

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday 7 August 1985

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

PAPER TABLED

The following paper was laid on the table:

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

Pursuant to Statute—
Consumer Affairs, Commissioner for—Report, 1983-84.

QUESTIONS

SAFETY RAMPS

The **Hon. M.B. CAMERON**: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Transport a question about truck safety.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.B. CAMERON**: Members will be aware that on the South-Eastern Freeway in past years there were a number of accidents involving trucks which had got out of control. As a result, the 1968 Government instituted the construction of two safety ramps. I think that the Hon. Mr Hill was the Minister of Transport at that time. Those two safety ramps have remained there virtually unchanged since that time. Unfortunately, like so many other items, they have become too familiar to the general public and they were constructed in rather a hurry because there had been one rather severe accident at the time.

Travelling on that freeway, as I do frequently, I have seen people within recent times parked across the ramps, and then coming down the safety ramps after they have spent some time up there. I understand that young people use them for activities other than those for which they were constructed in the first place. They go up there at night and spend some time there.

I do not believe that they really understand the problem they face if a vehicle travels down the ramp out of control, because they will not have a lot of time in which to get out of the way. I am also informed that people have been seen having picnics at the top of one ramp in particular.

Further, I imagine that at least the bottom ramp would be very difficult for a modern, large vehicle, such as a truck, to negotiate in a runaway situation. I realise that these days modern trucks have much better safety features and all sorts of systems that can perhaps prevent such accidents occurring. However, we all know that nothing is foolproof and a dangerous situation can arise. In recent times even jumbo jets, which have all the back-up systems in the world, have been known to fail.

Will the Minister take steps to ensure that the safety ramps are better signposted to inform the public that their use is dangerous for casual activity—whether it be parking across them during the day or at night, or using them for picnics? The ramps should also be examined to see whether any reconstruction is necessary to enable large trucks to negotiate them at high speed. I refer, in particular, to the lower ramp, although I understand that even the upper ramp needs looking at. Unfortunately, I think people's, and perhaps departmental, attitudes have become rather casual towards the ramps. There have been a number of accidents involving trucks in the hills recently, so I ask the Minister

to ensure that there are no fatal accidents such as occurred on Cross Road in 1968.

The **Hon. FRANK BLEVINS**: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring back a reply.

CONSENT TO DENTAL TREATMENT

The **Hon. J.C. BURDETT**: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about consent to dental treatment.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. J.C. BURDETT**: I refer to the dental treatment in schools of both primary and secondary students (although I am probably more concerned about secondary students) under the South Australian Dental Service and the question of consent to such treatment. I understand that it is usual for blanket consent to be given by parents.

The **Hon. R.J. Ritson**: It's not really an informed consent.

The **Hon. J.C. BURDETT**: No. The blanket consent is a general consent to dental treatment. Constituents have brought to my notice the fact that they are concerned that, whereas in private practice informed consent would have to be given for each treatment, under the School Dental Service that does not happen. I am informed that at times quite major disconnected procedures are carried out under a blanket consent given a year or more previously, and so on.

The Consent to Medical and Dental Procedures Bill was passed in the last session and an amendment to the Mental Health Act relating to consent is presently before a Select Committee. It seems to me that, particularly at this time when we are so concerned about consent, it is important that if a treatment or procedure is considerable there ought to be informed consent.

Of course, in referring to the School Dental Service we are talking about minors, and consent would normally be given by the parents, although that is not necessarily so under the Consent to Medical and Dental Procedures Act. I suggest that it is appropriate and proper and in conformity with the importance given to consent at present that there be consent to each major procedure. Is the Minister prepared to consider that consent—not just blanket consent but consent for any major procedure carried out by the School Dental Service—should be given in writing?

The **Hon. J.R. CORNWALL**: I think Dale and Joe have been nobbling the Hon. Mr Burdett again. The shadow Minister seems to have a pathological loathing and hatred of the School Dental Service. However, 98 per cent of parents in South Australia think it is the best thing that has happened since sliced bread was invented. It is an extremely popular, cost effective service, and one which I am happy to say is being expanded into secondary schools year by year by this Government; that programme is on target so that by 1988 every schoolchild, every student in this State up to and including the year in which they turn 16, will be offered the services of the School Dental Service.

I would be very interested to know the Liberal Party's position in the unfortunate event that members opposite were to gain office. Would they, as they did in 1980, stop the expansion of the School Dental Service in the secondary school area? That is the question to which we should be directing our minds. I would be very interested to hear from the Hon. Mr Burdett or one of his colleagues: let them stand up and tell us what they would do to or with the School Dental Service. Would they, in fact, cut it back as they did when they came to office in 1979?

The **Hon. M.B. Cameron**: You got a word wrong—you should have said 'Will they', not 'would they'.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I might have got a word wrong, but I would certainly have to infer from the persistent and vicious attacks on the School Dental Service by the Hon. Mr Burdett (who gets his information from two people who are at the extreme right of the dental profession) that in government he would do all in his power to roll back one of the best school dental services in the world and confine the facilities to the primary area only. Specifically with regard to blanket consent, the consent situation is just the same as it would be in any private dental surgery. Therefore, the question is totally irrelevant.

COSTIGAN REPORT

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: Last year the Costigan Royal Commission presented its final report, which contained findings about the criminal activities of the Port Adelaide branch of the Federated Ships Painters and Dockers Union. Some 62 pages of that report dealt with extortion in South Australia, including workers compensation frauds; fraudulent use of false names, addresses and dates of birth; social security and taxation frauds; and extortion rackets particularly requiring shipowners to pay large sums of money before a ship would be handled by the union and allowed to leave port—in other words, blackmail!

Those findings were commented upon at the time and are particularly serious. I asked some questions during the last session of the Parliament and as a result the Attorney-General wrote to me on 25 June with information in answer to those questions. He indicated that the State would not proceed further on the Costigan findings. That is a curious and disturbing decision in view of the reference in the letter, as follows:

In this regard—

that is, the Costigan recommendation to favour enforcement of the criminal law—

the report of Commissioner Costigan has been fully examined by the Crown Prosecutor in conjunction with the Commissioner of Police. My advice is that, although *prima facie* offences under section 160 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act are disclosed in some of the instances cited in the Costigan Royal Commission Report, most of the examples cited are now some four to five years old. As such, the Crown Prosecutor is of the view that documentary evidence is likely to have been destroyed and witnesses memories would undoubtedly be impaired.

The passing of time may also mean that witnesses are unable to identify the person who actually made the demands. Furthermore, I am advised that proof of the charges may necessitate calling overseas witnesses who, because of their involvement in the shipping industry, may well be unavailable.

I am surprised that the mere fact that these offences are four to five years old is a deterrent to prosecution when one considers that under the Companies Code, in particular, prosecutions can be launched six or seven years after an offence has occurred.

It is not clear from the Attorney-General's letter whether he and his advisers saw all the evidence that Costigan collected or made their decision only on the published report. My questions to the Attorney-General are as follows:

1. Did the Attorney-General or his advisers read all the material that the Costigan Commission had available in relation to South Australia or only the 62 pages in the public report before deciding not to take action against members of the Ships Painters and Dockers Union?

2. Did the Attorney-General or his advisers check whether documentary evidence was available in relation to the section 160 crimes (that is, demanding money with menaces),

whether witnesses are available and whether or not their memory is impaired?

3. As there is *prima facie* evidence of breaches of section 160 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, why will the Attorney-General not pursue the further investigation of these cases in the courts? Is he afraid to take on members of the union?

4. Will he have his reply to me of 25 June 1985 incorporated in *Hansard*?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The simple matter is that the honourable member's question, together with what material was available, was referred to the Commissioner of Police and the then Crown Prosecutor, Mr B.R. Martin, QC. The information I conveyed to the honourable member by letter was information conveyed to me by both those people—the Commissioner of Police, Mr Hunt, and the then Crown Prosecutor, Mr Brian Martin, QC. I take it that the honourable member is severely critical of their action in not recommending that prosecutions proceed in this particular matter. If that is his attitude and if that is the sort of accusation he is apparently making, I think that the honourable member should come out and directly indicate to the Council that he believes that those persons have not acted properly.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: What the honourable member is attempting to do is suggest that these people somehow or other made recommendations that were not satisfactory, or recommendations that they somehow or other do not agree with. That is nonsense. When the matter was raised it was referred to both those people. The letter I wrote to the Hon. Mr Griffin in response to his question is in accordance with the opinions I received from the Commissioner of Police, Mr Hunt, and the then Crown Prosecutor, Mr Martin.

I did not indicate to them what evidence they should consider. If the honourable member wants more details of that, I am prepared to obtain them for him. All I am saying is that the people properly charged with the responsibility of assessing the evidence and the Costigan Royal Commission Report were so charged with that responsibility by me, and that was the response I received from both those gentlemen. If the recommendations of those two people were that the matters should proceed, then I assure the honourable member I would have had no hesitation in proceeding, if criminal offences were indicated, against any member of the community, whether or not a member of a trade union.

The honourable member should realise that that is what occurred. I referred his questions to those gentlemen for a report. The nature of their report is contained in the letter I have written to the—

The Hon. K.T. Griffin interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: It is not. The honourable member was never prone to table in this Parliament the opinions he obtained from Crown Law officers. All I can say is that the views with respect to prosecution action that I have expressed in that letter were the views of the Commissioner of Police and the then Crown Prosecutor. In pursuit of the matter, and following the honourable member's question, they were the steps that were taken. The opinions of those two gentlemen are expressed in the letter to the honourable member.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I have a supplementary question. Will the Attorney-General, first, arrange to incorporate in *Hansard* his reply to me dated 25 June (that is procedural anyway)? More importantly, will the Attorney-General ascertain the information I have raised in questions 1 and 2 and bring back a report?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: Once again, the honourable member does not listen. I said that I was happy to get the information that the honourable member requested in so

far as I can, and certainly the letter was made public at the time that the—

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I would like it incorporated in *Hansard*. It was asked in Parliament; put it in *Hansard*.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: If the honourable member will contain himself for a short time he will get his answer. I made the letter public at the time that I sent it to the honourable member. Therefore, I have no difficulties with having it incorporated in *Hansard*.

ETSA LEVY

The Hon. C.M. HILL: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister Assisting the Treasurer a question in relation to the ETSA levy.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.M. HILL: There is some confusion amongst members of the public as to the portion of taxation concessions that were announced by the Treasurer earlier this week. I refer to the item relating to the \$11 million reduction in the ETSA levy.

The Treasurer indicated that the Government was going to reduce its levy from the Trust by \$11 million and, as a result of that, the Trust would be able to make some reductions in its charges for electricity to the consumer. The confusion arises as to whether that \$11 million reduction is a one-off reduction for this financial year only or whether it is a permanent arrangement which will stand not only for this year but for future years as well. I have been informed that on public radio the Treasurer indicated that it was a one-off proposal for this year but nevertheless people are still confused about it. Therefore I have directed the question to the Minister Assisting the Treasurer and I hope that the Hon. Mr Blevins can straighten out this matter and thereby overcome this confusion.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I am pleased that the Hon. Mr Hill asked this question because the question of ETSA tariffs is of course an interesting one. There have from time to time been figures given to the Council which indicate the rate of increase in electricity tariffs during the period of the Tonkin Government and the period of this Government. I am sure the Treasurer will be only too pleased to put those figures again before the people of South Australia so that they can clearly make the comparisons.

Regarding the levy, my understanding is that the arrangements that were made by the Treasurer for this absolutely unprecedented reduction in ETSA tariffs, an action of which we are particularly proud, have demonstrated quite clearly what an excellent Treasurer we have and an excellent Minister assisting him: we have been able to get the State's finances in such shape that we are able to return a significant amount of the tax raised to the taxpayers of this State. Concerning the specific arrangements made regarding the ETSA levy, my understanding is that the arrangements made are very close, if not identical, to the arrangements that were made by the previous Government in this particular area. However, what I will do is refer the honourable member's question to my colleague, the Hon. Mr Sumner, who represents the Treasurer in this place and who I am sure will be only too pleased—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: —to refer it to the Minister whom he represents here.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: I want an answer!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I will refer it to the Treasurer and bring back a reply. I am sure that, when the matter is

before the Council, the honourable member will have every opportunity to discuss it.

STOREMEN AND PACKERS BAN

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Labour a question relating to The Wholesaler and the ban that the Storemen and Packers Union has imposed.

Leave granted.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: The sorry history of the relations between union interference and other pressures on the birth of a new wholesaling enterprise in South Australia is well known I would assume to all honourable members. However, this morning I was notified by the manager of The Wholesaler that the South Australian manager of Nestles had informed him that they could not supply The Wholesaler's order for stock because the Storemen and Packers Union has applied a ban on that delivery. This is in direct defiance of an interlocutory injunction handed down from the Federal Court of Australia for the Storemen and Packers Union to lift all bans. The Storemen and Packers Union had until Tuesday last week to show cause why the injunction should either be lifted or be only of a temporary nature. The union's solicitor told the court that she had no instructions to seek an alteration, so the injunction handed down by the court became permanent. Therefore, the ban imposed this morning against The Wholesaler by the Storemen and Packers Union for the delivery of Nestles' stock is blatantly illegal. Therefore, bearing in mind the proud boast of the Bannan Government that South Australia is the State with the best industrial record in Australia, I ask the Minister:

1. Does the Minister consider the Storemen and Packers Union should comply with the injunction of the Federal Court to lift all bans applying to The Wholesaler?

2. Is the Minister aware of the illegal ban imposed by the Storemen and Packers Union on the supply by Nestles of stock to The Wholesaler?

3. Will the Minister investigate the circumstances of the ban and use his influence and that of the Government to have the ban lifted immediately?

4. If that is unsuccessful, and bearing in mind the precedent of the Federal Government in its action with the Builders Labourers Federation, would the Minister consider investigating measures to have the Storemen and Packers Union deregistered?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I am aware of the ongoing dispute that revolves around the new operation of the company The Wholesaler. I have had some very brief discussions with the Secretary of the South Australian United Trades and Labor Council and also with the Acting Secretary of the Storemen and Packers Union. I was informed last week that all bans by the Storemen and Packers Union in South Australia had been lifted and my understanding is that that is still the case. I am sure the Hon. Mr Gilfillan would have checked his information. He certainly would not have come into this Parliament (knowing the Hon. Mr Gilfillan) on the basis of a phone call and the opportunity to get some publicity and to bring a question into the Council that had not been thoroughly researched. I take it from the Hon. Mr Gilfillan that the bans on The Wholesaler are bans in defiance of a Federal Court injunction by the South Australian branch of the Storemen and Packers Union?

The Hon. I. Gilfillan: South Australian Nestles.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Never mind about South Australian Nestles. The Hon. Mr Gilfillan implied in his question that the South Australian branch of the Storemen and Packers Union had a ban on a delivery from Nestles

to The Wholesaler in defiance of the Federal Court's injunction.

The Hon. I. Gilfillan: Yes, that is my understanding.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The Hon. Mr Gilfillan now says that is as he understands it, which is a little different from the way he stated the question. What I would ask, and I think it is a pity one has to ask these things, is that, before Mr Gilfillan or any other honourable member comes into this Council with a question of this nature, they first of all check the facts.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: That would be too much to expect.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I think it is a perfectly reasonable request. However, the Hon. Mr Sumner says it is too much to ask.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: For them.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Oh, for them. He is probably correct, as always. However, my understanding is that the South Australian branch of the Storemen and Packers Union has lifted all bans on The Wholesaler in this State. That was the last information that I had. However, if the position has changed today, then I will certainly have my department investigate the honourable member's question and bring back a report. I would just go on to say the Hon. Mr Gilfillan had to get into some comment about the state of industrial relations in this State and the way this Government conducts its industrial relations. I am not sure whether that was taken as a compliment or whether the Hon. Mr Gilfillan was being facetious. I would just point out that the rate of industrial disputes in this State under this Government is extraordinarily low.

We have a very responsible trade union movement and employment group, which have frequent and very fruitful discussions with the Government. The results can be seen in the statistics. From memory, this State had 1.7 per cent of all industrial disputes in Australia last year, while it makes up 8.5 per cent of Australia's work force. I think that speaks for itself. Again, from memory, we lost 49 man days per 1 000 man hours worked, while the Australian average was about 244 man days lost through industrial disputation. We are doing it right when it comes to industrial relations.

I point out that the use of legislation, such as section 45D of the Trade Practices Act, which this Government and the Federal Government oppose, will only exacerbate industrial disputes. There has never been an industrial dispute solved through the use of punitive and penal powers against the trade union movement. In fact, those powers are quite counterproductive. That is being demonstrated at the moment in a dispute between the AMIEU, the National Farmers Federation and the owner of an abattoir in the Northern Territory. My understanding is that section 45D of the Trade Practices Act was used against the Storemen and Packers Union in that dispute. Apparently, there are still some problems with the wholesaler, so, again, section 45D has not solved that dispute.

Disputes will only be settled by bringing the parties together, letting them thrash out their differences and coming to some agreement. No industrial dispute has been solved through penalising the unions. The latter part of my reply has been in response to a comment made by the Hon. Mr Gilfillan. Once I have checked the Hon. Mr Gilfillan's statements to see whether or not they are factual, I will bring back a report.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I desire to ask a supplementary question. Does the Minister consider that the Storemen and Packers Union should comply with the Federal Court injunction—'Yes' or 'No'?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: We must first determine whether or not the union is complying with a Federal Court

injunction. In my reply, I stated (and I will not go through it again) that I had discussions with the Acting Secretary of the Storemen and Packers Union last week. I understand that all bans have been lifted in South Australia. If the Federal Court issued an injunction against the Storemen and Packers, obviously the union must have complied, but that is something for the union. I point out again that this Government does not support penal provisions against trade unions, because that is counterproductive. If they were effective, it may well be that we would have to reconsider the position. However, the fact remains that they are not effective.

Whether or not an injunction has been issued by the Federal Court and whether or not the Storemen and Packers Union is complying with it does not alter the fact that some problems remain in relation to that dispute. Obviously, if the injunction is being defied, it has not worked to solve the dispute. They never do and they never will. As I have said, I will check the facts behind the dispute again to see whether anything has changed since I last had discussions with the union, and bring back a report.

COST OF INFORMATION SYSTEM

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: Last year I asked the Minister a question about the Inpatient Separation Information System. I asked about problems with confidentiality which were subsequently rectified, according to a letter forwarded to me from the Minister. At that time I also asked the Minister some questions about the cost and I suggested a figure of \$400 000, to which the Minister replied, by way of quick interjection, to the effect, 'More like \$700 000'. Will the Minister inform the Council of the establishment and operating costs of the system to date—the estimated total establishment costs, if they are not all to hand yet, and the estimated annual operating costs? Will the Minister also state how much of the information that goes into the system is also forwarded to the Commonwealth Government and is, thereby, duplicated?

In his reply last year the Minister said that the system would be of great value for epidemiological research. Therefore, I ask the Minister for a specific list of the research projects in hand which are dependent on ISIS and, in particular, that part of the information thus stored which would not be available from Commonwealth databanks. Will the Minister state the expected clinical benefits which will accrue from this expenditure? Can the Minister assure the Council that this expenditure does have a clinical effect and is not, as Dr Neville Hicks put it some time ago on television, the administrative tail wagging the clinical dog? In other words, in view of the size of the expenditure and this administrative exercise, I think we are now entitled to have the clinical effect of this administrative exercise displayed to the Council.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: That was a very strange performance, but one becomes used to strange performances from the Hon. Dr Ritson. The honourable member sought leave of the Council to make a short explanation or statement on a question that he entitled 'Government waste'. The Hon. Dr Ritson gave no explanation whatsoever, but proceeded to ask a very lengthy series of quite detailed questions about ISIS. Obviously, if he were genuinely concerned to obtain that information expeditiously, the appropriate approach for the Hon. Dr Ritson would have been to place those many questions on notice.

Clearly, the only way I can provide adequate answers is to take the questions on notice and bring back a reply as soon as I reasonably can. However, I will make one observation with regard to the unfair and totally unsubstantiated inference of Government waste, presumably in the computing area. Over the years this has been a relatively contentious issue. It is new ground. The whole question of health and hospital computing has the potential to be used not only as a management tool but in very many ways for and to the advantage of patients.

In those circumstances, it is not always possible with a particular computing system to quantify in advance in strict money terms the exact advantage that will accrue. However, to ensure that we were in fairly good shape in this vexed area, a few months ago I inquired about who was the expert in Australia on health and hospital computing, and I was told that, beyond doubt, the expert was Dr Cliff Bellamy of Monash University. I subsequently arranged for the Health Commission to bring Dr Bellamy to South Australia on a consultancy basis, and he undertook a quite extensive study of hospital computing in this State. That study is a public document and is available to Dr Ritson or anyone else. It was released to the press and reported in one of the daily newspapers (I do not recall which of the two it was) a few weeks ago. Generally, Dr Bellamy's findings were, in many cases, strongly supportive of the computer program being conducted and developed in the South Australian health system.

As I said, the questions asked by the honourable member should more appropriately have been placed on notice. However, I will take them in that way and bring back replies as soon as they are available.

COMMUNITY SERVICES PAMPHLET

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Community Welfare, a question about a pamphlet.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: In today's mail I received several copies of a pamphlet produced jointly by the South Australian Department for Community Welfare and the Commonwealth Department of Social Security. I imagine that other members received copies of this excellent little pamphlet, which is entitled 'Help for people on low incomes and pensions in South Australia, 1985'.

In very simple, colourful style, with appropriate illustrations, the booklet provides advice on the help that is available to people regarding accommodation, rent relief and mortgage assistance; it outlines what concession cards are available, the qualifications for each concession card and the uses that can be made of them. There is information on Commonwealth and State educational assistance schemes; on how one can obtain emergency help in times of crisis; on employment and self employment schemes; on where one can obtain financial advice; on health facilities available for people on low incomes; and on how one can obtain information on various household bills and the concessions available for electricity and gas charges, rates, telephone charges, veterinary fees, and car registration and licence fees. It provides legal aid information in relation to the Family Court; it gives information on recreation; on various support groups and assistance that is available for specific groups, such as Aborigines, migrant women, youth, the unemployed, the aged, the disabled, and so on; and it gives information on matters relating to transport.

This is an excellent pamphlet, and I am sure that all members would want to join me in congratulating the two

departments, one State and one Federal, that have produced this mine of helpful information.

My questions relate to my desire to see this pamphlet disseminated as widely as possible so that the many people who could benefit from perusing it obtain a copy. Will the Minister say how many copies of this pamphlet have been produced? Will he suggest to the Department of Social Security that every pensioner and beneficiary in this State be sent a copy of this document? I would also be grateful for any other information about how this pamphlet is being distributed so that it reaches the many people on low incomes who could benefit so much from reading it.

The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL: I will be very pleased to take those questions to the Minister of Community Welfare and to ensure that they are answered fully, comprehensively and expeditiously. The matters raised are of real concern to a significant percentage of our community. I thank the honourable member for her questions.

TAXI PERMITS

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Tourism a question about taxi driver permits.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: As the Minister will appreciate, Adelaide is experiencing a shortage of taxi drivers at present. It is predicted that this problem will become acute with the influx of tourists for the Grand Prix. In response to this problem, the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board announced yesterday that it would implement a system of temporary, 90-day permits.

Apparently, the route and location examination for such a permit will be easier than the normal test. While I have some misgivings and reservations about endorsing an easier test, my principal concern arises from the fact that taxi drivers are often asked for advice on the city's tourist locations and activities because they are generally the first people to deal with tourists visiting Adelaide. However, taxi drivers fail to appreciate the importance of tourism and their role in promoting the industry. The way in which they react and the service they offer can colour a visitor's impression of Adelaide and South Australia. My questions to the Minister are as follows:

1. Will the Minister, in co-operation with the Minister of Transport and the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board, seek to ensure that the examination for the temporary taxi permit incorporates an appreciation on the part of the taxi driver of his or her important role in promoting tourism in South Australia?

2. As a longer term measure, will the Minister, again with the co-operation of the Minister of Transport and the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board, and possibly the Visitors Convention Bureau, seek to implement courses, seminars and the like to educate taxi drivers and owners on their important role in the tourism industry?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I thank the honourable member for her question. I have been taking an interest in this subject over a long period—certainly before I became Minister of Tourism and particularly during the period in which I chaired the Select Committee that inquired into the taxi cab industry in South Australia.

I am very pleased that the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board has decided, as was announced yesterday, to issue temporary permits, because for quite some time there have been problems in the industry in terms of the number of drivers who might be available during peak periods, and the Grand Prix period will be one of those peak times.

I share the honourable member's concern about the short term nature of the course that drivers will undertake, but I cannot really see that we can overcome that. We must ensure that the course is as comprehensive as possible and that the people who are granted temporary permits have sufficient knowledge of Adelaide and tourist destinations to enable them to help the public and visitors who use their services.

In relation to long-term measures, the honourable member may be aware that the Select Committee that inquired into the taxi industry in South Australia recommended that there be, as part of the taxi drivers course, a significant tourism component. I subscribe to that view and have raised that matter with the Minister of Transport. I hope that those parts of the Select Committee's report that deal with this important question of taxi driver knowledge of tourism matters in South Australia will be implemented. I understand that the Select Committee's recommendations have been referred to a task force within the Department of Transport for evaluation.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Are people involved with tourism represented on that task force?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I cannot answer that question because I do not know.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It would be worth while.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: Yes. I cannot answer that question, but I understand that the report of the task force will be in the hands of the Minister of Transport before much longer. I hope that it has looked favourably upon the taxi cab industry Select Committee's recommendations with respect to tourism.

VICTOR HARBOR RAILWAY LINE

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Tourism a question about the Victor Harbor railway line.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: In 1978 the Railway Transfer Agreement came into effect whereby Australian National, a Federal statutory authority, took over country railways in South Australia. This, of course, included the line running from Mount Barker through Goolwa to Victor Harbor. The Goolwa to Victor Harbor line is the oldest railway line in South Australia. It is generally agreed that the future of this line no longer rests solely with Australian National, whose management in recent years has tried heroically to stem a financial haemorrhage.

The South Australian Government has been dithering with this issue of the Victor Harbor railway line for well over a year, having commissioned a report nine months ago. The Premier has been sitting on that report for three months and refuses to release it. We saw recently in the press that, according to the Premier, this was because of its technical nature and because there were other reports that disagreed with it.

There are many interested parties who argue that, with some vision, imagination, Government, and possibly private sector, money, and voluntary support, this historic and scenic railway would be an exciting attraction to tourists from South Australia, interstate and overseas. That would include many steamtrain buffs. There are several examples of railway lines around Australia such as Kuranda in Queensland which have demonstrated the economic viability of tourist railway lines.

Although the Grand Prix to be run in November and our sesquicentenary festivities in 1986 will attract tens of thousands of visitors into South Australia, the State Government continues to procrastinate about the operation of the line, which is quite clearly a matter of frustration and disap-

pointment to voluntary groups such as SAVRAIL, which have fought hard to retain the line. My questions are as follows:

1. What are the recommendations of this mysterious report?

2. When will the Government release it?

3. What undertakings, if any, has the Minister of Tourism given to interested parties that the Victor Harbor railway line will not be lost as a result of State and Federal Government neglect of this State's tourism needs?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: The honourable member says that the Government has procrastinated on this issue. I think that he simplifies enormously the issues that are involved here. He knows, as well as every other member in this place, that it is not just a simple matter of the Government deciding to keep open the Victor Harbor line because it is a good thing or because it will be useful for tourism purposes. I wholeheartedly agree with him that it would be highly desirable to keep it open to allow steam trains to use that piece of track because it is, and would continue to be, a highly attractive tourism proposition.

The fact of the matter is that to make the Victor Harbor railway track suitable for the sort of use envisaged by the Steamranger people would cost an enormous sum of money. The honourable member knows as well as anyone in this place that the sums of money that are required to restore the track would put an enormous strain on the State Government's Budget. I understand that my predecessor and the Premier have made representations to the Federal Government seeking financial assistance to keep the Victor Harbor railway line open.

I have not seen a copy of the report to which the honourable member refers, so I cannot tell honourable members what recommendations appear in it. However, I will make further inquiries about this matter in order to ascertain what recommendations are in the report and what guarantees, if any, were given to the people who run the Steamranger company and bring back a report.

ELECTRICITY SURCHARGE

The Hon. PETER DUNN: I move:

That in the opinion of the Council the Government should immediately abolish the 10 per cent surcharge which applies to certain parts of the State and, further, that the Council call on the Government to institute an electricity pricing policy in which all citizens of South Australia are charged on the same basis, and that the Council condemn the Government for its failure to implement a fair and equitable system of charging electricity in country areas.

The Liberal Party has recently stated its position in relation to the 10 per cent electricity surcharge which applies to certain parts of the State. That position is that the next Liberal Government will abolish the 10 per cent Electricity Trust surcharge that currently applies to some areas of Eyre Peninsula and other areas in this State. For too long the Bannon Government has ignored the additional cost burdens imposed on people living in country areas, and this 10 per cent surcharge is applied in a manner that creates confusion and concern among the residents of Eyre Peninsula and people in other isolated parts of South Australia.

There are cases where neighbours are paying different rates for their electricity because one was connected by the Electricity Trust and the other by a local council which purchased electricity from the Trust and sold it to the consumer. This anomaly in charging does not encourage the establishment of industry with its associated employment opportunities in these areas. The Bannon Government

has consistently ignored people in country areas and has refused to reduce the burden of this surcharge on the people of Eyre Peninsula. A Liberal Government will take action to ensure that this 10 per cent surcharge is abolished. I have discussed this matter in detail previously and do not wish to repeat my remarks *ad nauseam* today.

However, it must be noted that this 10 per cent surcharge affects a very small section of the community and does not involve an enormous amount of money. Furthermore, it is a matter of principle. Electricity is today considered to be a fundamental necessity. Who in this day and age could exist without power? Who would live in this community without electricity? Who would go back to kerosene refrigerators or to no air conditioning? The mind boggles. Electricity is a necessity, whether one lives in the metropolitan area or in the northern most sections of the State.

This motion does not ask for anything more than is already supplied in relation to transport, water rates and perhaps the arts. We are asking that this anomaly be removed—that the 10 per cent surcharge paid by a small section of the community on Eyre Peninsula be abolished. I now refer to a report relating to a letter from Mr Colin Chilman, Secretary of the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association, which adequately sums up the position as people in the area see it. The report states:

Mr Chilman said the affected district council areas, which were only on Eyre Peninsula, had not been connected into the State grid supplied by the Electricity Trust of South Australia when ETSA was extended to country districts.

'A situation evolved whereby, while most of the State enjoyed the efficiency of electrically-operated facilities and equipment, communities in these more isolated areas were still coping with kerosene lighting and refrigeration,' he explained.

Mr Chilman said that in the 1960s and 1970s local government took the initiative offered by the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act, 1950, to borrow funds to reticulate electricity to their communities.

'To accomplish this, the various district councils constructed distribution networks throughout their districts, and now purchase electricity from ETSA for resale to their communities,' he said.

As heritage to this initiative, these communities were required by Government policy to pay 10 per cent more for their electricity than their fellow South Australians. Mr Chilman said other areas of similar population density were served by ETSA and benefited by trust pricing arrangements.

'Had local government not been forced to take the initiative to provide for their communities, many would now be connected to an extended trust scheme and enjoying trust pricing,' he said.

He said the present situation gave rise to a number of anomalies, such as people divided by a council boundary paying 10 per cent more than their neighbour. He also pointed to Cleve, from where the power lines travelled a further 140 kilometres to serve Port Lincoln, but where consumers paid 10 per cent more for electricity than at Port Lincoln, despite the additional capital and maintenance costs associated with the additional line.

'The establishment of industry is discouraged by higher electricity costs in council-served areas. Hence, the remoteness of these areas is not relieved by the additional services which would follow a population increase associated with industrial expansion,' he said.

Mr Chilman said he understood that an additional income of \$390 000 to ETSA would be sufficient to eliminate the 10 per cent surcharge applied to affected consumers. His association suggested the surcharge be abolished, and the amount be recouped through an adjusting increase in electricity charges to all trust consumers in the State.

Based on trust figures for the financial year ending 30 June 1983, with electricity sales of \$417 million to 575 300 consumers, it would cost each consumer only 68 cents per annum to bring about equalisation.

'The increase proposed is insignificant when compared with the increases applied to all State consumers by the trust during the 18 month period, from 1 May 1982 to 1 November 1983, when rises totalled 39.42 per cent,' Mr Chilman said.

He said the pricing structure adopted by other public utilities acknowledged and accepted the humane policy 'that the burden of isolation must be borne by all'.

That article clearly illustrates the problem that has arisen in these areas. As the Government has seen fit to pay back, for one year only, some \$11 million, I believe that it is only

just and fair that it abolish the 10 per cent surcharge applied to these specific consumers, so that all consumers pay a similar amount.

I will demonstrate how much a small business pays in an area such as Marla Bore near the Northern Territory border. Power is supplied by a diesel electricity generating unit to one motel in the area. These figures are 18 months old, and one should remember that electricity charges have increased since then. For 34 days to 1 February 1983, the Marla Bore Trading Company (or the Marla Bore motel) had a power bill of \$3 926, and for 28 days during the following month the power bill was \$5 686. With power bills such as this, how can a small business in such an area exist? Naturally, there is a great need for refrigeration, and these figures were taken during the hot summer period. Had this company been operating in the metropolitan area or paying the normal electricity tariff, the figure would have been not \$5 686, as was the case for the month of February, but \$2 700. So, there is an enormous disparity in relation to charges. To bring these electricity charges back to the city tariff will give these people encouragement and heart to develop a facility that we can all use when we travel to the north, and many of us at some stage will do so.

There is a very good case for the abolition of this surcharge. I cited only one case, but there are many others. Even so, a 10 per cent extra surcharge on Eyre Peninsula is very discriminatory, as it applies only to five district councils, and the remainder are able to charge the ETSA tariff. That clearly demonstrates the disparity that applies. I repeat my call on the Government in relation to the 10 per cent surcharge. The arguments have been canvassed over a long and protracted period of time not only by myself but also by Mr Gunn and, in particular, by the Hon. Mr Whyte, who has fought this matter for years now. We have all endeavoured to lower the tariff. The Hon. Mr Whyte has pushed this barrow for a long time.

It is high time, with electricity charges reaching their present level, that these people be relieved of the burden. There has been a 10 per cent surcharge on Eyre Peninsula for close to 14 years. I should have thought that the money recouped would have paid for the extra costs of running the distribution lines to the area.

I cannot see that it is serving any further purpose other than an extra tax and burden and a revenue-raising mechanism on those particular people who pay very high amounts to live in that area. It is not as though they live off social benefits or off the Government. They in fact produce a great deal of wealth for the community, and I believe it is time that that burden was relieved.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY secured the adjournment of the debate.

DISPOSAL OF HUMAN REMAINS

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

1. That a Select Committee of the Legislative Council be appointed to inquire into and report upon the disposal of human remains in South Australia and in particular to consider the recommendations of a report entitled 'Disposal of Human Remains in South Australia';
2. That in the event of a Select Committee being appointed, it consist of four members and the quorum of members necessary to be present at all meetings of the committee be fixed at three members and that Standing Order No. 389 be so far suspended as to enable the Chairman of the Select Committee to have a deliberative vote only;
3. That this Council permit the Select Committee to authorise the disclosure or publication as it thinks fit of any evidence presented to the Committee prior to such evidence being reported to the Council.

In 1983 I established a committee to examine and assess legislation relating to the disposal of human remains in South Australia. This action was taken after correspondence had been received from the State Coroner expressing concern about the controls applicable to human remains being brought in from interstate and overseas. Correspondence had also been received from the Australian Funeral Directors Association Incorporated, which was requesting a complete overhaul of the Cremation Act and regulations. There had also been concern expressed publicly about the controls applicable to the disposal of human remains and in particular with respect to the transportation of human remains.

The committee was comprised of representatives from my department, the Centennial Park Cemetery Trust, the State Coroner's Office, the Enfield Cemetery Trust, the South Australian Funeral Directors Association, the South Australian Health Commission, the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, the Cemeteries Association and the Department of Local Government.

The committee examined and assessed all relevant legislation and presented a report to the Government. As a result of its investigations, the committee observed that there is a lack of co-ordination and overseeing of legislative and administrative controls in the disposal of human remains. The committee discussed proposals to improve co-ordination and controls with respect to the existing legislation and also examined other initiatives.

The committee has made a number of recommendations to overcome the problems that it has observed. However, a number of these recommendations require further investigation. In particular, the committee has made recommendations with regard to the reuse and redevelopment of cemeteries. This is one area in which the public will be particularly concerned and in fact have already expressed their concern about that possibility. The report is a complete review of the disposal of human remains. It provides recommendations in the following areas:

1. The certification of death and documentation of it for disposal;
2. Storage, transportation and preparation of human remains;
3. Cemetery and crematorium management;
4. Burial outside cemeteries;
5. Review of legislation; and
6. Advisory Board.

The Government considers that as there are recommendations that require further investigation and upon which the public ought to be given the opportunity to comment, a Select Committee should be formed to consider the recommendations of the report and to make its own inquiries into this topic. I seek leave to table a copy of the report, which can form a basis for the Select Committee's deliberations.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I would point out that the Government does not have a concluded view of the recommendations of the report at this stage.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General) brought up the following report of the Committee appointed to prepare the draft Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor's speech:

1. We, the members of the Legislative Council, thank Your Excellency for the speech with which you have been pleased to open Parliament.

2. We assure Your Excellency that we will give our best attention to all matters placed before us.

3. We earnestly join in Your Excellency's prayer for the divine blessing on the proceedings of the session.

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: I move:

That the Address in Reply as read be adopted.

The first thing I would like to do is to congratulate the Government on its very excellent performance since being elected to office. Certainly not all the problems have been solved but the decline of the early 1980s has been arrested and again this State is performing as well as people have come to expect.

Mr Hunkin, CMG, who died during the last 12 months, was unknown to me, but I certainly express my sympathy to his family. However, Mr Clark was very well known to me. I knew him for all his time in Parliament and I always found him considerate and helpful. More importantly, although he had a safe seat, he went to extraordinary lengths to help his constituents. Although he had neither car nor driver's licence, he would go out of his way to visit people who had a problem and were unable to get to him. He was a member of the Parliament in the days before electoral offices were provided by the State, but he built his own office where people could more conveniently visit him. He was very popular in the district and worked always in its best interests and I can certainly concur with the remarks of His Excellency in expressing deepest sympathy to his family. I would also like to express my congratulations to our elevated colleague, Barbara Wiese, on her new ministerial duties and I also express good wishes to Frank Blevins, who has been given a heavier load to bear and will leave this Council at the end of this Parliament and transfer to the other House. I hope he has not taken on more duties than are good for his health.

The first matter I wish to speak on today relates to the Auditor-General's Report, which made pointed reference to what the Auditor-General considered were the failings and ineptitude of the Public Works Standing Committee. I am not aware why he reported as unfavourably as he did, but in the course of this speech I will point out some of the grave errors made by him. Firstly, I want to tell honourable members something about the Public Works Committee. My explanation will be brief.

The Committee consists of two members from the Government and two from the Opposition in the Assembly and one from the Government and one from the Opposition in the Legislative Council. The Government of the day appoints the Chairman and the term of office for each member is five years. The information coming to the Committee is privy to the Committee until a report is made to the Parliament. Lately, even then there has been an instance or two where we have had to seek the assistance of the President and the Speaker to limit access to Yatala Labour Prison reports for security reasons.

I have been on the Committee for about 10 years and in all that time we have been able to reach agreement without any political grandstanding. It is only the most simple and straightforward of projects that are recommended without findings. We seek at all times to point out the favourable aspects as well as the possible pitfalls in all projects and I find it difficult to believe that any witness appearing before us is not fully examined. I must add that all witnesses are not frank; some far from it. Some departmental heads have been reluctant to have their proposals examined by politicians. Some have even sent more junior officers along not well versed on the project. I remember one occasion when this happened; Reg Groth was the Chairman.

He closed the hearing and the next time we met to deal with that matter the right people were there as witnesses. The Public Works Standing Committee meets more often than any other parliamentary Committee in or out of parliamentary session. No project is approved without site inspection. There are times when we have quorum difficulties because a number of our members have marginal electorates or hold shadow Ministry portfolios. These responsibilities make it particularly difficult when the committee must travel on country work.

I have already said that I have been a member of the Public Works Committee for 10 years. Until recently, I could not recall an occasion when documents were leaked. Because of a recent leakage, members opposite, in feigned surprise at the escalating cost of a project, demanded that the Auditor-General examine that matter. That occurred, as we all know, and the Auditor-General made an adverse report about selective activities of the Public Works Committee. I am not objecting to an adverse report, if it is factual. However, I believe the case to be otherwise, and I must say that it came as a great surprise to me to have what I always considered to be the watchdog of wasteful Government expenditure passing the buck.

I now raise other points in relation to the Auditor-General's Report. I will refer to extracts from the general reports of the committee over the past 12 years. First, I refer to 1971-72, when the late Mr Clark was Chairman. In part, the committee reported that it was perturbed that some public works were not being completed in accordance with the evidence presented to it during its inquiries. The report continues:

Departments have been requested to report to the Committee on public works investigated by it during the past three years and to indicate whether the works are being completed in accordance with the estimate or to submit explanations where major variations have occurred. As soon as this information is to hand the Committee will report accordingly.

In 1972-73 the report states:

Last year the Committee expressed concern in regard to evidence and cost estimates and it is still anxious to know whether public works are being completed in accordance with the evidence presented to it during its inquiries. It is believed that the inquiries of the newly appointed Public Accounts Committee will henceforth probably ensure that the cost estimates recommended are adhered to or, if not, they will be reported on by that Committee.

The 1974-75 report states:

The Committee places considerable weight on expert evidence received from departmental witnesses and consultants when arriving at a decision in regard to a public work. Whilst most Government departments construct their particular public works at a cost in keeping with the evidence submitted to the Committee after making appropriate adjustment for cost escalation, it has come to the attention of the Committee that some public works have incorporated major modifications involving substantial increases in expenditure. Other public works, whilst not involving modifications to the initial proposals, have involved costs which bear little relationship to the original estimates presented to the Governor, to Cabinet and to the Committee. These variations have the effect of the Government being unable to maintain the program it has set itself. This matter has been referred to on several previous occasions in both periodical and annual reports but the situation has not improved.

In 1980-81, the Committee was under the Chairmanship of Mr Russack. The report for that year states:

Earlier general reports have described matters in detail which have caused concern to the Committee. The matters previously reported upon and still requiring remedial action are as follows: modifications to works; total cost of a project; works partly financed by the Government; progress of public works; and statutory authorities and guarantees. (It is coincidental that in this report the Committee drew attention to 12 major public works which had serious over-runs running into millions of dollars each.)

The 1983-84 report is rather lengthy. Although I am in possession of the full report, I will refer only to certain aspects, as follows:

Earlier general reports have described matters in detail which have caused concern to the Committee . . . It is necessary for the Committee to again refer to the matters which it considers require remedial action, and they are as follows:

- Definition of a public work.
- Progress of and modifications to public works.
- Total costs of a project.
- Works partly financed by the Government.
- Statutory authorities and guarantees.

Quite a number of paragraphs deal with the definition of 'public work' and the progress and modification of public works. There is also a lengthy paragraph on the total cost of a project. Works partly financed by the Government take up a lengthy paragraph which states, in part:

That situation has been rectified as regards Government departments which are now obliged to describe any project in excess of \$500 000 to the Committee prior to the controlling Minister seeking appropriation from Parliament, but in recent years there has been the trend of the Commonwealth and local governments working in co-operation on major projects or even the State Government working in co-operation with a statutory authority or private body.

Many of these projects were never brought before the Committee. I will read the paragraph dealing with statutory authorities and guarantees in full, as follows:

Statutory bodies do not come under the ambit of the Committee if they do not require additional appropriation from Parliament or if there is a specific exclusion. As at June 1983 (the latest figure available to the Committee) the outstanding liability of statutory bodies on which debt charges were payable to the State amounted to \$1 068 000 000. This represents an increase of about \$29 000 000 during the preceding 12 months. It is a major sum which did not require informed appropriation from Parliament but, at the same time, a major contingent liability for the Government is created. When one considers that the total of public works examined by the Committee during the present 12 months amounted to about \$85 000 000, it gives an indication of the relevant magnitude of Government expenditure being channelled through statutory authorities. The same type of development caused concern to the Commonwealth Public Works Standing Committee and the Commonwealth Parliament passed legislation in 1982 which, among other things, was aimed at bringing statutory authorities under the jurisdiction of that Committee. It is realised that some statutory authorities do submit projects to the Committee as a matter of courtesy but, here again, it is considered that State legislation should be amended to bring the activities of statutory authorities under the surveillance of the Public Works Standing Committee in this State for their expenditure on major public works similar to that which has already occurred with the Commonwealth legislation.

I now turn to specific matters raised in the Auditor-General's Report dated 16 May 1985. It comprises his comments, but they have to be read in conjunction with an undated document entitled 'Report on Capital Works Projects Recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works' which is no doubt the report to the Treasurer pursuant to section 12 of the Audit Act. This further report has to be read in conjunction with the three appendices on public works which are also undated and which are as follows: State Aquatic Centre, Port Augusta Netball Association (Relocation); and Lyell McEwin Community Health Services Redevelopment (Stage I).

The Auditor-General's Report raised four issues, the first being the difficulties of the committee in discharging its responsibilities unless: (a) complete and reliable information is supplied, and (b) the committee is able to satisfy itself that this is so.

The committee has been reporting this matter to Parliament for years and asking that heads of departments be informed of the requirements of the committee in regard to these matters. The other three issues of the four raised dealt with the State Aquatic Centre and were as follows:

The decision to proceed with the State Aquatic Centre was based on an inadequate consultant's estimate and an estimated cost increase of \$2 100 000 (41 per cent) did not contain explanations, nor an assurance that the Adelaide Swimming Centre was the most appropriate option.

The committee had been told of the overrun on expenditure and sought reasons for the variations in the cost of the project. The matter has not been formally referred to the committee for investigation and report in accordance with its enabling legislation.

The third matter raised by the Auditor-General was that the assessment of annual operating costs made no provision for debt servicing costs which are expected to exceed \$500 000 a year. No information on these matters is contained in the report of the committee to Parliament, the Auditor-General claims, but that claim is without foundation. It is not correct. The committee report (P.P. No. 162A/1983) states:

The estimated State contribution of \$2 550 000 (after making allowance for normal cost escalations) will ultimately become a charge against the consolidated revenue of the State.

That statement is quite unequivocal and blunt—that the whole State contribution will have to be met from consolidated revenue. Naturally, as the cost has increased substantially, the charge against consolidated revenue will have to increase accordingly.

The fourth point was that the State Government has made a significant capital contribution to an asset that it does not own or control and, if patronage improves, the effect of the Government guarantee will preclude it from getting any benefit towards some part of the debt servicing costs. We know that the swimming centre belongs to the Adelaide City Council—a local governing body—and perhaps to a lesser degree to the State, but its purpose is to serve the people.

At the hearings the concern was more that the Adelaide City Council was not prepared to be committed to extra expenditure over and above the present running costs of the swimming centre when the State Aquatic Centre is established rather than that body being expected to make some contribution to amortisation charges. A joint use scheme with the council is not a new operation.

I referred earlier to the fact that the Commonwealth joins the State and local government bodies in certain projects, and the State and local government bodies and, to some extent, private enterprise co-operate in other matters.

Two procedural matters were referred to, one being the sketch plan approach. It was considered a matter of concern, because variations might occur and because of the necessity to redefine the meaning of a public work because of the different modes of finance that have developed over the years since the committee was first established. I will deal with the second matter first. The fact is that if a project involves the State Government in an expenditure of \$500 000 or more, it is the committee's strong view that, irrespective of where the balance of the cost comes from, and irrespective of whether the debt is postponed by some lease-back arrangement or otherwise, the project should be investigated and reported on by the committee. These matters have essentially been covered in numerous periodical and annual reports.

It may take up to 12 months to complete documentation and working drawings, and, with the committee's concurrence, this material is prepared after the committee's recommendations are presented to facilitate the flow of public works. The Government is not committed to the plan until the first major contract is let. Section 3 of the Public Works Standing Committee Act provides that any additions to a public work constitutes a public work and, therefore, are required to be referred to the committee. Thus, any additions to a public work can be detected at the point of tender or contract when audit examination of tenders is carried out. The Committee has sought re-referral of major variations and overruns for years, as substantiated by numerous

published reports referred to as well as correspondence on file.

I concur, as does the committee, with the general matters raised in the concluding paragraphs of the report by the Auditor-General, especially the last, which states:

Resolution of the issues contained in the report requires the co-operation and support of Parliament and firm action by the Government.

Having said all those things, my last word on this matter is that, when the Public Works Standing Committee has delivered its report to Parliament on the matter before it, there is still the procedure of calling tenders and, before the job is contracted for, the tendered price goes under the scrutiny of the Treasury and the Auditor-General.

Another matter I would like to raise is gambling. It is a subject that blows hot and cold in the community and it depends entirely on which particular phase one is talking about. There was a time when any method of gambling was restricted and many ways of gambling totally prohibited, and anyone caught breaking or infringing those laws was severely penalised.

Over the past 20 years there have been major changes in both Government and public attitudes. One can easily place a bet on horses or dogs at the nearest TAB, registered bookmaker, or even the SP bookie. One can buy lottery tickets, Lotto tickets, and so on, in at least one venue in every suburb and town throughout the State. One can play bingo at any number of licensed venues almost any day or night of the week. All clubs and pubs and any number of stalls and street vendors flog off bingo-style tickets. I think everyone knows the style of ticket I am talking about—when peeling or rubbing is needed to reveal the letters or numbers.

We have the stock exchange where large fortunes are won and lost, and people with money to invest can buy debentures and lend money—to all sorts of enterprises, expecting some return via a large interest rate. From these there is a possibility of some return from the money outlaid. In most recent times we have had the introduction of amusement parlour machines, designed especially for the young, and, as far as I am aware, there is no payout. Those machines, I believe, are found in the oddest of places. It seems there are dollars to be made from the young by installing them. Every small business operator has jumped on to the band wagon.

I am not casting any blame or attempting to moralise in any way, but I have noted that people who are opposed to the various methods of gambling have not shown any opposition to the lucrative returns to the vendors and operators of amusement machines. These machines are a form of gambling, and the young are encouraged to use them.

Our most recent and newest form of gambling will take place in our soon to be completed casino at the Adelaide Railway Station. I want to make clear that I am not opposed to gambling, and I have been guilty of the odd flutter over the years. In any case, if that is what people need for their amusement and recreation, or if the businessman needs to sell shares in the hope of establishing a successful business, or even the consumer who has to borrow money from a credit provider, then there is no justifiable reason to curtail that activity if it is sensibly used.

As far as I can see, the only form of gambling forbidden in this State is the use of poker machines. There was a time when I was opposed to them, but my attitude has changed. I cannot see the difference in gambling on these machines as against going to every local race meeting or dog meeting, or sitting in a hotel for hours buying bingo tickets or even in the TAB.

It is just a different form, which will probably attract a different patron. It may even attract some patrons away

from the already recognised forms of gambling, but at least it gives them freedom of choice.

I believe that there would have to be very strict controls. I see them operating only in licensed clubs and the casino. In no way should hotels, delis, and so on, be able to install them. Generally speaking, the requirement for obtaining a licence to operate poker machines should be for community club profit, not for the profit of private enterprise.

In an article by Tim Parker in the *Sunday Mail* of 15 May 1983, claiming to have had an interview with a Mr McMerrick, he states that McMerrick had said that there were 10 000 private poker machines in South Australia. I know of only two, and, like the banned film or video, they are used in special sessions to raise funds for sporting bodies. I am assuming that, because of the large numbers of poker machines installed in the parts of Australia where they are legal and the plush clubs in which they are sited, there must be large profits involved in their use and that that money is spent creating employment. A report in the *Sunday Mail* of 18 March 1984, under the heading 'Bandit boom', states:

Millions of South Australian dollars are being gambled away on one-arm bandits over the border in New South Wales.

Busloads of South Australians daily venture to Wentworth and Coomealla to tackle the 'pokies'.

Tour operators charge \$20 for the 800 km round trip—

I believe that nowadays it costs \$25—

and are being swamped with inquiries from have-money-will-travel South Australians.

About 200 travel away each day for a gambling spree on the poker machines, banned in South Australia.

On average, each traveller spends \$50—contributing millions of dollars a year to New South Wales coffers.

Adelaide based Acacia Travel and Victorian firm Holiday-makers each runs two buses a day. There are also weekend specials.

The pokie expresses started rolling out of Adelaide five months ago. They hardly need promoting.

Mr David Brunton, manager of the Victorian Government Travel Centre which handles bookings for Holidaymakers said there was hardly a vacancy between now and November.

The majority who book are pensioners, but there is a smattering of housewives, holidaying couples and even overseas visitors bidding to 'get rich quick'.

The trips leave Adelaide at 7 a.m. and return at 11 p.m. Travellers spend four hours at the pokies.

Another article appeared in the press under the heading 'South Australian pokie punters spend nearly \$1 million', on 7 May 1984, as follows:

South Australian gamblers have spent nearly \$1 million on 'the pokies' in two interstate clubs in the past six months.

Two Adelaide firms which operate daily bus services to the gaming clubs in New South Wales—the Wentworth and Districts Services Club and the Coomealla Memorial Club at Dareton, near Wentworth—have carried more than 18 000 punters to the pokie paradise in New South Wales.

The manager of Acacia Travel Pty Ltd, Mrs P.J. Patton, estimated that people going over the border to play the pokies, which are illegal in South Australia, spent an average of \$50 each trip—a total of \$900 000 from the 18 000 visitors to the Wentworth and Dareton clubs in the past six months . . .

Tours were booked months in advance and Acacia's daily service was heavily booked.

The manager of Victour, Mr D. Brunton, which operates through the Mildura-based coach company Holidaymaker, said yesterday the service's weekend trips had been booked out until Christmas.

The *Advertiser* of 26 November 1984 published a financial report of the clubs involved in these daily excursions of South Australian people to these clubs, which states:

The Wentworth District Services Club has confirmed a profit of \$867 000 compared with a profit of \$480 000 in 1983.

In the annual report of the Coomealla Club at nearby Dareton, the profit figure rose to a record \$339 000.

At Wentworth the 128 poker machines turned over \$2.82 million in 12 months and bar sales increased by \$86 000 to nearly \$865 000 for the year.

I believe that there are other trips to Broken Hill of an overnight nature and that in all cases the very small return

fare gets the traveller all meals, a boat trip on the Murray River, if in the Wentworth area, and motel accommodation in Broken Hill. New South Wales border clubs do very well from South Australia, and I am sure that those clubs bordering Queensland and Victoria fare equally well. An article in the *Sunday Mail* of 23 June 1985, only a few weeks back, states that more than 50 per cent of South Australians favour legalising poker machines, according to Liberal MP Mr Heini Becker. However, what I really found of interest was another article alongside the one referring to Mr Becker entitled 'None in Queensland Casinos'—poker machines—as follows:

Jupiters, Queensland's first casino now nearing completion on the Gold Coast, will not have poker machines.

Neither will Townsville's Breakwater Casino which is due for completion next June.

However, Jupiters' operators are installing 'hundreds' of video gaming machines.

The machines are the video equivalents of such table games as blackjack, roulette, baccarat, craps and keno.

While they are not strictly poker machines, the video gaming machines do involve cash payouts.

The Queensland Government views the games as a way of allowing inexperienced gamblers to test their skills before playing at gaming tables.

Jupiters Casino public relations director, Ms Barbara Harper, said the machines would be installed in a set area of the two floor casino.

Jupiters Casino is part of the \$175 million Conrad International Hotel which is due for completion in late November-early December.

I do not doubt for a moment that very tough controls will be needed, for, like most gambling pursuits, there is room for large scale criminality. The report of the Victorian inquiry into poker machines, which is a fairly hefty one (and Victorians did not accept the need for poker machines in their State), by Murray Wilcox, QC, is worth a good look. I do not think that we should be too hasty and rush into such a venture, but a totally controlled trial at the new casino may be a worthwhile exercise.

This is the last time that I will have the opportunity to speak in a debate such as this. In any case, I consider it a somewhat futile gesture in a system that uses members of Parliament as a shield or, more appropriately, as scapegoats for all the nonsense and mischief that can be manufactured. When I came into this place I had no idea what to expect. I was not pushed in, make no mistake. Once I had decided that this was what I wanted, I fought every inch of the way to get here. I spent years out door knocking in the district of Midland, putting people on the Legislative Council roll. As a result, Brian Chatterton and I won our seats in this place by a handsome majority. I believe that the ALP expected victory, but the Liberals were shocked and had no hesitation in indicating that. I got many a laugh out of the situation we created. The Legislative Council had always been a safe repository of honourable gentlemen, and what had they got this time—a cat, or two cats, amongst the pigeons—I beg your pardon, honourable gentlemen.

Since the advent of the ALP and the five electorates of four members each, the ALP has managed to hold Central No. 1, and the other electorates were entirely Liberal, or whatever name they were masquerading under from time to time. At last Midland was broken down and two ALP members were elected. That meant another two Labor members would be elected at the next election.

The Hon. John Cornwall was selected very early as one of the candidates, and the Hon. Frank Blevins and his partner had made the going difficult in the seat of Northern. This set of circumstances and the skill and determination of Don Dunstan and the Government at the time, saw changes in the electoral system which gave the people of South Australia for the first time the opportunity to elect members favoured by the majority of South Australians.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: We used to sit over there.

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: You did not hurt the seats much. One of the most humorous interludes took place in our own Caucus. When we were suitably escorted into our first meeting of Caucus and had selected a chair, humbly in the background, or so we thought, it was brought to our attention in no uncertain manner that we had deposited ourselves in seats reserved for other honourable gentlemen. After some shuffling, we found seats that no-one wanted to remove us from.

Another incident quite early in the piece was when we decided we did not need the prefix 'honourable' prominently posted on our doors. On inquiry we found that the staff could not remove those offending letters, so we had to front up to the President, who informed us that tradition demanded such form of address and that nothing could be done about it.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: You love it.

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: Well, we found a chair, I can assure the honourable member, and I was able to climb on it and remove the letters. Mind you, we had to do it several times before the staff gave up putting the letters back. Now, after all these years, I have changed offices again to make room for my elevated colleague. What do I find—'honourable' has been added. I am not sure why. The present staff must have had to hunt around for those letters, or maybe they had them in reserve. In any case, they did not have enough letters, for I note that the only member to miss out is my colleague, the Hon. Mr Chatterton. His door remains as we previously arranged.

As our older colleagues left us and the new joined us they, too, quickly sought to have 'honourable' removed. I have had many a quiet laugh to myself because a few of those new colleagues use the title privately on their attache cases and their cards, and I have the cards to prove it. Another private laugh I have had relates to a local newspaper. In this town there is a very well known member of the opposition Liberal Party. It was a mystery to the newspaper why I was addressed as 'honourable' and my Opposition colleague could only be addressed as 'mister'. In fact, one of the principals of this paper spoke to me querying this very matter and acquainted me of the worthy qualities of my Parliamentary colleague. I do not think I was successful in explaining to him that the Legislative Council consisted only of gentlemen and the other House merely of bodies mixed up in the hurly burly of politics who, in no way, could be entitled to the title of 'honourable'.

The paper consistently refers to me as 'Mr' but I see that my Opposition colleague has now earned the title of 'honourable' on occasion by virtue of his serving as Speaker for a number of years. As a new boy I can remember being under instruction from the Whip.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You were the Whip.

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: Not in the first instance. My colleague, the Hon. Mr Chatterton, was also under instruction. We were amongst the older, worthy members of the Labor Party of the past, but the members already in this place were steeped in the tradition of the House and it was not so easy to steep us in those traditions. We were promptly told that this could be done or that that could not be done. Some things were unthinkable, and we did not do them. When the Whip saw fit, we were permitted to leave the Chamber to partake of a cup of coffee, always provided, of course, that it took no longer than 15 minutes.

In those days it was hard to find any of us after 4.30 p.m. This gave members of the Lower House many an opportunity to demand the abolition of the Upper House. It is still part of our policy—I advocated it then and my mind has never changed over the years—but there is an exception to that rule now. I think perhaps I could be

convinced to change my mind but I will spend more time on that shortly.

The new electoral arrangements, the new voting system and finally the evening-up of the numbers representing the different Parties brought a new atmosphere, invigorated activity, and the slothfulness became something of the past. Gradually the Committee system grew into quite an industry and flourishes today—so much so, in fact, that for some time past there have been too few of us on this side of the Chamber to satisfactorily share the load. I have not counted the number of Select Committees and other Committees on which my colleagues are serving, but I know that over the past 12 months I have been serving on five Select Committees, three still going, and the Public Works Standing Committee, which usually meets twice a week. And, there are always our usual ministerial Committees, and Party meetings.

This Council sits many hours longer now than was the case years ago, but the number of constituents bringing problems to individual members is far fewer than the burden borne by the staffed electorate offices of Assembly members, and very often we receive the kind of constituent problem which has been through a number of Assembly members and about which little can be done to aid them. No matter how good the intent of a Government, there is always a minority of people adversely affected by most decisions.

The Committee work of Legislative Councillors gives them an ideal opportunity to be of great service to their State. In the majority of cases, Committee decisions or findings are based on consensus of the needs of the State and of the people who pay the taxes that keep the State solvent. Again, in a majority of cases, the Government accepts the decision on the investigation and legislates to give effect to the major decisions of these Committees. It is the Committee work that I have enjoyed. Unfortunately, I am a misfit on the floor of this House. To me it is boring in the extreme. Throughout my working life I have changed my job many times, but I only recall ever being bored or misplaced in one of them.

For the purposes of debate any capable speaker can say all that needs to be said on a subject in less than half an hour. I can understand that on the odd occasion when someone or their Party needs to make a point that person can ramble on—'rambling' is a polite word for what I really think of the repeat repeats and the repeated repeats of some of our most painful orators who, no doubt, next day read and reread their words of wisdom. But, their next appearance in the House proves they learned nothing. Perhaps, of course, that proves there was nothing in what they said.

I do not really know whom they are trying to impress—certainly everybody in here suffers the belly-ache. Most members and staff would be too polite to admit it. If, by some mischance, they have followers or supporters outside this place who would bother to read the rubbish, their mentality is obviously on the same level or lower and is one major reason why the ordinary everyday person has a low opinion of politicians and the Parliament. And, it has been the main reason why we in this Council sit so late on many occasions. I would like to return to the possible exception in my desire to see this Council abolished. Even though some may claim otherwise—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: The member can count; that is marvellous! It has always been a political place. Even in its early years, the carefully chosen electorate boundaries, the selective voting method, ensured the election of the privileged of the one political viewpoint. The Dunstan Government of 1973 made major inroads into what had become the accepted order of things. It changed the number of

representation in here, but it did not lessen the political content of the place. Had it gone further and taken away the rights of this Council to provide Government Ministers, set up some advisory permanent committees, and given greater encouragement to the maintenance of Select Committees on one-off issues, I could accept that this Council might be of some possible use to the State. As it is, it is repetitive of the other House and not worth preserving. To have successful government, it is necessary to have the discipline of Party politics. Independents would be unable to govern; self-interest and self-preservation of the individual would always win through and make unity of purpose impossible. Party politics—

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. G.L. Bruce): Order!

The Hon. C.W. CREEDON: I have said many times that Party politics has a tendency to make people followers and deprives them of the right to think aloud. Party members may make the Government, but Cabinets make the decisions, and usually make sure that the press, Opposition and public know of those decisions before backbench political colleagues are informed. After my years in here observing the antics of the obsessed, my opinion is that self-interest makes a good politician and he or she, like all forms of the media, believe the people ignorant and misguided. But a good Parliamentarian's interests are in the betterment of the State and its people.

The Hon. B.A. CHATTERTON: I second the motion. The Select Committee on Native Vegetation will report to this Council in the next few weeks and I believe that if its recommendations are adopted, it will make a very significant contribution to the conservation of the remaining areas of native vegetation in this State. One of the large remaining areas of concern for conservation will of course be the arid zone.

Within the limits set by the Constitution, obviously Governments can pass laws about anything they like. Applied to pastoralism in the arid zone, Governments could pass laws on the main issues involved which would be to reduce stocking rates, control feral animals and require the restoration of already degraded areas. In practice, we must accept that this prospective approach is more likely to prevent undesirable activity than force desirable actions on unwilling participants. Hence, legislation to control or prevent overstocking is likely to have some effect and, indeed, more effect than legislation which attempts to force pastoralists to increase expenditure on the control of rabbits or goats or to undertake soil conservation measures. Of course, legislation exists for the control of pests and soil erosion, and large bureaucracies have been established to administer those Acts. No doubt these bureaucrats will argue strongly that more resources will make these laws more effective. However, it is doubtful, except for prosecuting a few really bad cases, that these laws and administrative empires that they have given birth to have had any effect on the general level of activity.

Stocking rates are an exception but need to be thought out in some detail. A general reduction in stocking rate would not be effective in solving the worst cases of land degradation in the arid zone, and it is probably unnecessary on some holdings. Research that has been done by the Adelaide University has shown that stocking rates within individual paddocks vary from very high rates that are causing severe damage to the vegetation to nil rates that are causing no damage at all. It could be that stocking rate reductions would be more effective in assisting regeneration by introducing long grazing rotations where areas that are degraded are completely closed to stock for long periods.

Before trying to impose legislative controls, we need to look at the economic pressures on pastoralists and how they affect things like stocking rate, the control of introduced feral animals and soil conservation. How can Government policies change these pressures? The major economic reality that should concern people involved in developing conservation policies for the arid zone is the cost price squeeze and the continual pressure it applies to farmers to increase the output of their enterprise.

Pastoral holdings are in a particularly unfortunate position as the great technological revolutions in herbicides, insecticides, plant breeding and plant introduction have not been applicable to the arid zone. Technologies such as animal breeding and mechanisation, which are relevant to the zone, have performed poorly in lifting productivity in the last several decades. Pastoralists are therefore faced with few options. They cannot increase the stocking rate per hectare. In fact, they are more likely to be required to reduce it. Output of wool per sheep is rising but at a very slow rate that is quite insufficient to compensate for the decline in income caused by the cost price squeeze.

Mechanisation of shepherding—that is fences—and shearing machines made substantial reductions to the cost of production in the past, but there have been no comparable mechanical innovations in the past 50 years. The only other path for pastoralists is to increase the size of their enterprise by purchasing other properties. Larger properties carrying more sheep are in a better financial position to reduce stocking rates and to undertake control of feral animals and soil conservation work.

Government programs since the early 1970s have encouraged rural adjustment through farm build-up which provides finance at concessional interest rates to encourage the amalgamation of properties. Naturally the money has to be rationed, as there are many more people wanting to take advantage of this cheap money than there are funds available. Money is therefore lent to a marginal group of farmers who are unable to get commercial loans but are profitable with concessional loans. Thus, the Commonwealth funds that go into the scheme are spread thinly over all rural industries, achieving little in any. An alternative policy would be to declare priority areas for funding. The arid zone with its lack of alternative methods of countering the cost price squeeze would obviously have a strong case for being declared a priority area.

There are other Government programs which have an influence on the adjustment of rural holdings. For a process of farm build-up to operate, some farmers will have to buy holdings and some will have to sell and move out. The movement out is likely to be greatest during periods of low prices and drought. Now that the Federal Government has stabilised the price of wool, drought will be the major factor that pushes a marginal property in the arid zone over into unprofitability. It is therefore important to scrutinise closely Government drought assistance policies to see if they are too generous and hence keeping basically unsound pastoralists in operation. It is an area of extraordinary sensitivity for Governments, as the media delights in emotional stories of land-holders ravaged by drought being forced from their land by hard hearted Governments.

A rational explanation of drought as an acceleration of the continual process of rural adjustment is poorly understood in such an emotional climate. Technological change has been of great benefit to most farmers in meeting the cost price pressures. A great deal of technology in agriculture flows from Government institutions, so we need to consider whether expenditure should be increased and whether research can be more efficiently managed. Unfortunately, research policy is almost universally left in the hands of research bureaucracy with all its institutionalised conserv-

atism and its vested interest in not resolving problems. Once a problem has been resolved, an empire has to be dissolved, and career paths can be disrupted. Most research is therefore ongoing, which can be explained as a euphemism for keeping me in a job for as long as I need. Conservationists should not be afraid to put forward research policy options, nor to advocate the winding up of existing on-going programs. Policies in a sense are the easier part; implementation is more difficult.

What policy options are available for overcoming the administrative problems of implementation? Firstly, we have the problem of cost. To enforce a policy of stocking rate control, feral pest control and soil conservation through an army of inspectors over such a vast area is economically and politically unrealistic.

Fortunately, LANDSAT has provided an alternative cheap method of monitoring the soil and vegetation of the zone. We can now rapidly identify areas of more severe overgrazing and land degradation and hopefully it will be further developed to identify more subtle changes in the future.

LANDSAT provides the data but there needs to be an Administration prepared to act on it. This may prove to be more difficult if past experience is a guide. In South Australia for example, stocking rate controls have been applied to the arid zone for a long time. One method of independently checking the pastoralists' stock returns is an examination of the quantities of wool offered for auction by the pastoral stations. The auction catalogues show that many pastoral holdings consistently overstock and are so sure that no action will be taken against them that they make no attempt to disguise their wool sales. In one notorious case a pastoral holding was advertised for sale with a level of wool production over 20 years that could only have been achieved through substantial overstocking. The pastoralist was never prosecuted for overstocking or misleading advertising.

Obviously, the technical capacity of LANDSAT is not itself going to overcome the inactivity of the Administration and its desire to remain popular with the pastoral community. Traditionally in Australia the pastoral community has commanded considerable social prestige and political power. It has been very effective in using this power and prestige to draw in the public servants as clients of their system. The values have become so deeply entrenched in the philosophies of the Department of Lands that conservation policies have almost no chance of successful implementation through these organisations. State Governments now have departments for the environment which have quite strong conservation philosophies but are newcomers to the ruthless world of bureaucratic infighting. While they have wide overall responsibilities they have few actual powers and have generally proved ineffective against the well entrenched bureaucrats armed with their Acts and regulations.

Policy making for the arid zone is further inhibited by the fragmentation of Government services and agencies involved in the zone. For example, in South Australia, the Department of Lands controls the leases and the stocking rate conditions that are applied to them. In recent years it has developed a small research capacity in an attempt to put its stocking rate policies on a more rational basis. Both Adelaide University and the Department of Agriculture have much more research experience and capacity but this has not prevented the establishment of another unit. Agriculture also runs the rural adjustment program and drought assistance. It provides research and extension for the sheep and wool industry. It has a division for soil conservation and a vertebrate pest control authority. The Department of Environment has vague overall responsibilities for conservation but few pieces of administrative clout with which to act. Its territory is confined to national parks and respon-

sibility for native animals. It also has a finger in the research pipe with programs on revegetation.

The situation in the arid zone is becoming critical. If we fail to take appropriate action, the area could become more and more degraded until we are faced with desertification on the scale of North Africa and the Middle East.

Given that we will need to work with Government resources that are currently divided between three separate departments, we will need to have changes to produce an effective organisation that is not clogged up with interdepartmental committees. If such an organisation can be developed to rationalise the Government input into the zone, there will still be a need to develop a balance between policies based on economic incentive to sensible conservation and policies based on legislative controls.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON (Leader of the Opposition): I must say that I was somewhat surprised at the contribution of the Hon. Mr Creedon, from whom I have not heard much since he has been a member of this Chamber. That does not mean that what he has said has not been appreciated, but I think it is a pity that probably one of his last contributions in this place had to be on the subject of abolition of the Legislative Council. As I recall, the Hon. Mr Creedon said that anything that could not be said in 30 minutes was not worth saying. I cannot help thinking that it is a pity, in view of the fact that the Hon. Mr Creedon spoke for 50 minutes, that he did not stop at 30 minutes and before he moved into a field which showed a lack of growing into the Council, because the Council has changed since the Hon. Mr Creedon and I came into this Chamber. It has changed considerably, and I am the first one to admit that. In fact, I supported many of those changes, as the Hon. Mr Creedon would recall.

I think it is a pity, given the development of the Council as a very worthwhile Chamber of State Parliament, that the Hon. Mr Creedon now proclaims the old war cry 'Let's abolish the Legislative Council'. I would be very interested to know whether the Hon. Mr Creedon will go out into the community now and start a campaign for the abolition of the Legislative Council, and perhaps even try to have someone hold a referendum on the subject. I will be very interested to fight that campaign, if that is what the Hon. Mr Creedon wants. That could well become a worthwhile issue in the next election, if the Hon. Mr Creedon wants to do that. We could talk about the fact that some Select Committees in relation to local government were shifted to this Council because they could not be handled in the Lower House because politics came into it too much. Therefore, those Select Committees had to be shifted to this Chamber so that the politics could be removed. The Hon. Mr Creedon says that this is the political Chamber. Of course it is, everyone knows that, but it is not a political Chamber to that extent.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. G.L. Bruce): Order! Other speakers have been heard in a reasonable amount of silence. A certain amount of interjecting is acceptable, but it should not be overdone.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Thank you for your assistance, Mr Acting President, but I do not think I need it because I cannot hear the interjections. However, enough of the Hon. Mr Creedon. I think it is a pity that he is retiring on that note and that he is leaving the Council with that sort of feeling. I think that underneath it all the Hon. Mr Creedon knows that the Council is a worthwhile Chamber of State Parliament. That is shown by the fact that we now have four Ministers in this Chamber. On the one hand, the Hon. Mr Creedon refers to the abolition of the Council, stating that there is no need for Ministers in this Chamber

and that there is need for change; on the other hand, he is a member of a Party which for the first time in the history of this State placed a fourth Minister in this Chamber. That makes me wonder whether the Hon. Mr Creedon is on side with his own Party. Perhaps it does not matter to him now.

Last week in this place His Excellency opened the final session of Parliament in the life of the present Government. Of course, the Governor's address is prepared by the Government of the day. Coming at the commencement of the session, the speech is expected to outline the Government program for the coming 12 months. Last week's presentation was something different; from the Government's point of view, it signalled the beginning of its election campaign. It was not a positive presentation full of vision and excitement: it was a program of reaction, defeat and retreat. The address outlined a cynical attempt at retaining government. The Labor Party has clearly adopted a strategy of cutting its losses and running. On issues where the Government has claimed to be standing on principle over the past 2½ years it has suddenly backed off. Virtually every topic was covered in the address, and the Government threw out crumbs of acknowledgement on a whole variety of issues.

The following were the issues: the economy; housing and construction; the submarine lobby; future Government directions; energy reserves; tax cuts; rural industries; workers compensation; cost of production; occupational health, safety and welfare; native vegetation; education; youth unemployment; health; community welfare; public sector efficiency; ethnic affairs; women; water resources; transport; marine; fisheries; law and order; rape; building; RBT; SA 150; the Grand Prix; the casino and convention centre; and the South Australian Film Corporation. If anyone wants to find a few more, they will have to scratch very hard indeed.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Nothing about Aborigines.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right. All these areas are important, but, just because the Government makes cursory reference to them, that does not mean it has the policies or capacity to respond to them. Many are significant issues, because the Liberal Party has made them so, and the Labor Government has been pathetically cynical and hypocritical in its response to them. A number of the announcements represent clear responses to flagging polls and rising community concern about taxes, crime, government, and high unemployment. The contents of the speech show that the Labor Party's attempt to hold onto power at any cost is desperate.

Yesterday's announcements were evidence of this (and I will touch on this later). But there are other examples. Consider the recent Cabinet reshuffle. Labor is hoping, by adding a new face, to kick some life into the old mob on the front bench. But they had to look to the Legislative Council to find someone. I must say that, while congratulating the new Minister, I am somewhat surprised at the choice, because on the backbench there was a very senior person in the Party with the obvious ability to carry out such a task.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Who was that? Anne Levy?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right. If anything is a symbol of the Labor Party's Caucus of mediocrity it is the fact that it was forced to look to the Legislative Council—the House that it has pledged to abolish (and the Hon. Mr Creedon went through the whole process again)—to find four Ministers. This is further underlined by the fact that ALP rules, I understand, limit the number of Ministers in the Legislative Council to three. The Labor Party has actually broken its own rules.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: You could never believe the Labor Party.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: No. I must say that if I had not moved an amendment to the Constitution to allow for

more than three Ministers in the Upper House, or for fewer than three, that would have not been possible. It is always the decision of the Government. There is nothing to stop any Government providing no Ministers in the Upper House. The only reason the Labor Party could select four Ministers in the Upper House was that I moved an amendment many years ago. If the Hon. Mr Creedon's Government believes that there should be no Ministers in the Upper House, there is nothing to stop him from proposing that in Caucus so that there are no Ministers in the Legislative Council, but I bet that he will not do that. The Labor Party has had to add a bit of life to the Ministry.

One new face cannot hide the incompetent and inefficient Ministers who have made up the Cabinet that has imposed record tax burdens on our community, even taking into account the recent announcement by the Premier. Nearly every area of Government activity has been touched on, with morsels thrown in to appease the masses wherever possible. The reality is that the Governor's speech is not a program of what the Government has embarked on but a program of back-tracking and double talking. This Government has all the credibility of a prostitute wearing white to the wedding. Nothing makes it clearer than the tax announcement early this week. The Government has continued to increase taxes over three years but now it is trying to say that it has not happened and it will give it back. What a lot of nonsense!

Earlier this week the Premier announced with feigned seriousness that at last, after a long hard haul, he was able to announce tax cuts. But his tax cuts package is nothing more than an attempted election sweetener and everyone has seen it for that. Anyone who listened to the talk-back radio program on which the Premier tried to sell his ideas would have picked that up immediately. It brings back memories of that old story of the Sheriff of Nottingham. After robbing the people for the past three years, the Premier is now trying to pretend that he is Robin Hood and giving it all back again. He wants to be accepted as being sincere.

The Hon. Peter Dunn: Will they call them the merry men?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Well, they will not be very merry by November. The reality is that so far under this Government State taxation has increased by 50.2 per cent per head. That is the largest per capita increase for any State in Australia. South Australia is no longer the lowest tax State, as it was under the previous Government. That increase of 50.2 per cent is almost three times the rate of inflation in Australia. We have been subjected to a massive real tax increase. As a result of the 50.2 per cent increase, John Bannon's Treasury coffers swelled by an extra \$261.5 million. He now offers back \$41 million and expects the whole State to jump for joy. Since the people put their faith in his promises of no tax increases and that he would not use State charges as a backdoor Budget method of raising taxes, they have been hit by a 50.2 per cent tax growth and 188 charges have been increased.

In each year of office Labor has increased State charges by well in excess of the rate of inflation. Having increased 196 taxes and charges combined, the Premier has cut six and expects the audience to applaud. The reviews will not get any better, and the Government's curtain will soon be coming down, because this outfit will not stay in business for very much longer. The public will reject Labor's cynical vote-buying exercise, because these so-called cuts pale into insignificance compared to the increases that preceded them.

Members should consider the following examples: there was the introduction of the financial institutions duty, the first new tax in 10 years in South Australia; taxes on beer, wine, cigarettes, petrol and insurance have all rocketed; minimum water rates have been increased by 60 per cent;

the price of water has increased by more than 43 per cent; sewer rates have climbed by more than 54 per cent; bus fares have jumped 57 per cent; and electricity charges have risen by more than 41 per cent, but we have just had a 2 per cent reduction to 39 per cent. Big deal! The minimum ETSA quarterly account has increased by 156 per cent. Yet all that John Bannon offers is a tax cut of 2 per cent. That is \$2 on the average household electricity bill.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: For one year.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes. Members know what can be bought with \$2.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: A packet of fags.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Better than that—every household could buy four Mars bars every three months for the children. What an enormous credit that must be in the eyes of the community. I bet that all the children of the State are standing back waiting for their Mars bars.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes. It is absolutely ridiculous for the Government to try to claim that that will help the people of the State. We must not forget that there have been 180 other increases—more than one for every week of the Labor Government. The public is entitled to some answers. Is the Premier prepared to repeat the promise he made before the last election that he will not increase existing rates of taxation or introduce any new taxes during another term of government?

The ALP policy speech of 1982 states:

The ALP will not reintroduce succession duties, will not introduce new taxes, nor increase existing levels of taxes during our term of office.

'Our term of office' means three years. There have been 196 breakings of that promise. When the Premier was challenged about this matter and asked whether he would give the same commitment he gave a qualified promise (not absolute, but qualified) that there would be no tax increases for the next three or four years.

The Premier has said that there will be no need to increase taxes if: (1) South Australia's economic recovery continues; (2) people keep their expectations in relation to Government service realistic; (3) inflation is kept under control; and (4) Canberra (this time Canberra, poor old Canberra is getting a flogging for everything these days), which provides 60 per cent of South Australia's revenue, does not alter dramatically existing Federal/State funding agreements. We know that that will happen, because the Premier only had a promise of one-off money for this year. The difference between the Premier's first promise that he would not raise taxes and charges and his recent similar promise is that the first promise was unqualified and the recent one was not. We saw what happened when he made an unqualified promise. What will happen now that he has made a qualified promise? We will not get past the first month before the whole lot are increased again. We already know that the Premier does not keep his word.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: He won't have a chance to break it, anyway.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I know, but we should remind people of the absolute hypocrisy and dishonesty of the statement made by the Premier before the last election. If that statement was dishonest, the next promise will be more dishonest, because he has not given an absolute promise; he has merely implied something, which is worse still. How much will total State tax collections amount to in 1985/86? In his first two Budgets the Premier increased tax collections by \$261.5 million dollars. In this financial year tax collections could amount to \$910 million, even after allowing for the Premier's taxation package—that is 15 per cent up, on my estimate, on last year's total tax collections. Is the reduction in the ETSA turnover tax to be permanent?

The answer is 'No'. This tax is established legislation, but the Premier is talking only about remitting part of it this financial year, not amending the legislation to make the reduction permanent. That tax was reimposed by the present Government and this year it generated \$28 million. Also, ETSA has already had a change in its interest rates—and we all know the end result of that. That amounts to \$12 million extra in charges for people who use electricity.

The election is obviously only weeks away. If John Bannon's word is as good this time as it was prior to the last election, then the commitments made earlier this week will be broken. Labor Governments, both State and Federal, cannot be trusted on the tax question, and the public knows it. That is why those Governments are dropping in popularity in the polls. That is also why one will not see Bob Hawke involved in the State election. That is why the ALP gurus will keep John Bannon up front and the word 'labor' right out of everything they do. The Labor Party is a high tax party and high taxes are unpopular.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: You are reading this.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That appeared in a press release that the Premier issued earlier this week. He deliberately kept his name and the word 'labor' apart. In fact, on the first page the word 'labor' did not appear once. It referred to what 'he', John Bannon, would do and not what the Labor Party would do.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: There were 1400 words, weren't there?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: In the four-page release the word 'labor' appeared only once, as the Hon. Mr Lucas says, in 1400 words. What is the Labor Party ashamed of? How does the Hon. Mr Bruce feel when people are ashamed to have the word 'labor' appear anywhere in a press release because they are frightened that that word is unpopular? The Labor Party is trying to create a cult, as it did with Bob Hawke, although that seems to be falling on shattered ground as well. It will not work!

The Government's assertions about the economy do not tell all the story. The Premier, when he was Leader of the Opposition in October 1982 referring to reference to economic indicator, said:

This is not done to create doom and gloom, although regrettably the story is not a good one, but to ensure that the facts are clearly set out and that economic planning and politics and business proceeds from a realistic assessment of our position.

In 1982 that South Australian Consumer Price Index figure was below the Australian average. By 1985 that position was reversed. In the 12 months to June 1984 the CPI figure was 7.4 per cent for Adelaide compared with 6.7 per cent for the national average. Adelaide has become the inflation capital of Australia and Government taxes and charges are a major factor in that. As at 12 June, the monthly increase in the State and local government component of the Adelaide CPI package was 11.7 per cent compared with a national figure of 7.7 per cent. Population growth in South Australia since December 1982 has been 1.7 per cent, the lowest of any State. Compare that with much maligned Queensland with a growth of 3.1 per cent, equal highest with Western Australia.

The Labor Party's hollow rhetoric can be easily exposed. As an example I turn to the discussion of employment in paragraph 3 of the Governor's speech. The Government has attempted to paint a favourable employment picture. We should not be pessimistic, but we should be realistic about the situation. More jobs were created in 1984-85, but in what areas were they created and are they permanent productive jobs? Nearly \$70 million has been spent on creating 7 000 Commonwealth employment program jobs—short-term work schemes which fail to tackle the long term unemployment issues, yet it is the long term unemployed and

the young unemployed in South Australia who face the gravest difficulty.

South Australia has the largest proportion of long term unemployed at 32.6 per cent, one third of whom have been unemployed for nine months or longer. Unemployment in the manufacturing sector, which is our main productive base, has dropped by 13 per cent in the two years June 1982 to June 1984. What this Government overlooks is the fact that unemployment is higher now than when it took office. The number of unemployed when this Government took office was 51 200 in South Australia. The unemployment figure at 30 June 1985 was 606 700 for Australia and 53 600 for South Australia. That is an increase of 2 400 persons or 8.5 per cent in 1985 compared with the 7.7 per cent in June 1982. It is also above the national average. The employment of an extra 3 300 Government employees masks what would have been worse figures under the policies of the present Government. We now learn that to hide this reality the Government is to spend up to \$500 000 of taxpayers' funds to promote itself in a pre-election publicity campaign on jobs. That document is the most blatantly political and cynical document that I have seen in my time in Parliament.

The Government claims to have no money when important projects are put forward, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, it is prepared to spend \$500 000 on a public relations scheme for itself. I suggest that the Hon. Mr Bruce, if he disagrees with that, should get hold of the document, because it clearly sets out that what the Labor Party has to do (and this is one of the main aspects of that document) is to lift the Government's image in regard to doing something about unemployment. It says that the public is not sufficiently aware of what the Government is doing. It says that the Government's image has to be lifted in the minds of the public, so it will spend \$500 000 of taxpayers' funds for the Labor Party. That is what it is all about.

The Hon. G.L. Bruce: Shades of Tonkin.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I would like to know when that happened. This exercise is unnecessary and a waste of public funds. There are plenty worthwhile projects in the community on which the funds could be spent. It is essential that the Government withdraw this project and spend this money on something worth while. The Liberal Party has a positive alternative plan to tackle the jobs question. We intend not just to talk about and put out PR exercises on unemployment to inform people that we are trying to do something about it, but to tackle it. The Liberal Party has developed a range of policies aimed at tackling the issue of unemployment in a meaningful and long term way. We do not believe in temporary mocking up of the figures by inflating the public sector, which this Government has done, or running ineffectual 'make work' schemes which, in the long run, have no real effect on unemployment.

As a basis for tackling youth unemployment, the Liberal Party believes that it needs to guarantee adequate education and training for all young Australians. Young Australians deserve the chance to get a foot in the door. Today's school leaver must be provided with a better set of values and skills. The Liberal Party has a comprehensive youth employment scheme. The key elements are: at least one year of full vocational training in practical skills. The Hon. Mr Bruce would agree with that. I am sure that he would think it is the way to go, having been in the work force and in the union movement. The other key elements are: an extra 500 places in TAFE colleges; special course work to motivate and train more young people to become self-employed or to participate in community or cooperative business ventures; a two-year work training scheme to provide training with an approved employer; a training assistance scheme providing Government financial help to companies introducing specialist training programs; more opportunities to

undertake permanent part-time work; and an immediate review of the costs involved in youth training and supervision, so that these costs can be recognised by industrial tribunals in setting youth wages.

This is not a proposal for wholesale cuts in youth wages. The intention is to ensure that young people are paid on the basis of training and experience, and not solely on age. I understand what the Hon. Mr Bruce is talking about. I know what happens with some employers. I have teenage children. I know that some employers take advantage of young people. As soon as they turn the right age, those young people are out of the door and the employers find other young people to take their place. Everyone knows about that. We have to ensure that employers cannot do that. Once young persons have experience, employers must provide reasonable wages and not throw them aside. That is an area in which there will be no politics. I am happy to discuss this matter with any person from the union movement to work out a program so that that cannot take place.

The funds for the program that I have just outlined can be obtained by redirecting job creation funds. The result will be a group of young people with dramatically improved long term job prospects and an improved outlook on society to replace their present worry, which is very real, as the Hon. Mr Bruce would know.

In the Governor's speech the Government indicated that it will shortly put before Parliament detailed proposals designed to provide a basis for the development of South Australia into the next decade. South Australians have waited three years for this great vision. Suddenly, a great vision is to appear a matter of months before the election.

The Hon. G.L. Bruce: We had to get the State out of its bankruptcy.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I think that it would be better for the Hon. Mr Bruce to sit back quietly in the corner. I can understand his wanting to defend the Government, but one cannot defend the indefensible. After three years it is better to leave it be and take what is coming.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Go down the gurgler quietly.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right. This matter was talked about prior to the last election, but it never eventuated. There were visions from the present Government prior to the last election—development programs, Enterprise Australia (whatever they call the thing), and all sorts of funds were going to be set up—to raise millions and bring it into the public sector to provide opportunities for people. Those programs never got off the ground the way the Government said they would. It had a huge document setting out all that was going to be done. Unfortunately, that has not come to pass. Now it is going to be dragged up again with an election just weeks away.

The Liberals have a plan—a vision—for the future. We have laid it down for the public to see and assess well in advance of the election. In January the Liberal Leader, Mr Olsen, outlined our plan—our vision—for the future of the State. It is a plan for action—a plan full of promise and hope for the people of this State.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: 'Olsen for Action'.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right. This belated and half-hearted attempt by the Government is just another case of plugging another hole in the dyke. Wherever the Liberal Party has been able to find weaknesses in the Government—and there have been plenty—the Government has tried to act to block them. By giving in and lying down on every issue it hopes to make the next election issueless. Such a strategy will fail.

In the Governor's speech, the Government blithely expresses concern for rural communities. It is true that the rural sector has provided a major stimulus to improve economic circumstances in some areas. But actions speak

louder than words. This Government is concerned only about where the political numbers are. For that reason it treats rural electors with disdain. If a marginal metropolitan seat had raw sewage discharging unremittingly into the sea—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Finger Point!

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Finger Point—then something would be done about it. What has been done about it? When this Government came to office the program was cancelled.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: It just moved the finger the wrong way.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is what it did to the people of Mount Gambier. I will take a bet on what will happen. We will find that Finger Point is put back on the estimates very shortly—just in time for the election and for the people to say that maybe they will get it this time.

The Hon. L.H. Davis: The Government is too late to win Mount Gambier.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right.

The Hon. C.M. Hill: The Hon. Frank Blevins went down there.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: He went there, but he did not go out to Finger Point.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I apologise. I am pleased that the Minister went. I remember the Hon. Frank Blevins down there, because I was standing at the back of the crowd listening to the comments, and, by gosh, they were cynical.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Members can take one thing for certain: the people of Mount Gambier are good, intelligent country people. They know a bunch of cynical hypocrites when they see them. The Hon. Mr Lucas is a product from that area, and he will back up what I say, because the people of Mount Gambier will not be taken in by any last minute restitution of Finger Point on the works program. They know what will happen. As the Hon. Mr Lucas said, they know that the Government will turn the finger the other way to Mount Gambier immediately the election is over. Finger Point will be taken off the list again, particularly if the Government does not win Mount Gambier but gets into office—which, of course, will not occur. However, if it did occur, all members know that it would be an act of cynicism. It has been absolutely disgraceful. The Government used that as a method of cutting costs when it came to office so that it could afford more public servants. That is what it was about—so that the Government could put its mates back on the list again.

Well, it will not work; it will fail. In the Governor's speech, the Government blithely expresses concern for all sections of the community. There is one section of the community about which I want to speak very briefly. It is an area about which I know the Minister of Agriculture has had a lot of flak, rightly or wrongly; some of it is right and some is wrong. However, he has had a lot of flak. I refer to the question of Sims farm. I want to speak very briefly on this subject. It is an area about which I have some concern, as the Minister knows because I had some short contact with him on the issue.

It is very important when a person in a community leaves an asset to the Government for a particular purpose that, before that asset is used in another way, there needs to be very real and serious thought given to it, because it is not something that any person does lightly. Normally, when a person does that, it is because he has a concern about something that is not existing in the community. In this case, this man and his wife, who obviously thought very seriously about their community, left their farm for a particular purpose.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: How much do you know about this man?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I know quite a bit about it. I have even read the will. This person left his farm, the asset that he had built up over a lifetime, for a particular purpose. I think it is wrong when any Government (and I use the term 'any Government') decides to sell that farm because of a legal interpretation of a small portion of a will.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Tell us about his wife.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: His wife was left with the right to live there for the rest of her life with the use of the farm and with all the facilities on the farm.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Well, it was his sister; I am sorry. I just read the will, and I assumed that it was his wife.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Leave it to Peter. Leave it to someone who knows something about it.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: No, I will not, because I think it is important that a person's intentions are carried out. I take exception to lawyers getting hold of wills and taking out little parts of it and saying, 'That gives us the right to flog it off and to use it for another purpose.' Well, I frankly do not agree with that and, no matter who the Minister is, he has to be very careful when being advised by legal colleagues. That legal advice must take into account, before it is accepted and used, the morality of what the Government is going to do—whether that was the original intention and whether that person would have been happy for that money to be used for another purpose.

The Hon. G.L. Bruce: What happens if the bequest becomes a liability to the State?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: In that case, one would have to take that into account, I guess. But, in this case it was obviously left to that community, which was prepared to take it on.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: It was deliberately not left to that community. That was the problem. He deliberately did not leave it to the community.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: But in this case it was that community in the Eyre Peninsula region which was going to use it.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: He made a conscious decision to leave it to the Department of Agriculture. Whatever possessed him, I have no idea.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: The department operates an office in that area for that area. It does not operate it for the rest of the State. It operates it for that area and it is obvious that that person appreciated that and wanted that farm to be used. We must give serious thought to the whole question of agricultural education. I have from time to time assisted with schools with the little sections that are added for the purposes of agricultural courses. In fact, I have been to a school where there was one. While these facilities are very useful and provide a very useful adjunct to education, there are methods of providing agricultural education on a wider basis, so that in many cases a farm can be used to provide young farmers with experience in the management of a whole farm rather than just plots at a school.

I am not saying that plots and agricultural courses are not helpful. However, it is also helpful to young farmers in the early stages of their career to observe in action a farm that is run by top, competent people. One of the great problems with so many farming communities these days is that the young man goes home to the farm under father, and, if one person is difficult to learn from, in many cases it is the father. It is very difficult to try out new ideas and to convince parents that one has ideas that might assist,

whereas it is much easier to learn from somebody outside and, in particular, from this sort of area.

So, before we make any decision to sell an area like that, if it can be used by a school for the purposes of education, we should seriously consider that. I know that the Minister is not gung ho to sell the property and that he wants to do the best thing possible with the property. I trust that when he makes his final decision, the Minister will take into account the views of the local community and ensure that, if possible, that particular area is used for the local community.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: When Cabinet makes its final decision.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I have great faith in the power of the Minister concerned to guide Cabinet to a proper decision, because I am sure that he has sufficient power within that Cabinet to ensure that whatever decision he makes will become the decision of Cabinet.

The assets test, of course, has caused very grave concern in the rural community, and it is an area of great concern that people in the metropolitan area can have very large assets indeed in terms of houses whereas people in the rural areas cannot. There is a real area of discrepancy there, and the latest moves to try to cover for that are not good enough. Rural communities have real problems these days, and there is no way in which this Government, for instance, would allow enormous subsidies on public transport to be removed.

However, the State Labor Government hardly raised a whimper when their Federal colleagues removed the fuel freight differential, resulting in a further fuel cost hike in the country. One ought to go out into the country now and try to buy fuel. I know that you, Sir, have to buy it in the rural areas. In relation to the Hon. Mr Blevins, I do not know what the situation would be in Whyalla.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Well, you don't listen to me. An answer I gave during the last session on fuel spelt out my personal opinion very clearly.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: The Minister should get his colleagues in the Lower House (who have the voice of the press and of the Federal Government more) to do something about it. If it was a Federal Liberal Government and this happened, I could just imagine what the Minister and his colleagues would say. They would be on it every day, and they would be blaming us for it. They must accept the blame in this case because it is their Party, their Government, that has done this, not us. We put the subsidy on, and you people took it off. You have caused the problems in the rural areas.

Another indication of what this Government thinks of rural people is what has happened to the Ministry of Agriculture. It is now considered to be a junior Labor portfolio. That is the first time in my time in Parliament where there has been a Minister of Agriculture who has had that as a junior portfolio, and that seems like a long time. I would like to know when in the history of the State that situation has applied.

We have seen the situation with country doctors, who are an extremely valuable part of our community. What happens? Our friend, the Minister of Health, a veterinary surgeon, has almost waged war on them over the last three years.

The Hon. Dr Cornwall never stops getting into country doctors, who provide a service that is second to none. If the Hon. Dr Cornwall persists, we will end up with no country doctors in this State at all. What the Minister has been doing to country doctors is dreadful, because they provide a very real and valuable service, as I am sure the Hon. Mr Bruce would know. Are these the signs of a Party that is truly concerned with the well-being of rural people? The answer is, 'No'.

Throughout the Governor's address the Labor Party's hypocrisy was thinly veiled at the best of times. However, the veil came off in the area of costs imposed on businesses. The present Government has done more to impose additional burdens on businesses than has any other Government. Be they financial, administrative or legislative costs, they have been very significant. Since it came to office, the Labor Government has increased 188 State charges and eight State taxes, despite the promise to not increase taxes and not use State charges as a backdoor method of taxation. What a load of rubbish!

The Hon. G.L. Bruce interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: If the present Government stayed in for another three years, there would be no State left. Despite announcements made earlier this week, the average South Australian and South Australian business is worse off in real terms. For the second year in a row the Government has indicated in the Governor's address that it will introduce new workers compensation legislation this session. It is essential that something be done to tackle this ever increasing problem. It will be very interesting, as the Hon. Mr Lucas has said, to hear what the new Minister of Labour has to say about this issue. I am really looking forward to it. First, we will want to see the legislation, because we have been awaiting its arrival for a long time. Secondly, I want to hear the Labor Party tell us what it did in the early 1970s, because that caused the present problem.

All members who were in this Parliament at that time will recall that legislation, the changes that occurred and the warnings that were given about the cost of the legislation. The Government is now standing up and saying that it will cure the problem—a problem that it created. It will be very interesting indeed to hear exactly what the Minister of Labour has to say in regard to his remarks about prostitution and the other words that he used to describe anyone who dares to reduce the return to workers.

I am looking forward to seeing exactly what is in the legislation, if we see it at all—this mythical legislation. We have been promised this legislation for three years but it still has not appeared. Why is there this delay? This indecision seems to be a hallmark of the present Government. I mentioned previously the issue of native vegetation clear-ance controls, and it was also mentioned by the Hon. Mr Chatterton a moment ago. I look forward to the introduction of the Select Committee's report to this Parliament in the very near future.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: We read about it in the *Advertiser*.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That may well be. As a member of the Select Committee, I cannot confirm or deny what was in the *Advertiser*.

The Hon. C.W. Creedon: Mr Cameron has been leaking things.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is a very serious charge indeed—one that I do not think is worth answering. However, I indicate quite clearly to the Hon. Mr Creedon that the report on native vegetation that appeared in the *Advertiser* yesterday had absolutely nothing to do with me. This area has caused grave concern. In fact I challenge the Hon. Mr Creedon to ask the journalist responsible for that report that specific question and see what answer he receives. It will be very interesting indeed to see that report. I am sure that honourable members will realise that that Select Committee of the Upper House, which worked quite well despite what the Hon. Mr Creedon has said, has done an excellent job in arriving at a situation that may well solve the problem in relation to native vegetation controls. However, we must wait and see.

As I have outlined, the Labor Party has jumped all over the place in response to Liberal Party policies and alternatives, but has been prepared to allow youth unemployment

to continue at an unacceptable level and do practically nothing about it for three years. However, the Liberal Party has developed the program that was outlined earlier. That full policy was outlined two months ago by the Liberals and is aimed at addressing two issues closely associated with youth unemployment, namely, work experience and skills training.

It was criticised by the Government at the time. Yet we now find the Government saying in its address:

... [the Government] ... particularly wishes to provide young people with the skills necessary to make the transition to the workplace. A comprehensive program for providing young people with both work experience and skills training will shortly be presented to the community.

That quote uses words extraordinarily similar to those used by the Liberal Party in the release two months ago of its comprehensive and positive program which fills the void created by the Government's lack of policy.

Public sector management is hardly an area in which this Government can honestly claim great capacity. Since its election, the Labor Party has put on the public payroll an extra 3 300 public servants at a cost of millions of dollars. And this Government has overseen programs of waste and negligence no better example of which can be found than the North Adelaide Aquatic Centre. No-one will be able to use that swimming pool for any worthwhile competition because the diving board is too short, the surface of the pool gets waves, and it even leaks. Additionally, the State Transport Authority, the E. & W.S. Department and the Electricity Trust have major deficits.

Labor has run up a record Budget deficit of more than \$60 million. Where is its action plan to tackle this? The Liberal Party in government was efficient and effective in its management of public resources. By careful and efficient management it was able to achieve a 2 per cent real reduction in employees—without retrenchment—and also able to save taxpayers the equivalent of \$70 million in a full year. This Government's response to so many issues is to call for a report. In fact, the Minister of Health is most famous for this. Whenever he has a problem in his area he calls for a report. We even have a report on waiting lists.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: The Minister of Reports!

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes, but they are not worth releasing, so I do not know why he bothers with them. I suggest that, if members opposite think they are worth releasing, they should have a look at the one on waiting lists—it is the daddy of them all. Steps can be taken to improve public sector management and resource allocation without unnecessary additional legislation, if the Government has the will.

In looking at what could broadly be defined as women's issues, we find the Government again lagging behind the Liberal Party. The Government has had nearly three years to develop appropriate responses in this field, yet it appears that women in South Australia will have to wait even further to find out what the Labor Party will do for them. The Governor, in his speech, said:

In the Budget, which will be presented later in the session, a special program will be put forward which will assess the resources allocated to initiatives particularly affecting women.

So, we still have to wait. The Government wants yet another assessment, another report and another delay for the people of this State before they find out what the Government is going to do in a particular area.

While the Labor Party dithers, the Liberal Party does not do so. Last weekend the Liberal Party released a 64 page comprehensive women's statement assessing and, more importantly, responding to the needs of women into the next decade. Our statement addresses many key areas. There are, of course, a significant number of issues which have

broad relevance to both men and women, and there are those of special concern to women. The Liberal statement is the most comprehensive statement on women ever made by a political Party in South Australia. We want to ensure that women achieve genuine equality of opportunity, and that they fully participate at all levels of society and the economy in South Australia, as workers in the home, the labour force and as consumers.

Our statement is a strategy to achieve and maintain that objective. We reject the notion of even more reports, studies and assessments. It is pleasing to see that the Labor Party is now prepared to acknowledge that its frequent and sometimes vehement opposition to the north-east busway project was misguided and in error. The O-Bahn project, which was commenced by a Liberal Government and which applied vision and vigour to our public transport system, will be a fine transport system and will benefit thousands of South Australians.

For six years there has been debate about the capacity of defendants to make unsworn statements for use in their defence of the crime of rape. Quite deliberately the Bills that we have introduced in this Council through the shadow Attorney-General have been rejected time and again. They were finally passed last time when one of the Australian Democrats changed his mind, and that Bill is now before the Lower House. It has been put back on the Notice Paper.

If the Attorney-General is really serious about the issue, he will not go through the performance of waiting for a Bill to be drawn up, bringing it into this Council and then taking it to the Lower House; he can do it tomorrow. He can support the Bill in the Lower House, make amendments if he likes, bring it back and it will be all over. His support for this issue is welcome, but unfortunately it is belated. It is years overdue. I suggest that the only reason the Attorney has backed down is straight political expediency. He suddenly realised that the women of this State were being left in a very difficult position because of the unsworn statement.

There is growing concern (backed by growing evidence) that this Government is soft on law and order. Criminals, it seems, frequently have greater rights than you or I, Mr President. It is a sad reflection on this Government that this injustice will now be changed only because of political expediency and because the polls demand it.

You, Mr President, would be aware that I have followed the issue of road safety in general, as has the Hon. Gordon Bruce. The question of random breath testing has been of great interest. I have watched Bills go through this Council to provide for a beefing up of random breath testing. All of us, particularly members of the Select Committee, agreed with those Bills and thought that they were necessary to provide the proper operation of random breath testing. However, I am concerned that we are not spending enough money on advertising. Advertising is more important than this \$500 000 that the Government is spending to promote itself, as was disclosed in the past few days.

The question of safety and human lives is involved, and there is not point in having more units on the road and doing all those other things in regard to random breath testing if we do not raise public awareness. It is absolutely essential that sufficient funds be allocated to ensure that the public is aware that random breath testing is around and is working. In New South Wales this job was done properly. As the Hon. Mr Bruce would know, the Select Committee went to New South Wales and found that the program of advertising there was excellent.

The Hon. G.L. Bruce: And still is.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right. They are still advertising, and public awareness is at an all time high. As a result, the number of deaths in New South Wales although

slightly above 1 000 this year is well below the average of 1 300 as in previous years; that is, 600 New South Welshmen in two years are still alive because of random breath testing and, more particularly, because of the very high awareness created to a large extent by the advertising that has occurred. I would strongly recommend to the Government that it redirect the money that it is allocating for its self promotion campaign for the next election, that is, the action which I disclosed earlier and which Mr Olsen disclosed in another place. The Government should use that money to promote random breath testing. As the Minister of Agriculture would know, that will save lives, and that is essential. The number of deaths in South Australia is still far too high.

I must say that I am disappointed that, after all the work that the Select Committee has done and the work done to ensure that most of the recommendations of the Select Committee pass through this Council, that area is still neglected. I will watch with great interest too see whether the Government (and I guess the Premier will be the key figure) uses the South Australia 150 celebrations for political purposes. It will be a matter of great disappointment if that occurs, but it seems to me that even at this stage that could well be the case. I can already see a situation where a celebration that should be apolitical, a celebration by all the people of the State, because an election is coming up, will be milked by the Premier for all it is worth for political advantage. I trust that that will not occur, but it appears to me that that could quite possibly be the track down which the Premier and his advisers are running. There is no doubt in my mind that over the next few months we will see a parade of taxpayer funded commercials with the Government milking the situation for all it is worth, singing the praises of the Premier and the Government. I bet that very few of the advertisements will mention the Labor Party. Very few will contain the word 'Labor'. I wonder how many old time Labor people and union people (and I use those words in the indirect not the direct sense) such as the Hon. Mr Blevins and the Hon. Mr Bruce—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I am not sure about the Hon. Mr Creedon: I think he was a small businessman and a capitalist—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: That is right; I wonder how they feel about the Labor Party being left out. Do they really support that action? Do they think personalities should

become more important than the Party they have supported over the years? These commercials to which I refer will be part of an unprecedented abuse of taxpayers' funds (if the moves that are already under way are any indication) which will put the efforts of the Dunstan Government to shame. It is an attempt to glorify this Labor Government's meagre achievements for cynical electoral advantage.

The Hon. C.W. Creedon interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes, it was. People are gullible, I grant that. The South Australian community is pre-eminently concerned about four things: the high level of taxation that we face; the disturbing and growing extent of Government waste (and if members want examples I am happy to cite them, but anyone can drive out to North Adelaide and see one); the level of unemployment; and the need to firmly and effectively tackle crime and violence. Only the Liberal Party has the desire, determination and capacity to tackle all these things. But I am very confident that this will be my last Address in Reply speech from the Opposition benches. The Government has been electioneering in the advertisements that have already been prepared. The Government has taxed, tormented and twisted for three years and will be rejected by the public even with this latest attempt to sell its soul for political expediency. I reject absolutely what has been said by the Hon. Mr Creedon.— that this Council is an unnecessary part of the Parliament and that it should be abolished.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: He is finished now.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes, only when he finishes. This Council is a valuable part of the Parliament. It does not need me to sell it but, if the Hon. Mr Creedon or any member opposite wants to set out to abolish this Council and if they want to debate the issue in the community, I am happy to meet them anywhere and to take on the subject. We will see who comes out on top. I know that the people of this State know the value of this Council and the valuable part it is playing in the Parliament of this State. I support the motion.

The Hon. G.L. BRUCE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.40 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday 8 August at 2.15 p.m.