need and urgency for this Bill. However, if the parent legislation is not proclaimed until February next year (which is quite likely) how can an amending Bill be proclaimed before then? The problem is quite obvious, and I seek an answer from the Minister.

If this Bill cannot be proclaimed prior to the proclamation of the parent legislation, what is the justification for the Minister's statements in another place in relation to the urgency for this provision? If this Bill and the parent leg-

islation cannot be proclaimed, does that mean that the Chief Executive Officer cannot be appointed? If the amending Bill is not proclaimed, can the Minister go ahead and appoint the Chief Executive Officer, irrespective of what has happened? If that is the situation, what is the urgency for this Bill? I repeat that the Liberal Party supports the intent of this Bill, as we supported the intent of the parent legislation. When the legislation is enacted we give the board our best wishes for its operation. The Opposition does not wish to delay the passage of this Bill, but I have raised a number of questions—

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: Which should be answered.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Yes, and I am sure that they will be answered to our satisfaction. I look forward to receiving those answers from the Minister.

The Hon. K.L. MILNE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.28 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday 17 August at 2.15 p.m.