

# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

### First Session of the Forty-Sixth Parliament (1986)

The Forty-Fifth Parliament of South Australia having been prorogued until 11 February 1986, and the House of Assembly having been dissolved on 10 November, general elections were held on 7 December. By proclamation dated 19 December and subsequently varied by proclamation dated 9 January 1986, the new Parliament was summoned to meet on 11 February, and the First Session began on that date.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday 11 February 1986

The Council assembled at 11 a.m. pursuant to proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor (Sir Donald Dunstan). The Clerk (Mrs J.M. Davis) read the proclamation summoning Parliament.

#### GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION

The Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary to prepare for the opening of the session, the Honourable Leonard James King (Chief Justice) and the Honourable Samuel Joshua Jacobs (a judge of the Supreme Court) were announced by Black Rod (Mr B.M. Serjeant) and conducted to chairs on the dais.

A message was sent to the House of Assembly requesting members of that House to attend to hear the Governor's Commission for the opening of Parliament. The members of the House of Assembly having arrived, the Clerk read the Commission.

The Senior Commissioner (the Honourable Mr Justice King) announced that His Excellency the Governor would, in person, declare the reasons for his calling the Parliament together as soon as the new members of the Legislative Council and the members of the House of Assembly had been sworn and the two Houses had notified that they had elected respectively their President and Speaker.

The members of the House of Assembly and His Honour Mr Justice Jacobs withdrew.

#### SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

His Honour Mr Justice King produced a Commission from the Governor authorising him to be a Commissioner to administer to newly elected members the Oath of Allegiance or receive an Affirmation in lieu thereof, also writes and returns for the election of 11 members.

The Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation was then administered to and subscribed by the new members, who signed the members' roll.

The Commissioner retired.

#### ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General):** I remind the Council that the time has arrived for the election of its President. I move that the Hon. Anne Levy be President of the Council.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON (Leader of the Opposition):** I second the motion.

**The Hon. ANNE LEVY:** I submit myself to the will of the Council.

There being no other nomination, the Hon. Anne Levy was declared elected and was escorted to the President's Chair by the mover and the seconder of the motion.

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** Madam President, I take this opportunity on behalf of members on this side of the Council, and indeed on behalf, I am sure, of all members of the Legislative Council, to congratulate you on your election as President of this Chamber.

There is some personal satisfaction, so far as I am concerned, in your election today as President, because all my colleagues who became members at the same time as I did in the Legislative Council—the Hon. Frank Blevins, the Hon. Dr Cornwall and you Madam President—have now either been appointed to the Ministry or, in your case, been elevated to the position of President of this Chamber, a position of the same status and importance as that of Ministerial rank in the Parliament.

It is particularly pleasing for me that the Chamber has seen fit to elect you to be President. Since you have been a member of the Parliament the assiduousness with which you have pursued the interests and rights of women in Parliament and the South Australian community has been well recognised by everyone in the Chamber.

I think that it is important to note that today you are making history in that you are the first woman Presiding Officer to be elected to any Chamber in any Parliament in Australia. I think that this is something of symbolic importance, particularly in view of the work I have mentioned that you have done in the Parliament and the community in advocating the rights of women in our society. There is another respect, however, in which you are also making history, and that is that you are the first Labor member of Parliament to serve as President of the Legislative Council in South Australia.

That, too, I believe is a significant achievement, not just for you but also, may I say, for the Labor Party after the many years (indeed, of course, over a century) of the existence of the Legislative Council—I think since its constitution in 1856. That is another cause for personal congratulation for you. Indeed, I think it is also something of which the Labor movement in this State can be proud—that, after the moves to democratise the Legislative Council in the 1960s and the 1970s, and now having a Legislative Council which is elected by full adult franchise, we have finally seen the election of a member of the Labor Party—a non-conservative member—to the presidency of this Chamber.

You have served the Parliament in a number of ways since your election on 12 July 1975, most recently as the Chairperson of the Industries Development Committee. I do not think there would be anyone in the Chamber who did not feel that you were fully qualified for election to the presidency of this Chamber. Your election is symbolic in one sense: symbolic of the fight that you have carried to the community for the rights of women in our society. I would like to emphasise that I do not believe that your appointment is mere tokenism. There is no question that your appointment is well deserved—that you are as well qualified as any member of this Chamber to be elected to the presidency of it.

I am sure that the additional public position that you now hold will enable you to continue to fight for those issues that you hold dear and, in particular, of course, to continue your work in the community on behalf of your constituents, particularly your work in continuing to promote the cause of equality of women in our society, which I believe—I think most people believe—still has some way to go to be fully achieved.

I think everyone recognises that you have the qualities that are needed for the presidency as well as the experience, but also the personal qualities of impartiality, fairness, courtesy and tolerance which are necessary for the position of President, having at times to preside over conflicting claims within the Chamber and, indeed, outside it, as you have also a significant part, as one of the Presiding Officers, in running the Parliament as a whole.

For my part and the part of honourable members on this side of the Council, I can assure you that you will command our respect, and I offer you my heartiest congratulations on your election to the position. I wish you every success in this important new office and new step in your Parliamentary career.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam President: that is a term we will undoubtedly get to use and get to know, because it is a brand new situation for all of us. I wish to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election to this very important office. From the point of view of the Opposition, the office can be even more important than it is from the point of view of the Government, because at times the situation can be difficult.

In the short time in which you have had discussions with me about matters in the Council, I know that you will conduct this office with impartiality and fairness. Indeed, I know from your time in this Council, which has been of considerable length, that you understand the problems of Opposition and the need for Oppositions to be treated with impartiality and fairness. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to give you any lecture on that subject.

I must say, Madam President, that we will miss you on the floor of the Council, sitting on the other side reminding us when we interject too much. I trust that your previous attitude will not lead you into taking too drastic action against members, because I believe this Council conducts itself well and reasonably, and I would not like to see too many restrictions placed on debate. I remind honourable

members of your favourite saying 'He's at it again', and I trust you will find some new way of dealing with the difficulties that you might have with certain honourable members—it seems mostly on this side of the Council.

Again, I congratulate you. As the Attorney said, it is a unique change, because it is the first time that a non-conservative member has taken the Chair. (Of course, that could have occurred, as the Attorney-General knows, but that is history.) I anticipate your handling this position with impartiality and fairness.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to the honourable member who held your position prior to your taking office—the Honourable Arthur Whyte. He presided over this Council extremely well, conducting the business fairly and with impartiality over a long period. Certainly, I appreciated his role in this Council during his time here. Madam President, on behalf of the Opposition I congratulate you.

**The Hon. I. GILFILLAN:** It is with great pleasure that I address you, Madam President, on behalf of my colleague, the Honourable Mike Elliott, and the Australian Democrats, as we celebrate your appointment as President of the Chamber. I agree with most but not all of the remarks that were made by the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber.

Having shared three years with you as an on-the-floor active member, I confidently expect you to be aware of the difficulties and frustrations from the time you spent in the rank and file. I am sure your experience will lead to an astute, fair and lively Presidency. We look forward to your contribution in that role. We are also keen that you continue as a contributing member of Parliament because, as was acknowledged by others, your gifts and discharge of responsibilities in that area would be a sorry loss to South Australia if the Presidency stifled them. We are sure that that will not be the case, and we look forward to your Presidency in this Chamber.

**The PRESIDENT:** I thank honourable members most sincerely for the confidence they have expressed in me. I feel very honoured by the privilege of being President of the Legislative Council. I may say that the view from here is rather different from that on the floor, and I expect that I will enjoy my time as President of the Council. I would like to make clear that, as President, I regard myself as the servant of the Council and bound to protect the rights of all its members, both collectively and individually.

I can assure members that I aim to ensure the efficient, fair and impartial conduct of proceedings in this Council, and I ask for their tolerance and good will to help me achieve this. As a democratic socialist, I have a long commitment to representative government and the supremacy of Parliament.

I hope to represent this Council as its spokesperson for the benefit of all South Australians who have elected us to represent them. I certainly do not intend to diminish in any way my political activities, although I will no longer be able to participate in debate within the Council. I am certainly very conscious of the honour of being the first ever member of the Labor Party to be President of this Council.

The Legislative Council is 130 years old, and the Australian Labor Party is 95 years old, yet all the 12 previous Presidents of this Council have come from the conservative side of politics. I am glad that attitudes have changed. We now have a majority of people in this State who have expressed a clear preference for a Labor Government and, as such, a member of the Labor Party should preside in this Chamber, as in the other place. I am indeed grateful to my Caucus colleagues for permitting me to be their first ever representative in this position, and I hope that I will not disappoint them.

I am also both proud and humble at being the first woman to become a presiding officer in any Parliament in this country. Women are still most under represented in positions of responsibility and power in our society. Although women members of our Parliament have increased from three to eight during the International Decade for Women, we are still only a tiny minority amongst legislators. Certainly, there is much to be achieved before our Parliaments are truly representative in sex distribution of the community which elects us.

Although South Australian women achieved suffrage in 1894, we had to wait for 65 years before a woman became a member of this Parliament, and now 92 years before a woman has become a presiding officer in an Australian Parliament. I know that I will cease to be the sole woman presiding officer in about two hours time when certain events occur in Canberra. I hope that our select group of two increases in number in time to come. Throughout my time in the Chair in this Chamber I will attempt to represent my sex as well as my Party and this Council to the best of my ability. Again, I express my appreciation to you all for the honour that you have done me. I look forward to the responsibilities attached to being your President and I hope that my efforts will meet with the approval of you all.

At 11.38 a.m., attended by a deputation of members, the President proceeded to Government House.

*On resuming at 12.11 p.m.:*

**The PRESIDENT:** I have to report that, accompanied by honourable members, I proceeded to Government House and there presented myself as President to His Excellency the Governor. I claimed for the Council the right of free access to and communication with His Excellency, and that the most favourable construction might be placed on all its proceedings. His Excellency was pleased to reply:

I congratulate the honourable members of the Legislative Council on their choice of a President. I readily assure you of my confirmation of all the constitutional rights and privileges of the Legislative Council, the proceedings of which will always receive the most favourable consideration.

*[Sitting suspended from 12.13 to 2.15 p.m.]*

### GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

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

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

1. I have called you together for the dispatch of business.
2. My Government begins its second term of office confident that it will continue to guide South Australia towards further growth and prosperity.
3. My Government has been pleased to note the continued strength of our economy throughout the past year. There was sustained improvement in employment opportunities and a decline in the unemployment rate which was noticeably greater than the national trend. Particularly high levels of activity in the housing and construction industries contributed significantly to these results.
4. My Government's first priority remains the development of a regional economy which can provide jobs for all South Australians who seek work. Policies for the development of the State will be directed towards the broadening of our economic base.

5. My Government has built on the start made by our predecessors to ensure that South Australia becomes the centre for the development of high technology industries within Australia. The Innovation House complex at Technology Park, the third stage of which will be completed this year, provides a focus for this development and the attraction of new companies to the State.

6. My Government also recognises the benefits that can be provided to our economy through the development of a strong tourism industry. The Australian Formula One Grand Prix has given our City and our State international recognition. The completion of the Casino-Convention Centre complex and major developments in regional areas provides a solid base from which to further develop our tourism industry.

7. My Government will develop programs which stimulate the manufacturing sector. A Chair of Manufacturing will be established at one of the State's tertiary institutions, and a South Australian Centre of Manufacturing will be developed offering a broad range of advice and assistance to the manufacturing industry.

8. South Australia's export drive will be enhanced by aggressive promotion programs overseas, the development of economic and cultural links with Shandong Province in China and the opening of a trade office in Los Angeles. My Government has been working with the private sector to establish South Australia International, an organisation which will co-ordinate South Australia's international trade effort. A Working Party will soon present its report on the appropriate structure for the new organisation.

9. My Government recognises the potential for South Australian industry to benefit from large scale projects. The announcement of the go-ahead for the Roxby Downs project will have an immediate impact as the construction phase commences this year. My Government will continue its drive to secure the contract for the Royal Australian Navy's submarine replacement program, confident that the State's industrial record and technological competence offer significant advantages to the Commonwealth Government and the successful tenderer.

10. My Government is gravely concerned at the situation in the rural sector. Declining world commodity prices and high interest rates are causing many farmers great hardship. My Government will work with the rural industry in this State in planning for the future of the industry and will vigorously represent its concerns at the national level.

11. Despite an indifferent start to the 1985 season, the year finished much better than anticipated. With the harvest virtually completed, above average cereal yields have been recorded in most areas of the State. The recent creation of the Rural Adjustment and Development Fund, reaffirms the Government's commitment to the rural sector and indicates its recognition of problems facing farmers and rural communities.

12. My Government will place great importance in its second term of office on environmental issues. A study has commenced of the needs of metropolitan Adelaide until the year 2000. This study will be a crucial factor in determining the nature of our city's development. My Government will be closely involved in this study and will shortly place before this Parliament and the community an analysis of the options for future urban growth.

13. The safety and quality of our water supply is of prime concern. My Government will increase controls over potential water polluting activities in the Adelaide Hills. Amendments will be introduced to the Dangerous Substances Act and Regulations to protect the marine environment from chemical spillages and mishandling of dangerous chemicals.

14. My Government will maintain its vigilance in the area of fire protection for Hills residents. A new Country

Fires Act will be introduced which will clearly establish responsibilities for the prevention and suppression of fire.

15. My Government is concerned to ensure the personal safety and security of the community. Death and injury on the State's roads is of great concern. The provisions of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act will be reviewed so that penalties for offences which cause death and bodily harm by dangerous driving will be increased.

16. My Government will reintroduce legislation designed to alleviate trauma suffered by victims of crime. This will provide for emergency financial support and the speedy resolution of compensation of claims.

17. Protection for home buyers against unsatisfactory building work will be provided by amendments to the Builders Licensing Bill. A Travel Agents Bill will be introduced to protect the travelling public from the effects of insolvencies among travel agents.

18. My Government believes that the people have endorsed its proposed changes to the workers compensation system in this State. Following consultation with employer and employee groups, a Workers Rehabilitation Act will now be introduced which will improve the rehabilitation prospects of injured workers. Later this year, an Occupational Health and Safety Bill will be introduced.

19. My Government has demonstrated the priority it gives to employment by the administrative arrangements it has put in place to ensure that technical and further education are more closely linked to Government employment programs. My Government is also mindful of the need to give our young people the very best education available and one which will equip them for their future place in an increasingly technological world.

20. My Government will continue to pursue high standards in the provision of health and welfare services. Health services to meet the needs of communities in the rapidly growing areas of Adelaide will be expanded. Stage I of the redevelopment of Lyell McEwin Health Service will be completed later this year and, in the southern area, planning for a hospital at Noarlunga will proceed.

21. My Government is concerned at the impact of rising interest rates, particularly on home buyers. A new range of measures to assist home buyers will be introduced and my Government is hopeful that recent falls in prime interest rates indicate some easing of financial conditions.

22. South Australia's recreation and sporting facilities will continue to be developed. Construction of an international hockey stadium and small bore rifle range will commence in 1986.

23. This year is the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of European settlement in South Australia. In March of our Jubilee Year we will be honoured by a visit from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh. The biennial Festival of Arts will also be staged this year. In view of the significance of these events and in line with moves in Eastern States, my Government will introduce legislation to extend daylight saving by a further two weeks. Later in the year His Holiness Pope John Paul II will visit our State. The visits from Her Majesty and His Holiness are of great importance to our people.

24. As we celebrate our Jubilee Year, my Government is confident that, with good management of our regional economy, South Australia will continue to make a significant contribution to the nation's growth and development. Moreover, my Government is determined to ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to share in the benefits of the State's social and economic progress.

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

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

**The PRESIDENT:** Members will know that Parliament commences each day with the reading of prayers. As I have always made an affirmation rather than take an oath, I feel it is more appropriate for the prayers to be read by the Clerk rather than by me, and the Acting Clerk has kindly agreed to do so.

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General):** In accordance with the wish of the President, I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable the Clerk to read prayers this day and for the remainder of the session.

The Council divided on the motion:

Ayes (11)—The Hons. G.L. Bruce, B.A. Chatterton, J.R. Cornwall, M.J. Elliott, M.S. Feleppa, I. Gilfillan, C.A. Pickles, T.G. Roberts, C.J. Sumner (teller), G. Weatherill, and Barbara Wiese.

Noes (10)—The Hons. J.C. Burdett, M.B. Cameron, L.H. Davis, Peter Dunn, K.T. Griffin, C.M. Hill, J.C. Irwin, Diana Laidlaw, R.I. Lucas, and R.J. Ritson.

**The PRESIDENT:** There are 11 Ayes and 10 Noes, a majority of 1 for the Ayes. However, that is not sufficient for a suspension of Standing Orders, which requires an absolute majority of the Council: in other words, 12 votes. I will abide by the wish of the Council and read the prayers, although I must express some astonishment that members who are Christian would wish their prayers read by a non believer.

*Prayers having been read:*

#### SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

**The PRESIDENT:** I have received a commission from His Excellency the Governor authorising me to administer the oath or affirmation to members of the Legislative Council.

#### MEMBERS' SERVICE

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General):** By leave of the Council, I wish to address some remarks to those members who retired from this Council at the conclusion of the last Parliament. On behalf of members on this side of the Council, and I am sure on behalf of the whole Council, I would like to express my thanks to the retiring members of the Council for the work that they contributed to it and to the people of this State during the period of their parliamentary service.

As honourable members realise, there was no previous opportunity to say anything about those members who retired, because, prior to the last election, Parliament was prorogued while we were not sitting. However, I do not believe that the occasion should pass with the retirement of these members without expressing our thanks to them. A number of members retired: the Hon. Mr DeGaris, the Hon. Arthur Whyte, the Hon. Cec Creedon, the Hon. Lance Milne and the Hon. Frank Blevins (although not retiring from political life, the Hon. Mr Blevins has left this Chamber). I would like to deal briefly with each one of those retiring members in the order in which they were elected to Parliament.

The Hon. Ren DeGaris was first elected in 1962. He was a member of the Land Settlement Committee from 1965 to 1967; in the Hall Government he was Chief Secretary, Minister of Health and Minister of Mines from 1968 to 1970; and he was also Leader of the Opposition in the

Legislative Council from 1967 to 1968 and from 1970 to 1979. Therefore the Hon. Mr DeGaris had a very long period of service in this Chamber. It is true that there were significant differences between him and members on this side of the Council, of whom at the time he was elected there were only four, particularly over the question of electoral reform. However, although those differences existed, and indeed were the subject of heated controversy at times during the 1960s and 1970s, I think it would be true to say that members on this side respected the Hon. Ren DeGaris's contribution to Parliament.

Once the question of electoral reform had been dealt with, I found that there were a number of issues on which I agreed with the honourable member during the latter period of his service in Parliament. In particular, the Hon. Mr DeGaris always had a very keen interest in Parliament as an institution and, in particular, he had a keen interest in the Legislative Council as one arm of that institution. He was concerned to develop procedures that ensured that members of Parliament were able to play their rightful role as elected representatives of the people in the oversight of actions by the Government. The Hon. Mr DeGaris put forward a number of important propositions on the committee system of Parliament and in particular of this Council; indeed, he was very forthright in his comments on the question of parliamentary control and examination of the finances of the Government.

The Hon. Mr DeGaris espoused those views, particularly in his later years in Parliament, and I believe that some of those views will bear fruit during this session of Parliament, as the Labor Party is committed in the area of parliamentary reform to many of the things that the Hon. Mr DeGaris espoused. In particular, he was one of the members of the Legislative Council who was able to dissect a Government budget very effectively, and I believe that in his latter years he was able to bring a reasonably non-partisan approach to the analysis of Government budgets, including the analysis of budgets produced by the Tonkin Government between 1979 and 1982.

The Hon. Arthur Whyte spent 19 years as a member of the Legislative Council, having been elected in 1966. He was a member of the Subordinate Legislation Committee from 1973 to 1978. Of course, he was President of the Council from 1978 to 1985—a period of seven years. On both occasions (in 1978 and again in 1979) he was elected as President of the Council, with support of members on this side. Members on this side, at a personal level, always had good relations with the Hon. Arthur Whyte as a back-bench member, and in particular in the important position as President of the Council over the seven years that he presided in the position that you now occupy, Madam Chair.

The Hon. Arthur Whyte contributed a number of things to Parliament and community activities. I do not wish to enumerate all those at present. However, coming from a farming background at Kimba, he obviously had an important interest in rural industry and in the concerns of rural people in this State. He also had a particular interest in the racing industry.

As President, he had to deal with a number of issues and determined, in his view, that he had a right to block Government legislation at that time. It was important to negotiate with the Hon. Arthur Whyte on a number of issues during the last three years that the Labor Government (the Bannon Government) was in power. I particularly mention the Maralinga land rights Bill that was before this Council. The Hon. Arthur Whyte played an important role in those negotiations.

From the time of his election, the Hon. Arthur Whyte advocated a system of proportional representation for the

Council. The system that was introduced in 1973, although not precisely what he would have supported in terms of proportional representation, was a system of proportional representation and is the system by which honourable members are now elected to this Council.

I believe that in his Party room he advocated the cause of that method of electing representatives to Parliament, in particular to this Council, and that it in part bore fruit in 1973. Therefore, I also thank the Hon. Arthur Whyte for his contribution to the Council and to the South Australian community.

The Hon. Cec Creedon was a member of Parliament from 1973 to 1985. He was a member of the Subordinate Legislation Committee from 1973 to 1975 and of the Public Works Standing Committee from 1975 to 1985. He came to Parliament with a strong interest and background in local government as Mayor of Gawler. He made a number of contributions in Parliament and in the community, particularly in the area of local government administration and the law relating to it.

The Hon. Lance Milne was elected as an Australian Democrat to the Legislative Council in 1979 and served for six years after a career as an accountant and in public life as Mayor of Walkerville, as Agent-General of this State in London and as Chairman of SGIC. As the only Australian Democrat member in this Chamber for three years—from 1979 to 1982—he had a particularly difficult and onerous task in assessing legislation that came before us.

The Hon. Lance Milne brought his own particular engaging personality to the deliberations of the Legislative Council. He was always accessible and attempted to find the middle ground in any debate and dispute in the Parliament. He sought conciliation rather than confrontation in issues that were before us. I have no doubt that the Hon. Lance Milne in his consideration of issues before Parliament and the public of South Australia had firmly the interests of South Australia uppermost in his mind.

Therefore, I wish all those members a very happy retirement and thank them for their contributions to Parliament during their respective periods as members of the Legislative Council. With respect to the Hon. Frank Blevins, I wish only to say, of course, as he is continuing his parliamentary career as a member of the House of Assembly and still as a Minister, that he entered the Parliament at the same time as I did in 1975.

We have had a close association since then. I am sure that all honourable members here respected the abilities of the Hon. Mr Blevins on various committees—the Land Settlement Committee and the Subordinate Legislation Committee—and subsequently as Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Fisheries, Minister of Forests and now as Minister of Labour, Minister Assisting the Treasurer, and Minister of Correctional Services. I wish the Hon. Frank Blevins all the best in his new career in the House of Assembly.

Finally, I express congratulations, on behalf of those members of the Council who have been here for some time, to all the new members who have joined us here today—the Hon. Mr Elliott, the Hon. Mr Irwin, the Hon. Ms Pickles, the Hon. Mr Roberts and the Hon. Mr Weatherill, all of whom have joined the Legislative Council as new members, some Liberal, one Democrat and some Labor. I extend to them my personal congratulations and express the wish that they enjoy their period as members of Parliament and find the career of a parliamentarian fruitful and to the benefit of the people whom they represent.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON (Leader of the Opposition):** By leave I would like to say a few words about the honourable members who have retired and whose names the Leader has detailed. The Hon. Ren DeGaris is the first

about whom I will speak. I was one of the people in this Council in the early 1970s who can recall many of the occasions on which there were differences of opinion. Let me assure honourable members that, despite those published differences of opinion, such did not extend to a personal level and I did appreciate the Hon. Mr DeGaris. I have known him throughout my entire life and he has always been a friend. However, we have had some differences of opinion.

The Hon. Mr DeGaris served the Parliament extremely well and served the Liberal Party extremely well, also. He was the Leader of this Party for many years. He was a Minister of the Government in 1968-69 and during that period, and earlier than that, some honourable members will remember that I stood for the House of Assembly and he was my adviser and mentor in those days. I valued his advice during that period. I wish him well in his retirement. I have no doubt that, having been in the Parliament for so long, it must be very difficult indeed to then step into civilian life and start life again in retirement, because the Parliament becomes part of one's way of life.

The Hon. Mr Whyte and I also had differences of opinion at various times—some fairly recent, I might say. When he was President there was always the assumption that because he was a Liberal he always listened to my advice. I found that the opposite was often true; that I was required to listen to his advice because of his experience and because he was a very independent person. I am sure that every honourable member who was in this Council during the period of his Presidency would accept that he was very fair and just in his decisions. We might not have agreed on all occasions with what he did, but he did it to the best of his ability, conducting the Chair fairly and appropriately and I did appreciate that. I wish him and his wife well in retirement and trust that we will see them from time to time.

The Hon. Mr Whyte was a very strong advocate of country people and a strong advocate of country racing—not a subject I know a lot about. However, from time to time I was schooled on the matter and required to issue certain words that were clearly not mine but words of the President acting on behalf of that part of his constituency with whom he had a close association. Thanks to the Minister of Health and others, we did win a battle or two with various authorities. If anybody has any idea that I was responsible for those wins, that is not the case: it was the Hon. Mr Whyte who did the work. He was a long-term member of the Parliament on behalf of the Liberal Party and he served the Party extremely well. He did his best to carry out his job on behalf of people, particularly those in the Eyre Peninsula region. The recent election in that part of the world clearly indicated the sort of regard in which he was held in that part of the State.

The Hon. Mr Creedon has also been around for a long time. He came into the Parliament when the franchise was changing. I think he was a partner of the Honourable Mr Chatterton at that time. He was a very good committee man. I served on two very important committees with him—the random breath test select committee (and I did appreciate his contribution to that committee) and the native vegetation clearance select committee. He was very fair in his approach to both of those subjects and to many other subjects which were discussed in this Council.

The Hon. Mr Milne's record speaks for itself. He certainly provided some interest in this Chamber. It was a battle all the time to ascertain whether he would listen to the voice of reason from this side, which I thought was always right, or whether he would listen to the voice of reason from the other side, which the Attorney and his fellow Ministers thought was right. He did his best, was very fair and, most importantly, did his best to protect this Council. There were

times when I wondered whether the House of Assembly was making a takeover move for us. However, the Hon. Mr Milne kept control of that situation and was certainly willing to assist. He had a long and distinguished career in other areas and certainly contributed to this Parliament in a very fair and just way. I did not always agree with the decisions that he made. However, one cannot always get one's own way in this establishment.

I will not say too many nice things about the Hon. Mr Blevins because he is a continuing member of the Government and I am sure that tomorrow I will disagree with something he does. I will say, though, that he was an excellent member of the Legislative Council. He certainly started out with some different views, but by the time he left this Council I think it had to some extent educated him. I was sorry, indeed, to lose him because he had just got to the point where he understood the value of the Legislative Council.

**The Hon. G.L. Bruce:** The quality is downstairs.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** Probably on your side. I indicate that I appreciated his role in making certain that this Council remained a separate and independent Chamber of the Parliament. I welcome all new members. I will not go through them by name, but I am pleased to see new faces scattered around the Chamber. I indicate to them that this is an excellent Chamber of the Parliament. It is the most democratically elected House of the Parliament, as you would all appreciate. I think that we should make a point of protecting it and I trust that you will grow to understand and appreciate the role of the Legislative Council. I am quite certain that the public appreciate our role, but our friends and comrades in arms in the other place do not always appreciate our role.

We attempt to provide a reasonable and reasoned debate on issues; new members on the other side might not always agree. However, we do, I believe, represent a broadminded view of the South Australian electorate. I am pleased indeed to see the Hon. Jamie Irwin on my side of the Chamber and can assure members on the other side that he will contribute to this Parliament in a worthwhile way.

**The Hon. L.H. DAVIS:** I would like to join with the Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr Sumner) and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing my appreciation of the service given by retiring members. The retirement of the Hon. Ren DeGaris marks the retirement of the father of the House of the last Parliament, and it is worth placing on record the fact that this means that my colleague, the Hon. Murray Hill, becomes the father of the House. Mr DeGaris gave distinguished service to the Liberal Party, to the Parliament and to the community. He was a formidable debater, particularly on financial and constitutional matters. Certainly, the issues he tackled were quite often controversial, but he was fearless in putting his point of view, and for that he was always respected.

The Hon. Arthur Whyte was President of this Chamber for nearly eight years. He was a kindly man and, as his friends on the West Coast—and, indeed, throughout South Australia—would have said of him, he was a real Australian. He had a great sense of fair play. He had compassion for and an understanding of the rural community from which he came. He was a shrewd negotiator. As President he was a presiding officer of distinction and his contribution will be long remembered. As you would be aware, Madam President, he continued to seek to serve the Party by standing for Flinders in another place and achieved a remarkable 15 per cent swing for the Liberal Party, which was a tribute to him from the people of that area.

The Hon. Cec Creedon was a quiet, kindly man who came to the Parliament with a fine record of service in his local community. I served with the Hon. Mr Creedon on

several select committees. He was a man of few words but with infinite common sense and, as my colleague the Hon. Mr Cameron said, he was a fine committee man.

What can one say of the Hon. Lance Milne? We always hoped that at the last moment he would change his mind and seek re-election but, sadly, that was not to be. He was a member who, more often than not, was under considerable pressure, because he was the person to whom people seeking a point of view would go, knowing that Lance Milne had the balance of power, if not the balance of reason. He had some lovely traits, lovely personal qualities. He always maintained his sense of humour however tight the situation, and the Hon. Lance Milne will be sadly missed.

The Hon. Frank Blevins, of course, has applied for and won a transfer to another place, where he will continue as a Minister of the Government. I also make the point that my colleague the Hon. Mr Cameron has made: he certainly modified his view over the last decade.

I also would like to join in welcoming to this Chamber five new members: the Hon. Jamie Irwin, the Hon. Carolyn Pickles, the Hon. Terry Roberts, the Hon. George Weatherill and the Hon. Michael Elliott. I am sure that they will enjoy their stay in this Chamber.

Finally, my congratulations to you, Madam President, on achieving your high office.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VACANCY

The **PRESIDENT** laid on the table the minutes of the assembly of members of the two Houses held this day to fill a vacancy in the Legislative Council caused by the resignation of the Hon. Frank Blevins.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- Adelaide Children's Hospital Stage 4 Redevelopment (Phase I),
- Elizabeth Urban Aboriginal School (Establishment),
- Happy Valley Water Filtration Plant Distribution System Augmentation (Revised Proposal),
- Modbury Hospital Redevelopment,
- Mount Gambier Hospital Redevelopment—Phase I,
- Mount Gambier Hospital (Replacement of Boilers),
- Roxby Downs (Education Complex and Government Offices),
- St Leonards Primary School (Consolidation).

The **PRESIDENT** laid on the table the following interim reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works:

- Augmentation of the EL 137 and EL 172c Water Supply Pressure Zone,
- Port Lincoln Community College of Technical and Further Education (Establishment),
- St Leonards Primary School (Consolidation).

#### PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

- Pursuant to Statute—*
- Children's Court Advisory Committee Report, 1985.
- Commissioner of Police Report, 1984-1985.

- Coroners Act, 1975—Rules—Post Mortem Examination Fees.
- Industrial and Commercial Training Act, 1981—Regulations—Declared Variations.
- Justices Act, 1921—Rules—Court Fees.
- Legal Practitioners Act, 1982—Regulations—Certificate Fee.
- Local and District Criminal Courts Act, 1926.
- Local Court Fees.
- S.A. Jubilee 150 Board—Report, 1984-85.
- South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service—Report, 1985.
- Superannuation Fund—Report to Members, 1984-85.
- State Bank of South Australia Act, 1983—Regulations—Deceased Customers Accounts.
- Summary Offences Act, 1953—Regulations—Traffic Infringement Notice.
- Superannuation Act, 1974—Regulations—Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science.
- Eligibility of Part-time Staff.
- Rules of Court—Supreme Court Act, 1935—Breaches of Recognizances.
- Listing of Trials and Abuse of Process.
- Fees.
- Probate Fees.
- Interest Rates.
- Arraignment Day.

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

- Pursuant to Statute—*
- Commercial Tribunal Act, 1982—Regulations—Registers and Delegation of Powers.
- Landlord and Tenant Act, 1936—Regulations—Commercial Tenancing Agreements.
- Liquor Licensing Act, 1985—Regulations—Exemptions (Amendment).
- Second-hand Motor Vehicles Act, 1983—General Regulations, 1985.
- Licenses Trade Standards Act, 1979—Regulations—Sunglasses.

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

- Pursuant to Statute—*
- Report of Commissioner for Corporate Affairs on Administration of the Building Societies Act, 1975—Report, 1984-85.
- Report of Registrar of Credit Unions—Report, 1984-85.
- Friendly Societies Act, 1919—
- Alterations and Amendments to Constitution of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Grand Lodge of S.A.
- Amendments to General Laws of Mutual Community Friendly Society of South Australia.
- Amendments to General Laws of Manchester Unity-Hibernian Friendly Society.

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

- Pursuant to Statute—*
- Board of Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium 130th Annual Report, 1984-85.
- Chiropractors Act, 1979—Regulations—Registration Fees.
- Coast Protection Act, 1972—Regulations—South East Coast Protection District.
- Dentists Act, 1984—General Regulations, 1985.
- Department of Lands—Report, 1984-85.
- Dried Fruits Board of S.A. 56th Report, year ended 28 February 1985.
- Fisheries Act, 1982—
- Cowled's Landing Aquatic Reserve.
- Aquatic Reserves—Fish Processor—Price Paid.
- Fishery—Agents—Miscellaneous.
- Fishery—Agents—Marine Scale.
- Rock Lobster Fishery—Mussels—Southern Zone.
- Rock Lobster Fishery—Mussels—Northern Zone.
- River Fishery—Murray Cod.
- Scale Fishery—Licence Holders—Restricted Marine.
- Fishery—Murray Cod.
- Nets and Lobster Pots of Recreational Fisherman.
- Bag Limit for Snapper.
- Food Act, 1985—Regulations—Dairies and Itinerant Vendors of Milk.
- Greyhound Racing Control Board—Report, 1985.
- Health Act, 1935.
- Regulations—Qualifications of Manager and Directors of Nursing Homes.

Land Tax Act, 1936—Regulations—Prescribed Bodies.  
 Marketing of Eggs Act, 1941—Regulations—Grading of Eggs.  
 Report of Auditor-General, year ended 30th June, 1985.  
 Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, 1946—Regulations—Milk Licence Fees.  
 Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Act, 1956—Regulations—Fees.  
 Murray Bridge Soldiers' Memorial Hospital Incorporated—By-laws.  
 Native Vegetation Management Act, 1985—General Regulations, 1985.  
 Planning Appeal Tribunal—Report, 1985.  
 Planning Act, 1982—Regulations—Native Vegetation. 'Planning Appeal Tribunal Rules, 1985.'  
 Crown Development Reports by S.A. Planning Commission on proposed—  
 275kV Transmission Line, Torrens Island to North-field.  
 Proposed redevelopment of Carrick Hill Estate.  
 Racing Act, 1976—Rules of Trotting—Driver's Fees.  
 Real Property Act, 1886—Regulation—Land Division.  
 Road Traffic Act, 1961—Regulations—  
 Towing Loads and Vehicles.  
 Flags.  
 South Australian Health Commission—Report, 1985.  
 South Australian Health Commission Act, 1975—Regulations—Hospital Fees.  
 Salisbury Private Hospital, Declared Hospital.  
 South-Eastern Drainage Board—Report, 1985.  
 State Transport Authority—Report, 1985.  
 Stock Diseases Act, 1934—  
 Proclamation: Revocation of proclamation.  
 Vertebrate Pests Control Authority—Report, 1985.

By the Minister of Tourism (Hon. Barbara Wiese)—  
*Pursuant to Statute—*  
 Report of Aboriginal Lands Trust—1984-85.  
 Boating Act, 1974—Regulations.  
 Hog Bay.  
 Lake Leake.  
 Variation of River Murray (Goolwa Zoning) Regulations.  
 Children's Services Act, 1985—Regulations—Exemptions.  
 Education Act, 1972—Regulations—School Councils.  
 Director-General of Education—Report, 1984.  
 Flinders University of South Australia—Report 1984 and Statutes.  
 Department of Marine and Harbors—Report 1984-85.  
 Department of Mines and Energy—Report 1984-85.  
 S.A. Teacher Housing Authority—Report 1984-85.  
 Director-General of Technical and Further Education—Report 1984.  
 University of Adelaide—Report 1984 and Statutes.

By the Minister of Local Government (Hon. Barbara Wiese).  
*Pursuant to Statute—*  
 Building Act, 1970—Regulations—Surface Skimmer Devices.  
 Impounding Act, 1920—Regulations—Murray Bridge as Prescribed Area.  
 Local Government Act, 1934.  
 Amendments to Local Government Superannuation Scheme.  
 Local Government Finance Authority Act, 1983—Regulations.  
 Guarantee Fees.  
 Prescribed Hospitals.  
 Recreational Grounds (Regulations) Act, 1931—Regulations—  
 Glenelg Oval.  
 Thebarton Oval.  
 Football Park.  
 Mortlock Park.  
 Adelaide Oval.  
 Norwood Oval.  
 Unley Oval.  
 City of Adelaide—By-law No. 16—The Central Market.  
 City of Kensington and Norwood  
 By-law No. 47—Vehicle Weight.  
 By-law No. 48—Traffic.  
 City of Tea Tree Gully—By-law No. 50—Traffic.  
 Corporation of the City of Elizabeth By-law No. 30—  
 Rubbish Tips and Refuse.  
 Corporation of the City of Port Augusta—By-law No. 90—Fences.

Corporation of the Town of Thebarton—By-law No. 43—Heavy Loads.  
 District Council of Blyth—By-law No. 29—Vehicles.  
 District Council of Gladstone—By-law No. 24—Traffic.  
 District Council of Tanunda—By-law No. 32—Traffic.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: LYELL McEWIN HOSPITAL

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL (Minister of Health):** I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** On 11 September 1985 I wrote to the Chief Secretary about matters raised in Parliament concerning Lyell McEwin Hospital. I referred specifically to allegations of serious financial mismanagement and deliberate 'cover up'. Allegations were made against hospital employees and officers of the South Australian Health Commission.

In my memorandum to the Chief Secretary I formally requested a review by the Auditor-General of all the matters raised in the Upper House during the preceding three weeks concerning financial management at Lyell McEwin Hospital, including those issues dating back to the 1980-81 financial year.

**The Hon. M.B. Cameron:** Have you a copy of the reviews?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I have not sought leave to table it yet; just calm down a little. On 13 December the Chief Secretary forwarded to me a report from the Auditor-General on that review. I now seek leave to table that document, together with the findings of the Director of Audits, who conducted the actual review. In doing so, I also seek leave that the reports be authorised to be published.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I want to remind the Council of the performance of members of the Opposition, particularly the Hon. Mr Cameron and the Hon. Mr Lucas, who at the time chose to make irresponsible and slanderous statements under Parliamentary privilege about the behaviour of senior officers of the Health Commission in the execution of their duties.

At the time they were making their allegations—allegations unsupported by any evidence—I warned them that they were acting unfairly and that they were departing from the accepted standards of public behaviour, particularly with regard to the denigration of those who were unable to defend themselves. The Auditor-General's memorandum of 13 December 1985 summarises the findings of the Director of Audits and includes the following statement under the subheading (*e*):

... there is no evidence of 'cover up' by the Health Commission of the financial mismanagement which occurred at the hospital in 1981-82 and 1982-83.

I emphasise that the finding is no evidence of cover up. Honourable members will see that the position with regard to administrative deficiencies and the falsification of information submitted to the Health Commission was exactly as I described it to the Council last year. Clearly, these problems existed during the term of office of the previous Government (that is, the Tonkin Government). It was quite extraordinary—and I said so at the time—for the Opposition to try to make political capital out of problems which could be traced back to the Tonkin Administration. I was mystified by the recklessness of the Opposition because, while those deficiencies came to light in the first year of the Bannon Government, the political responsibility, if any, could only be sheeted home to the previous Liberal Government.

I refer honourable members to the second paragraph on page 4 of the report of the Director of Audits. This is an



unequivocal statement that, upon receiving the private auditor's report dated 27 June 1983 for the 1982-83 financial year on 19 August 1983, the Commission took prompt action to second officers to Lyell McEwin Hospital to investigate particular financial problems. On the following page, paragraphs 9, 11, 12 and 15 confirm the explanation I gave to the Council concerning the mistake made by the Executive Director of the Central Sector in an internal memorandum dated 26 August 1985.

In a memorandum written some two years later the Executive Director of the sector inadvertently wrote that in July 1983 the Commission became aware of financial mismanagement, falsification of returns, inadequate computer systems and a general low level of administrative competence in the Lyell McEwin Health Service. In fact, the falsification of returns came to light after that date and I explained that simple error of memory to the Council. Although the Opposition attempted to upgrade this simple error to concoct some sort of 'case' for charging cover-up by Commission officers, the Director of Audits has confirmed the truth of the explanation I gave. In the words of the Director of Audits, that explanation 'is fully supported by statements given by officers of the Health Commission and the hospital who were involved'. The Director goes on to say:

It is further substantiated by the sequence of events which took place as disclosed by our investigations. Also, the Administrator, in evidence, stated that he was not instructed by Commission officers to overstate the expenditure. We can only conclude that officers of the SA Health Commission were not aware of the overstated expenditure until 27 October 1983. The Commission did not query the returns and reimbursed the hospital for the expenditure shown in the claims which included the overstatement.

The detailed report by the Director of Audits shows that the parties to the falsification which occurred within the hospital were the former Administrator and the former Accountant. They were responsible for the falsification and for deliberately misleading the private accountant, who did not identify the journal entry understating expenditure for 1981-82 during the course of the audit for that year. If there is any valid criticism to be made of Health Commission officers it would appear to be their failure to take more drastic action against those responsible. The Director of Audits concludes that transferring the two hospital employees to non-financial positions within the hospital was not an appropriate penalty.

While recognising that the Commission's response to matters raised by the private auditor has resulted in much improved financial and management control at the hospital, both the Director of Audits and the Auditor-General stress the need for effective monitoring procedures and for a re-examination of board structures of hospitals and health units to ensure they have the necessary professional, business and financial management skills to carry out their duties effectively. The upgrading of hospital boards, using a corporate board of directors approach, is a matter which I have consistently addressed since early 1983. The matter was further discussed with representatives of the metropolitan public/teaching hospitals again last week.

The 1980-81 and 1981-82 fiasco at Lyell McEwin Hospital exposed serious problems. The complexity of the hospital system and the gross lack of management information and financial data have combined to perpetuate the line that hospital administration belongs in the 'too hard' basket. I want to make it clear that this has never been acceptable to me or to the Government. The myth that hospital management is more complex than many other complex areas of business administration must be dispelled. At last week's meeting with representatives of our major hospital boards and administrations I further outlined the directions we must take to increase efficiency, to improve accountability

and to guarantee the best possible services for South Australians.

The Chairmen, Chief Executive Officers and Medical Superintendents of the State's eight largest public/teaching hospitals attended the meeting for discussions and consultation on some of the major issues to be addressed during the next four years. A summary of these discussions, which were wide-ranging and very constructive, will be released publicly within a week. The topics included a review of the administration and financial management of the metropolitan public/teaching hospitals, issues of concern within hospitals, such as the role of boards and of executive staff, resource allocation and management information systems, and issues between hospitals such as inter and trans hospital rationalisation and coordination. I have asked the hospital representatives who attended the meeting to consider a number of options for establishing a hospital review and implementation strategy to upgrade financial and management information. The conduct of that review will be given the highest priority.

As honourable members will be aware, the process of independent assessment of health units and services is one which I have actively pursued as Minister of Health. In the past three years I have instituted more than 20 external reviews within the health system. Furthermore, we have acted decisively to implement many of the recommendations of those reviews. As I told the Council on 11 September last, the commission and the Minister strongly support the Auditor-General's suggestion for an independent study of the central office of the commission. I am pleased to advise that this review will be conducted by a committee to be chaired by Mr Ken Taeuber, formerly Director-General of the Department of Lands and a distinguished South Australian. His co-members will be Ms Anne Dunn, Commissioner of the Public Service Board, Dr. David Blaikie, Director of the South Australian Dental Services (who is also, a Master of Business Administration), and Mr Peter Agars of Touche Ross Management Consultants.

Hospital boards, the South Australian Health Commission and the Government must have reliable and detailed financial information to ensure good management. As part of that process we must ensure that false or misleading information is not fabricated by persons involved in the expenditure of large amounts of public funds. I will be recommending to Cabinet that we take whatever legislative or administrative action necessary to make it an offence under health law for any person employed in the Hospital system to give false or misleading information to Health Commission officers or any other person. This action will be instituted after proper consultation with interested parties, including the Public Service Association and the Government Management Office. In closing, I ask the Hon. Mr Cameron and the Hon. Mr Lucas to apologise to the Health Commission officers they have maligned.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I believe it is reasonable to expect them to acknowledge that they were mistaken, based on the report of the Auditor-General and the Director of Audits.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** It is quite odd. Members opposite spent a lot of time alienating their natural constituency in the hospitals over the past three years; apparently they intend to perpetuate that mistake. They cannot redress the hurt they caused to individual officers at the time, but they can certainly remove any remaining slight upon the reputation of those officers of the Health Commission. I expect they will have the integrity and decency to apologise and withdraw unreservedly.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL (Minister of Health):** I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** As honourable members will be aware, an outbreak of legionnaires disease has occurred in the southern suburbs of Adelaide. Legionnaires disease has been recognised in South Australia since 1979, and the IMVS was the first laboratory in the country to isolate the legionnaires disease bacillus now known as *legionella pneumophila* from a patient. Thirty cases of legionnaires disease were notified in South Australia during 1982-1985. All were investigated by the Public Health Service and no potential common source was identified for those cases. The disease has a case fatality rate of 30 per cent, but this is probably an overestimate because milder cases tend not to be recognised and hence leave hospital without being notified.

Legionnaires disease is an acute bacterial infection characterised by loss of appetite, feeling unwell, muscle aches, headache and fever with chills. A cough is common and abdominal pain with diarrhoea may occur. Pneumonia may be mild or severe. A variant of this infection known as 'pontiac fever' does not cause pneumonia and spontaneous recovery occurs in two to five days. The legionnaires disease bacillus is a common water and soil organism. The high percentage of the general population with antibody to legionnaires disease bacillus indicates that it is widespread and that infection (probably without recognisable disease) is common. Legionnaires disease is usually confined to adults, more frequently in elderly males and usually associated with a history of smoking or other disease that reduces resistance to infection.

One of the difficulties in conducting investigations is that the organism is difficult to grow. It requires special conditions, including a carbon dioxide enriched atmosphere, and it has a variable growth period of between two and 10 days. Because of its fragility in culture conditions, a negative growth does not necessarily indicate absence of the bacillus.

In late December 1985, the consultant staff in the Intensive Care Unit at Flinders Medical Centre became aware that they had seen four cases of severe pneumonia within a two-week period. This was considered highly unusual, particularly as it was early summer rather than winter. The first two cases had a fulminant pneumonia and died within 48 hours of admission. These now remain as suspected cases of legionnaires disease because in one case permission to obtain tissue by autopsy was refused and in the other a range of tests has been inconclusive. Further specialised tests are in progress regarding the second case.

The next two cases were admitted consecutively on the last two days in December. These patients had been ill for five and two days respectively. The possibility of an outbreak of some pneumonic pathogen in the community was discussed with the medical staff in clinical microbiology at this time (31 December 1985). Among a variety of pathogens, legionnaires disease was considered and investigations were performed for this disease. Erythromycin (the treatment of choice for legionnaires disease) was added to the treatment schedule of these two patients. Bronchoscopic specimens were obtained for microscopic examination and for culture of routine pathogens as well as *legionella pneumophila*. No legionella were found on direct immunofluorescence testing and cultures from both cases were negative after one week of incubation.

A further case of pneumonia was also seen in the general wards by the medical staff in the clinical microbiology at this time. This patient had been admitted unconscious on

26 December 1985. Extensive tests were inconclusive and based on the clinical features it was thought most likely that this patient had aspiration pneumonia. However, he was subsequently proven to have legionnaires disease. On 7 January 1986 a further case of fulminant pneumonia was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. Because of severe symptoms and the suspicion of legionnaires disease bronchoscopy was performed immediately. Specimens from tracheal aspirates and bronchoscopy were both positive by direct immunofluorescence for *legionella pneumophila* (serogroup 1). This patient died within 48 hours. This was the first evidence tending to confirm the diagnosis of legionnaires disease in any of these cases but, surprisingly, cultures for legionnaires disease bacillus were negative.

A closer examination of all these pneumonic cases then began. It is important to note that positive titres (positive blood reactions) take up to two weeks to develop and that they must be confirmed as rising titres to be conclusive. Therefore, it can be as long as three weeks before they can be described as decisive. Specimens of serum for the two remaining cases in the Intensive Care Unit were collected in the next week at a time when antibody to *legionella* would have been expected to be detectable. These subsequently proved to be positive for *legionella* antibody (serogroup 1). At the same time as the Clinical Microbiology Department was pursuing this investigation, doctors elsewhere in the hospital treating two patients with pneumonia were sending blood specimens to the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science for testing. The institute tests indicated that these two patients, who had milder pneumonia and had been discharged within five days of admission, had also suffered from legionnaires disease.

On 15 January 1986 the Communicable Disease Control Unit of the South Australian Health Commission received a laboratory report from Flinders Medical Centre notifying the positive immunofluorescence test on the case admitted on 7 January 1986. This was the first case to be notified to the unit since October 1985. This was also the first occasion when the Communicable Disease Control Unit became aware of any case associated with what was later recognised as an outbreak.

On the following day the Director, Bacteriology Division, Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, telephoned the Communicable Disease Control Unit to report that serological tests for legionnaires disease had confirmed six cases from the Flinders Medical Centre and Repatriation General Hospital at Daw Park. Some cases had been transferred from the Repatriation Hospital to Flinders Medical Centre for management. The unit followed up by contacting the two hospitals and it was established retrospectively that the five confirmed and two suspected (fatal) cases involved persons whose addresses were all in suburbs close together. The suburbs were Daw Park, Clapham, Pasadena and Westbourne Park. The apparent pattern was broken by one case, a resident of Normanville who had, however, spent the previous five weeks as an inpatient at the Repatriation Hospital. The Pasadena address belonged to a porter at the Repatriation Hospital who had recently suffered a severe pneumonia.

The investigation which ensued was detailed and complex and is still proceeding. The Public Health Service, with the close cooperation of Flinders Medical Centre and the Repatriation Hospital, began compiling available data on 17 January 1986. A health surveyor and a public health nurse were detailed full time to the investigation. Cases were defined as persons with a pneumonic illness and the demonstration of either a single high blood test (that is a high titre of immunoglobulin M), an acute phase antibody or a significant rise in titres of antibodies to legionnaires disease

bacillus. A history suggestive of legionnaires disease includes mental confusion, diarrhoea, liver and renal failure.

The number of these cases was clearly in excess of that expected for the place and season in question: thus, by definition, an epidemic had occurred. An examination of epidemiological factors showed that the time of onset of the first recognised cases was clustered in an eight day period from 25 December 1985 to 1 January 1986 consistent with a one day exposure on the 23 December 1985 because the incubation period of legionnaires disease ranges from two to 10 days.

There were initially four females and three male cases recognised, with ages ranging from 45 years to 72 years. Predisposing factors such as a history of smoking, other drug use, recent surgery and other chronic disease such as diabetes were common. There was a concentration of cases in Daw Park and closely adjacent suburbs and apart from one patient aged 45 all the patients were over 60 years old.

At Flinders Medical Centre, the full-scale investigation and search for possible cases included serological testing and interviews of individuals possibly associated with the outbreak. These included patients admitted to the hospital since 1 December 1985 with pneumonia and lower respiratory tract infections whose specimens may have been routinely collected and stored, but not tested. These patients were reinterviewed and had second specimens collected for comparative purposes after testing. The examination of cases of patients with pneumonia and lower respiratory tract infection was also extended to those in two categories: those living in suburbs close to the confirmed cases of legionnaires disease and those living in suburbs remote from the confirmed cases. New patients admitted with pneumonia and undiagnosed viral-type illnesses were monitored immediately upon presentation at the Accident and Emergency Department. Household family members of proven cases, presuming that they were likely to have undergone similar exposure, were interviewed and tested after examining records or talking to the family members. Each individual was allocated a level of suspicion of high, moderate or low depending on the presence of typical pneumonic symptoms, fever, radiological evidence of pneumonia and their place of residence in relation to the confirmed cases. High suspicion cases were pursued first and then moderate suspicion cases.

On 20 January 1986 a meeting was held at Flinders Medical Centre. Present were representatives of Flinders Medical Centre, the Repatriation General Hospital and the South Australian Health Commission. Case data were reviewed and both hospitals confirmed that no new cases were being seen in their wards. Repatriation Hospital representatives expressed concern about the circumstantial connection between the location of cases and air-conditioning cooling towers, especially some newly installed at the Repatriation General Hospital.

An extensive environmental sampling program was instituted at the hospital on 20 January 1986 and extended over subsequent days to include cooling towers, evaporative coolers and hot and cold water systems. Expansion of the investigation was planned, involving reinterviewing of known and suspect cases, collection of water samples from involved homes, collection of related operational and microbiological data from the E&WS Department and institution of a search for other sources of water aerosols near to the epicentre of the cases. Major metropolitan hospitals and local general practitioners were to be canvassed for other possible cases and apprised of the outbreak.

On 21 January 1986 E&WS Department staff joined the Health Commission interviewing team to facilitate collections of water samples, and by 22 January 1986 it was ascertained that this outbreak was not reflected in an abnor-

mal number of admissions to other hospitals. On 23 January 1986—the day I returned to work after three weeks' leave—the cleaning of cooling towers at Repatriation Hospital was being considered, though no positive isolations of legionnaires disease bacillus had been made. It was ascertained that one of the newly installed towers had operated recently on one day only (20 December 1985). Resampling of those towers as well as from sprinkler systems and from the house of a case was done by E&WS Department staff.

A further consultative meeting was held at Flinders Medical Centre on 24 January 1986. Twelve patients were then confirmed to have been involved in the outbreak. The epidemic period was now 22 December 1985 to 10 January 1986. A further nine suspect cases were still being investigated with dates of onset within that period. No new possible cases had been seen for a fortnight. The meeting was surprised at the lack of publicity of the outbreak, but likewise could see no benefit in premature announcements in view of the lack of recent cases, the awareness of the local medical practitioners, and the lack of any positive or useful advice that could be given.

On the same day as that consultative meeting—24 January—I was advised of the outbreak and immediately canvassed the desirability of making a public announcement. The Acting Director of the Public Health Service (Dr Chris Baker) provided written advice that a public statement should not be made at that time. Dr Baker's reasons were that the Public Health Service was still awaiting environmental microbiological results which would not be available for a week, that the outbreak was of short duration, and it would be more helpful to the community to provide a comprehensive picture once further details from interviews had been obtained. My advice was that a full and exhaustive statement should be made when the detail from all the investigations and the environmental microbiology testing was available—and that is advice which I am following today.

**An honourable member:** Do you want to incorporate it?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** Not really. The advice to delay making a public announcement was, however, overtaken on 28 January. Following media inquiries to my office I gave instructions that a comprehensive statement and all available information should be released. The question of commonality of water supply to houses occupied by patients confirmed or suspected as suffering legionnaires disease was raised at the 24 January consultative meeting by the E&WS Department representative. He indicated that these houses were in the same pressure zone, fed from tanks at Clapham and Pasadena, ultimately from the northern outlet of the Happy Valley Reservoir. Following the meeting, two commercial sites with air-conditioning plants close to the hospital were identified and investigated.

By 28 January 1986, the results of case interviews were beginning to show that there was no single common time and place factor that could explain all the infections. The Repatriation Hospital reported that, following its own testing of cultures, two of its cooling towers were presumptively positive for legionnaires disease bacillus. It was not known at that time if the isolates were of the same serogroup as that implicated in the human infections. Another 20 or so possible cases had been revealed from case note reviews.

Following further tests by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science it was established by 30 January that the organisms grown from the water specimens taken from the cooling towers at the Repatriation General Hospital were serogroup 1. This is the same serogroup as that which infected all the confirmed cases of legionnaires disease in the current outbreak. It is essential to note that this does not constitute a definite link between the contaminated cooling towers at the Repatriation General Hospital and the

human infections. Serogroup 1 is the most commonly found serogroup of legionnaires disease bacillus, both in the environment and in human infections. Confirmation of a causal role can only be obtained if bacteria isolated from humans are available for comparison with bacteria from the environment. In this case, because of the difficulties I outlined earlier, it has not been possible to grow bacteria from patients involved in the outbreak.

The count of confirmed cases on 30 January 1986 was 19, still all confined to the period 22 December 1985 to 10 January 1986. There remained the tight clustering near the Repatriation Hospital with others spread in an arc of perhaps two kilometre radius from that point. Mitcham Local Board of Health officers combed the district for cooling towers. Published reports of similar outbreaks showed that aerosols from these towers might travel up to 200 metres, so the search concentrated initially in an area of 500 metre radius from the central cases.

Discussions with senior staff of the E&WS Department on 30 and 31 January enabled a number of theories on mechanisms of infection to be advanced and tested. Heavy rain occurred on 8 and 9 December but did not appear to affect the results of routine bacterial monitoring for the area and no change was noted in the latter part of December. An intensive bacteriological survey of the Daw Park area had been done (as part of a prearranged program) on 17 January and it, too, revealed no abnormality. Flow rates in the area were not remarkable during the time of possible exposure, so sediments were unlikely to have been resuspended.

A street-by-street search for records of burst mains was arranged and, because the case distribution was consistent with a preferred seeding pattern, inspections for cross-connections were commenced. Resource reallocation was necessary to allow the State water laboratories to cope with the increased load presented by the ongoing investigations, and by the newly planned legionnaires disease bacillus surveillance of water sources and mains.

At the consultative meeting held at Flinders Medical Centre on 31 January 1986 progress with case interviews was reviewed. Two possible cases of legionnaires disease were reported at Flinders Medical Centre with a date of onset of 24 January 1986, putting them outside the previous epidemic period but predating the decontamination of the Repatriation General Hospital cooling towers: I stress that point—predating the decontamination of the Repatriation Hospital cooling towers. Both of these cases lived near others involved in the outbreak. The positive isolations from the hospital cooling towers were confirmed by the E&WS Department and that department's further survey plans were outlined. It was noted that none of 15 evaporative coolers, as distinct from the cooling towers at the hospital, was positive for legionnaires disease bacillus. It was decided that a case control study of the homes and water exposure of cases was desirable. Help would be forthcoming from E&WS Department's plumbing inspectors to better describe hot water systems and salient features of the house plumbing.

The third week of the investigation has seen a continuation of the projects mentioned above and the design of the case control study by the Health Surveying Services and the Epidemiology Branch, South Australian Health Commission. There have been 19 confirmed cases (including one managed at Queen Elizabeth Hospital), all of which occurred between 22 December 1985 and 10 January 1986. There was one death of a confirmed case, one of a case yet to be confirmed and another to which I referred earlier and which will never be confirmed because of lack of pathological specimens. Tests associated with the two more recent sus-

pect cases at Flinders Medical Centre will not be completed until later this week.

At the request of the Public Health Service, the Royal Adelaide Hospital has been retrospectively reviewing case notes for the December/January period. Of the 31 pneumonia cases reviewed, four have been categorised as possible legionnaires disease, nine are unlikely and 18 have been discounted. I stress that results of tests associated with the possible cases are still awaited.

There has been a flood of blood specimens with requests for legionnaires disease serology received by the IMVS. This is evidence of medical interest in the outbreak, but there has been no significant change in the reporting of lower respiratory tract infection by the general practice sentinel scheme.

Testing has also involved family members of 12 of the confirmed cases of legionnaires disease. None have been ill recently, but 10 had positive blood tests for legionella antibody, indicating past contact with the organism. The interpretation of this finding is uncertain. Some insight into the significance of these low-level titres in the relatives of patients with legionnaires disease may be gained after work by a serologist from the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science who has just returned from a tour of the United States and Europe studying legionnaires disease serology. That officer has already started a detailed examination of all the data available.

To date, 29 cooling towers have been located and sampled in the area bounded by Daws Road, South Road, Cross Road and Belair Road. Only those at the Repatriation Hospital have been bacterologically positive. I am advised that there is no epidemiological indication to test water samples from cooling towers at Flinders Medical Centre. Although a number of confirmed cases have been treated at the hospital, none developed their illness while at that institution and interviewing has not implicated it as a potential source of infection. However, the head of the Communicable Diseases Control Unit, Dr Scott Cameron, has requested that specific tests for legionnaires disease be carried out at the hospital as part of the investigation.

The investigation continues with the assumption that person-to-person spread of legionnaires disease does not occur and that infection by ingestion of legionnaires disease bacillus is not recorded. Potential large scale sources (such as cooling towers) of aerosols are being detected, sampled and maintained to keep them safe. The search for such towers is to be extended to one kilometre beyond the cases on the strength of a verbal report of an investigation of an legionnaires disease outbreak in Glasgow, Scotland. This will now involve the city councils of Marion and Unley as well as Mitcham.

The E & WS Department has worked closely with the Public Health Service to investigate the possibility of any relationship between the public water supply and the outbreak. The department has made laboratory facilities and staff available for tests on water samples from a wide range of locations, including private homes, commercial properties, public buildings and the reticulated water supply. Other personnel have been assigned to accompany Public Health officers conducting interviews. Because of the suggested possibility of a connection between cases of legionnaires disease in the southern suburbs of Adelaide and the quality of water supply, an intense monitoring program for the bacillus was implemented from 3 February. The main aims of this program were to determine the presence or otherwise of legionella in the water supply distribution system serving the Daw Park area and to determine the presence or other of legionella in the water presently supplied from Happy Valley Reservoir, including the effect of chlorination. The proposed program will include tests on reservoir water before

chlorination, Happy Valley outlet after chlorination, service tanks, distribution locations in the vicinity of 'case' premises and ends of mains. Samples are being collected weekly or twice-weekly for four weeks, after which the program will be reviewed.

Additional samples will be collected from the Happy Valley southern outlet and from other metropolitan reservoirs. The timetable for sampling involves Happy Valley Reservoir northern outlet twice weekly, and again after chlorination twice weekly. Weekly testing is being conducted on the Shepherds Hill tank, Pasadena tank, Clapham tank, Seaview Downs tank, Brighton (Arundel Road), Brighton (end of main), Ascot Park (Marion Road), Edwardstown (South Road near shopping centre), Daw Park (Rockville Terrace), Daw Park (end of main), Clapham (Sturt Avenue), Wayville (Goodwood Road), Thebarton, Adelaide (city area) and Royal Adelaide Hospital (inlet mains). Twice weekly tests are also being made from samples at the Repatriation Hospital (inlet main) and the Daw Park High School (inlet main to sprinkler system).

Results of testing of water samples to hand have confirmed the presence of the legionnaires disease bacillus in three cooling towers at the Repatriation Hospital and these results duplicate tests performed by the hospital's pathology department. Hospital staff have been advised about the cleaning and maintenance of the towers to eliminate 'L. pneumophila' and prevent recolonisation. Tests on a fourth tower and a garden tap in the hospital grounds have proved negative. Other tests at Daw Park High School and a number of homes of patients with legionnaires disease have also been negative. A report from the State Water Laboratory dated 10 February states that tanks at Shepherds Hill and Pasadena supplying the Happy Valley distribution were examined for L. pneumophila on 28 January 1986. The bacillus was not detected in any of the tank waters collected.

The Government is advised on health-related aspects of water supply by the Standing Committee on Health Aspects of Water Quality, or HAWQ, as it is known, which is responsible to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Water Resources. The committee, which is chaired by the Executive Director of the Public Health Service of the South Australian Health Commission, includes representatives of the Health Commission, the E & WS Department and local government.

Although it was originally established to monitor progress in measures to control naegleria fowleri, the committee provides advice on a range of matters affecting water supply and quality, including nitrate levels, swimming pools, fluoridation, chlorination, salinity and contamination issues. The programs which have been instituted to tackle the present outbreak of legionnaires disease and strategies to minimise the chance of a recurrence will be reviewed by the Committee on Health Aspects of Water Quality at a meeting later this week. Following that review and the provisions of any additional information from the ongoing investigations, I will make a further statement on these matters—although, hopefully, not quite as long and exhaustive as today's—including the long-term monitoring of water supplies.

## QUESTIONS

### NEO-NATAL UNIT

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** I seek leave to make a statement on the question of the Queen Victoria Hospital neo-natal unit, not on legionnaires disease. Might I say—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! You are seeking leave to make an explanation.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** Before asking a question?

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** Are you going to be picky? You are going to start off well. Honourable members will be as concerned as I at what is clearly a case of inadequate support being given in the area of neo-natal care which was publicly highlighted in the media today.

Of particular concern must surely be the financial constraints which have been imposed by the Government at an earlier stage and the Minister of Health, which prevented the Queen Victoria Hospital in particular and the Flinders Medical Centre from being adequately equipped to cope with growing pressures from increasing numbers of low birth weight premature infants. According to the Chief Executive Officer at the Queen Victoria Hospital, there are fewer intensive care cots equipped with ventilators than are needed to provide lifesaving support to prematurely born babies.

I understand that within the last three years the Queen Victoria Hospital was reduced from 16 to 14 cots, so there are presently two empty spaces for intensive care cots at the hospital. As a result, back-up equipment and obsolete equipment, I understand, have had to be employed; spare parts have had to be borrowed from old models; or babies have had to be transferred to Melbourne. To quote from a doctor involved in the neo-natal area:

Occupancy levels are frequently so high that some of the ventilators that are used to keep severely small and under-developed infants alive are running on spare parts from obsolete machines or equipment up for maintenance.

We had a baby a month ago where we had to take an obsolete ventilator out of the School of Nursing—where it was put three years ago for teaching purposes—to use on that baby, to avoid a transfer interstate.

I should not, I suppose, be surprised that the doctor concerned did not wish to be named, because he feared 'a professional reprisal from the South Australian Health Commission'. This fear highlights where the Minister of Health's priorities really lie—not with neo-natal care but with his own image and his own influence. Only last week the Minister of Health summoned senior health officials to a meeting at which he attempted to tighten his grip over the dissemination of the—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Any comment regarding the conference held by the Minister of Health does not seem relevant to neo-natal care units at the Queen Victoria Hospital. Under Standing Orders an explanation must be limited to facts relating to the question.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** Madam President, I shall leave that to a later stage. Certainly, there will be some detail given on that particular issue. The sum of \$45 000 is needed to provide an intensive care cot with a ventilator, and I have a list of the various parts of an intensive care cot with their costings, which I will not give at this stage but which will be available to any honourable member.

I understand that the Minister has just appointed a media liaison manager; that appointment will cost, I understand, more than the capital cost of a fully equipped life-saving intensive care cot and ventilator.

**The Hon. J.R. Cornwall:** Don't be silly.

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** It is not silly. A little more will be said about that later, too. It is all a matter of priorities, and the central office of the Health Commission appears to be a fertile area from which resources could be diverted to the Queen Victoria Hospital. However, that is a situation that, I am sure, will be looked at very closely now by the Auditor-General—the \$13.2 million that the central office is costing. I ask the following questions:

Will the Minister immediately review his decision (to establish an information filter in the form of a media liaison

unit) to provide funds for situations such as the Queen Victoria Hospital?

Will he review central office staffing (that is, the 296 people costing \$13.2 million), in view of the high costs of the bureaucracy highlighted by the Auditor-General, to provide funds for the Queen Victoria Hospital?

Will he redirect resources so that vitally necessary equipment and staff can be provided for neo-natal units?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** If that is the standard we can expect from the shadow spokesman for health over the next four years, then regrettably the level of debate—on that side of the Chamber, at least—will perhaps be even lower than it was in the previous three years. First, with regard to the question about redirection of resources and the sensible allocation of resources, and the co-ordination, integration and rationalisation of our hospital services, that is precisely what the meeting last week that Mr Cameron was about to malign was all about. A summary of the proceedings of that meeting will be available as a public document later this week, as I said in my ministerial statement. Obviously, the Leader was reading the *News* at that time. He really should give up being a lazy, off-the-top-of-the-head operator and do a little work if he is going to make some sort of fist of understanding a complex and difficult portfolio area.

Secondly, with regard to the staffing of the central office, I also announced in that ministerial statement about Lyell McEwin Hospital that I have appointed a working party or committee to do precisely that.

**The Hon. M.B. Cameron:** About time too—it's about three years.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** The working party to which I referred in the Ministerial statement, which the Hon. Mr Cameron did not hear because he was reading his newspaper, will be chaired by Mr Ken Taeuber. I will go through it again. It will be chaired by Mr Ken Taeuber, a very distinguished South Australian and former senior public servant and Director-General of the Department of Lands, among other positions. He will be assisted by Dr David Blaikie, Director, South Australian Dental Service, who has a masters degree in business administration. He will be further assisted by Miss Anne Dunn, a Public Service Commissioner, and by Mr Peter Agars, a senior executive with Touche Ross Management Consultants. The question of the central office review has been addressed.

The distorted matter of the \$13.2 million that the Hon. Mr Cameron tried to distort further again today was fully explained in the last session of Parliament: it is not \$13.2 million—it is something less than \$12 million. I might add that it represents in total less than 1.8 per cent of the total health budget. So, it is a quite remarkably low figure for administrative costs in such a large and complex organisation.

With regard to the so-called media liaison unit and the costs of that unit, the Hon. Mr Cameron, if he knew anything about the central office or about health administration, would know that there has been a press officer—a media officer—employed by the Commission for many years. That person was employed also as Mrs Adamson's press secretary when she was Minister of Health. I think she was there possibly before Mrs Adamson and certainly well and truly during her time, and that officer has remained as an information officer for an organisation employing more than 20 000 people in a complex system with a total budget this year approaching \$750 million.

Not by any criteria that might be applied would that position, with a salary of something less than \$30 000, be described as profligate spending. It is also true that fairly recently the Commission—I stress 'Commission'—appointed

a further information officer or media liaison person at the level of PP3, which is about \$30 000 a year. Of course, that is low if one looks at what they are paying information officers, people with journalistic and media background and experience, interstate. For example, the New South Wales Department of Main Roads recently offered a routine position for an information officer at a salary of \$44 000. Ours is a very modest appointment.

I might say that given the size and complexity of the two very large organisations that are within my portfolio areas now, and given the real necessity for those organisations as service organisations to make knowledge available to the people of South Australia whom we serve, it is certainly my intention to canvass a more comprehensive information unit that will service both the Health Commission and its many health units and the Department of Community Welfare.

Such appointments have to be seen in the context of the provision of adequate information in two organisations with total budgets this year that will certainly exceed \$800 million, especially as in every sense of the word they are service organisations. Let me now return to the question of neonatal services and neonatology at level 3 and otherwise. The Hon. Mr Cameron made a false statement. Indeed, he is not a stranger to the peddling of untruths, but he made yet another false statement when he alleged that the number of—

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** Madam President, I rise on a point of order. I am a very sensitive soul. I have been around here a long time, but the Minister always has a problem with his language, with his attitudes and with his expressions about people on this side of the Council. I seek his withdrawing his statement about my peddling of untruths. The Minister can come outside if he likes and see how he gets on in the public arena.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Are you raising a point of order?

**The Hon. M.B. CAMERON:** Yes. I want the Minister to withdraw that statement about the peddling of untruths. If he does not I will challenge him outside to say it and see whether or not it is true.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Minister has been asked to withdraw and apologise for those words that could perhaps be classed as being injurious and objectionable words, and I ask him to do so.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** In my recollection I did not use the phrase 'peddling untruths'. I said—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I am allowed to have a say on this. I said the Hon. Mr Cameron was not a stranger to using untruths, but if he is so sensitive—he is giving one of his little c grade repertory theatre performances today—that he finds it offensive, I am perfectly willing to withdraw it. The Hon. Mr Cameron handles the truth very carelessly. He said that during the last three years—to use his words—the number of neonatal cots (I presume he meant level 3 neonatal cots, although frankly I do not think he would know the difference; he probably would need a guide dog to find some of the hospitals) had reduced from 16 to 14.

The fact is that when I became Health Minister the question of how many neonatal cots at level 3 or otherwise that was reasonable on a national and a State basis had been a matter for ongoing discussion at Health Minister's conferences under Governments of both political persuasions, both at federal and State level, for some time. It was a very expensive technology.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I draw the Minister's attention to Standing Order 110, which says that in answering a question a member shall not debate the matter. I fear that the Minister is bordering on debating the issue, rather than

answering the question, and I ask him to make sure that he strictly answers the question.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I think you are right: I am indeed bordering, but fortunately I have not crossed the border. I am explaining, apropos the redirection of resources and resource allocation, what the position was and is. There was concern around the nation because of the high cost. In those days it was estimated that it cost about \$1 000 a day to maintain and staff neonatal cots at level 3. Therefore, it was considered desirable that there not be a burgeoning and excess capacity of this intensive technical set of protocols that had been developed. At that time there were 14 cots at Queen Victoria Hospital that were operational, and there were nine at Flinders Medical Centre.

The debate at that time, remembering that this was 1983, was whether that was too many for South Australia. As I have said, that matter was discussed at the Hobart conference of Health Ministers in 1983 and at successive Health Ministers' conferences. We must remember that in the past five years there have been quite dramatic advances in onatology—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I insist that the Minister is debating the question. The question posed by the Hon. Mr Cameron referred to the possible redirection of resources from other units in the health centre towards neonatal health units at Queen Victoria Hospital. I hope that in his answer the Minister will stick strictly to the reallocation of resources, about which the question was asked, and that he will not debate the whole area of neonatal health units.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** With very great respect, Madam President, I am not doing that. For your information, and for the information of the Council, I am explaining the position in the previous three years. I am explaining that technology has advanced very rapidly and that as a result Dr Raelene Conen, who is a former reader in obstetrics and gynaecology at the Adelaide University and the senior medical adviser in these areas within the commission, has recently completed an extensive report on the current position and on what is required. I expect that report to be available to the commission and to me in the very near future. If that report recommends, as I believe it will from preliminary talks which I had with Dr Conen late last week, that additional resources are available, whether at level 2 neonatal care or level 3, those resources will be made available.

I have personally received no request from anyone for additional funding, but I make it clear that, if additional resources are recommended as part of Dr Conen's review, those resources will be made available. In the meantime—and I am being very careful not to debate the issue—as a result of the only direct representation that was made to me concerning neonatology—I have specifically made available funds for a very senior and very experienced neonatologist to be appointed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and he started there very recently. Expertise at the hospital has been improved to that extent. As I have said, technical support will increase to the extent necessary as recommended by Dr Conen.

For the Hon. Mr Cameron to compare the capital cost, which is relatively low, and to make out that somehow by providing \$30 000 or \$40 000 per cot we could fix up everything is quite stupid. The real cost in the intensive care area relates to the well trained specialist staff. Of course, that is what makes up the cost of many hundreds of dollars per cot per day. I repeat, and I cannot say it often enough, that, if this recently completed extensive review by Dr Conen shows that additional resources are necessary, or that resources within existing budgets should be re-allocated, that most certainly will be done.

## HOUSING INTEREST RATES

**The Hon. L.H. DAVIS:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about housing interest rates.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. L.H. DAVIS:** On 1 December 1985—only six days before the State election—the Premier, Mr Bannon, said that he had an understanding with building societies in South Australia that they would not seek an increase in home loan rates from the State Government before 1 April 1986. This statement, understandably, received widespread publicity. At the time Mr Bannon was quoted as saying:

I don't think we should get ourselves locked into the view that interest rates will inevitably rise.

Today, little more than two months later, Adelaide building societies are paying 17 per cent or more for short term money, and it is possible to receive up to 18 3/4 per cent on funds invested in 90 day bank bills, that is, securities guaranteed by a bank.

Late last week building societies received permission from the State Government to increase home loan interest rates to a maximum of 17 per cent as from 10 February 1986. This is absolutely justified in terms of the cost of money borrowed by the building societies. At least some sections of the building society movement believe that the delay in granting a rise in interest rates ahead of the 1985 election has resulted in a larger rise than otherwise would have been necessary. Quite clearly, the building societies have been the meat in the sandwich. The latest increase means that in the past 12 months there has been a 3½ per cent increase in building society interest rates—for many households an increase of well over \$100 in monthly repayments.

In some districts the value of houses has fallen by as much as 15 per cent in this 12 month period, which means that for some building society borrowers the size of their loans now exceeds the value of their houses. First, why did the Premier on 1 December 1985 mislead the South Australian community by saying that he had an understanding with building societies that there would be no increase until 1 April 1986 when in fact a 1½ per cent increase in building society rates occurred on 10 February? Secondly, does the Government accept that with continuing high interest rates a serious crisis has developed for many South Australian householders, whether they borrow from banks or building societies?

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** The situation is that the Premier did have an understanding with building societies, which he indicated to the public on 1 December, that is, that there would not be another approach by building societies to the Government for an increase in interest rates following the agreement that was entered into some time prior to that, which involved a 7.5 per cent subsidy that the Government agreed to. That was initially due to expire on 31 March 1986. Circumstances with respect to interest rates altered, and interest rates continued to rise. The honourable member would know as well as I that the State cannot be immune from general interest rate rises, and it cannot completely insulate itself from interest rate rises.

The general environment is that real interest rates are at record high levels. There is some suggestion that prime rates commenced to fall in late January this year. Hopefully, that indicates a future downward trend that will see itself reflected in the home building sector. For the honourable member's benefit, in case he has overlooked it, it is worthwhile noting that his Party is a strong supporter of deregulation of bank interest rates, which would have seen all home owners paying interest rates substantially higher than they are paying at the present time. The Hawke Government has given a commitment that there will be no increase in the ceiling

of 13.5 per cent for bank loans, and one can assume that that will be maintained. That understanding existed on 1 December between the Premier and the building societies and it was arrived at when the application was made for an increase prior to that date and the subsidy was granted.

There is no question that the increase in interest rates is of grave concern to South Australians, in particular to those who have loans from building societies. However, I point out to the honourable member that, at the time of announcing the most recent increase of 1.5 per cent, which building societies established to the satisfaction of the Government were necessary—I do not think that the Hon. Mr Davis is arguing with that—a number of measures were announced by the Government to alleviate hardship for those people caught with making increased payments.

The Government announced a number of initiatives: continuing the Government's .75 per cent subsidy to building society borrowers already receiving it; building societies undertook, where possible, to ensure that eligible borrowers were not permitted beyond 30 per cent of gross household income in mortgage repayments; and, I understand, building societies will examine any new situations brought to their attention and have made arrangements for an extension of the period of the loan such that immediate repayments do not necessarily have to be increased if that is seen to be appropriate in any particular case brought to their attention.

Initiatives also mentioned were to implement the Government's election promise to introduce an interest rate protection plan abolishing monthly loan administration fees charged by societies at 1 July last year; ensuring that borrowers are aware of the Government's home guarantee assistance program; and developing measures to help people seeking home loans through low start loans.

The interest rate situation is largely beyond the control of the State Government. That was made clear by the Premier during the last election campaign. Factors outside this State influence the level of interest rates. However, the Premier said prior to the election that the State Government would do all it conceivably could in the circumstances to assist home buyers. It did that. It took that action last year with the subsidy given to building societies and the action it took, for instance, regarding representations to the State Bank, and now there is its most recent announcement of a number of initiatives to alleviate problems of home buyers.

I assure the honourable member that the Government does not underestimate the problem. The Government recognises that the situation needs to be addressed. We have addressed it in so far as it is within our power in this State to address the issues that are of concern and the hardship that has been caused to some people as a result of the increase in interest rates.

#### DUNCAN CASE

**The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Attorney-General on the subject of the Duncan case.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN:** I am informed that as a matter of course the police inform the media when a person has been arrested and charged and communicate the time and place of the appearance of that person in court. Last week, when two persons were arrested and charged with manslaughter in South Australia, the normal course was not followed. Those two persons were arrested, charged and appeared in court without any communication being given to the media that that was occurring until the Attorney-General announced these events at a press conference later.

With no knowledge of a court appearance in South Australia or an application for suppression of names, the representatives of the media were not able to attend the hearing and report it, nor were they able to make any representations on the suppression orders. We now have the curious position of a suppression order in South Australia in respect of two people and no suppression order in respect of one person arrested and charged in Western Australia. My questions are:

1. Did any Minister give an instruction or make a request that the normal procedures were not to be followed and, if so, who was it and why?

2. If not, whose decision was it to depart from normal procedures in communicating with the media?

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** I am not aware that normal procedures were not followed with respect to the arrest of persons charged with manslaughter following the death of Dr Duncan. I was kept informed by the Crown Prosecutor (Mr Rice) of what was intended once he had considered the report of the task force. He told me that he believed charges should be laid. Once that decision had been made—and I concurred in that—he conveyed that view to the police.

Then, of course, it is a matter for the police, particularly where an arrest is involved, to form the view that there is a reasonable suspicion. The police, in accordance with normal procedures, I understand agreed that arrest was appropriate in these circumstances. From that point on the matter was left to the police. It is a matter for the police to determine how an arrest should occur. I was kept informed that a particular time had been determined for the arrest of the suspects in South Australia and simultaneously in Western Australia. I was informed of when those arrests were made and when the persons appeared in court, although I understand that the individual in Western Australia spent the night in custody and did not appear in court until the following day.

However, the two persons in South Australia appeared in court—one at the Kadina court of summary jurisdiction and one at the Para Districts court of summary jurisdiction. I understand that the Crown was represented by senior police officers in the cases that came before those courts. If the normal course was not followed I am not aware of why that was so. I was kept informed as to what was occurring.

I said I would make myself available to the media late in the afternoon for questioning as to events that occurred. Naturally, there was some interest from the media, and most of them came to ask me some questions. It was agreed that I would make a statement later in the day about the arrests, given the controversial nature of this case and, indeed, its antecedents going back to 1972 and, more recently, in this Parliament last year.

As far as I am concerned there was no suggestion that the normal procedure should not be followed. I believe that the Crown Prosecutor was kept informed by the police. Certainly, I made clear to the police that I felt I should make a brief statement and make myself available for questioning that afternoon. That was done once the individuals had been properly arrested, appeared in court and those procedures had been gone through.

Once those procedures had been gone through and the person had been arrested and was in custody in Western Australia I made myself available for questioning by the media and made a brief statement about what had happened. There did not seem to me to be anything unusual in that course of action. To my way of thinking it was perfectly normal, and all I can say is that the matter is now best left to the courts to determine the guilt or innocence of those persons who have been arrested and charged with manslaughter and who will go before the courts in accordance with usual procedures.



**The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN:** In light of that answer, will the Attorney-General inquire whether or not normal procedures were followed and, if they were not followed, determine the reasons why not and bring back a reply?

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** I am really not quite sure what the honourable member is suggesting in this particular case. Correct procedures were followed in relation to this matter. I believed that, as the matter was one of considerable public importance, I should make myself available for questioning that afternoon by the media. Any other course of action would not have been acceptable, so that was done.

*The Hon. K.T. Griffin interjecting:*

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** If the honourable member is not arguing about that, I do not quite know—

*The Hon. K.T. Griffin interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER:** —what he is arguing about. What I do know is that, so far as I am concerned, there was nothing abnormal in the procedures adopted by the police. I was kept informed about what was happening by the Crown Prosecutor. The method of arresting people is a matter for police operations, and the police determined when the arrest would take place. As I have explained, the prosecutor concurred in those matters and kept me advised when the people were going to court. It was considered appropriate that a statement be made once those procedures had been gone through. If there is any more information that I can provide the honourable member, or if he has any information he is able to give me to clear up what he seems to think is a mystery, I am quite happy for him to bring it to my attention.

#### NATIONAL PARKS

**The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister for Environment and Planning, a question on national parks.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT:** I wrote to the Minister for Environment and Planning on 2 January seeking some simple statistical information on national parks but have not yet received a reply. I believe that in the past six years the area of national parks in South Australia has doubled, but the staffing levels have remained the same.

I commend the Government for what it has done in relation to increasing parks and hope that it continues to do so as there are a number of ecosystems that need representation. However, I expect, and hope that the Government agrees, that there is difficulty in ensuring conservation of the parks themselves, and also in handling the problems associated with vermin and bushfires, if we continue with the same staffing levels for a much larger area.

I realise that the Minister might not have this information at his fingertips but ask him to supply information, as soon as practicable, showing on a year by year basis for the past six years what has been the total area of national parks in South Australia; how many rangers have been employed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in South Australia both within and outside of conservation parks; how many non-rangers have been employed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service both inside and outside conservation parks; and what is the area and present staffing of each park?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I shall be pleased to refer that question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

#### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**The Hon. G.L. BRUCE:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Tourism, representing the Minister of Employment and Further Education, a question about the employment of juniors.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. G.L. BRUCE:** The following advertisement in the *Murray Valley Standard* of 23 January was drawn to my attention by a constituent living in that area:

Junior sales people, 12-15 years, to work part-time evenings, and/or weekends, selling confectionery. Approx. earnings p/wk, \$20-\$50 under full supervision; please ph. 388 4436 or 223 5635.

The constituent expressed concern that the safety of minors could be in jeopardy. When an advertisement appears in a local paper seeking people 12 years of age to sell confectionery it immediately springs to mind that those people will be employed on door-to-door sales, but whether that is right or not I do not know. Will the Minister say whether, first, the safety of minors is guaranteed in a situation where an advertisement such as this is placed in a paper and, secondly, whether such minors are being exploited in any way by the work required of them?

**The Hon. BARBARA WIESE:** I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

#### SCALPERS

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to directing a question to the Minister of Youth Affairs on the subject of scalpers.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** This morning's *Advertiser* lists 63 advertisements for tickets to the Dire Straits concert which will be held tomorrow night. Prices are listed up to \$120 each for tickets which originally went on sale in November of last year for \$23 each. I understand that when the tickets were originally offered for sale they were sold out within days, and we are now witnessing scalpers in action on a large scale, exploiting the shortage of tickets in order to make unreasonable profits for themselves.

While there may be some persons who have legitimate reasons for wishing to sell their tickets shortly before the concert there is no doubt that the majority of those advertising tickets at exorbitant prices are doing so purely as a profiteering racket. I have been advised today that those—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! That comment is an imputation, not a fact. I would ask members to stick to facts in their explanation of questions under the Standing Orders.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** Thank you, Madam President. I have been advised today that those who genuinely want a refund of their tickets can return them to BASS outlets for resale at the original price. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Will the Minister, together with the Attorney-General, investigate whether there is any existing legislation, such as the price control legislation, which might be used—with some adaptation, perhaps—to control the activities of scalpers in the future?

2. If not, does the Government propose to take any action at all against scalpers involved in the reselling of concert tickets at unreasonable profit levels?

**The Hon. BARBARA WIESE:** I am not quite sure why the question is being directed to me. The fact that it is probably predominantly young people who would attend a Dire Straits concert does not really seem to be adequate reason for a question to be directed to me concerning a matter which I think is probably better related to the respon-

sibilities of the Minister of Consumer Affairs. However, I share the honourable member's concern for the interests of young people in our community who seem to be exploited by unscrupulous people who are now trying to get inflated prices for concert tickets, and I shall take up this matter with my colleague the Attorney-General—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. BARBARA WIESE:**—in his capacity either as Attorney-General or as Minister of Consumer Affairs—whichever seems to be appropriate—to see whether there is legislation at the moment that might be of some benefit to young people who are being exploited in this way.

### ADOPTION

**The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW:** I seek leave to make a short explanation prior to addressing a question to the Minister of Community Welfare on the subject of adoption reform.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW:** Last Thursday the Minister announced the formation of a three-person panel to review the State's adoption laws and procedures. The Opposition has welcomed this initiative, just as we welcomed an almost identical announcement some six months ago by the former Minister of Community Welfare.

Possibly the Minister recalls that on 26 September last year the Hon. Mr Greg Crafter advised—and perhaps the Attorney-General might like to listen to this—the former Minister for Community Welfare—

*The Hon. C.J. Sumner interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW:** Where I sit does not really matter to me very much, but it might concern you. The former Minister of Community Welfare advised on 27 September last that he would be establishing a three-member committee within the following two weeks to overhaul South Australia's adoption laws.

I ask the Minister whether his announcement of last week was a belated effort to honour an undertaking by the Government six months ago to establish a committee to review our adoption laws and procedures. Alternatively, does his announcement confirm that he has disbanded the earlier inquiry in favour of establishing his own? Further, as I am not aware of the review panel's terms of reference, will the Minister confirm whether the panel will have the authority to assess matters such as whether a single person will have the opportunity in future to be an adoptive parent; whether in all instances the consent of the natural mother is required for a child to be eligible for adoption; whether an adopted child will have access to its medical history, and the relevance of maintaining the combined ages limit as a criterion in determining eligibility to be an adoptive parent?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I do not have the terms of reference with me, so I am not able to provide them precisely. They are, however, a public document and the Hon. Ms Laidlaw can obtain them from the office of the Department for Community Welfare in the GRE building. I am sure that there are any number of people there who will be only too pleased to send them down to Parliament House as a result of a simple telephone call. As to the panel, it will be chaired by the Reverend Dr Geoff Scott, who is the President of Lincoln College and former executive officer of the social justice commission of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church.

The other panel members are Peter Erickson, Chairman of the adoption panel, and Rosemary Wighton, who is Deputy Director of the Department for Community Wel-

fare. My predecessor canvassed the idea of an extensive review of adoption on several occasions. It was increasingly obvious that we needed to review the legislation. In fact, the recommendation to establish a review came to Cabinet, I think, fairly late during the election period, when we were actually in the run-up to a State election.

It was not considered responsible at that time to make an announcement in a matter of potential social controversy; that might not have created an environment in which the review could have been established in the responsible and creative way that we believe was necessary, but it was certainly approved by Cabinet in November of last year.

We have now got the review team together. They met, I think for the first time, late last week. There was no reason for striking out, starting again or anything else. We have an adoption review panel—and there is an end to it. What I want to make clear is that anybody can make a submission—preferably a written submission in the first instance—to that adoption review panel. Further, I want to make it clear that it should not be regarded as an inquiry in the normal sense. There is an abundance of literature around this country and around the world about contemporary adoption practice and about desirable legislation with regard to adoption.

In that sense, the panel of three have been asked to review the Australian and world literature, and there is also, of course, an abundance of material within Australia. Victoria, in particular, has quite recently introduced new and very constructive, very positive and very comprehensive adoption legislation. What I have said publicly and repeated frequently is that I want a report from the review team quite rapidly—preferably by the end of April; that I want to seek comment from interested individuals and organisations during the review and when the recommendations of the review are made public.

It is also imperative, however—and I cannot stress this too much—that we keep this whole process on the fast track. It is my intention that we should introduce amending legislation before the end of this calendar year. As the honourable member would know, I personally—as Acting Minister—a little more than 12 months ago became involved in a very difficult and complex situation regarding an inter-country adoption. That is just one area which is sensitive, which is difficult, which is not adequately covered by the existing law—either State or Federal—and which needs to be addressed and will be addressed. I make it very clear that it most certainly will not be simply a matter of a review which will then become a public discussion document, which will then be further dissected, which will be put out as a further discussion paper and so on—the interminable ways in which we can get bogged down.

The review report will be available, I hope, by the end of April or thereabouts. It will be available for further comment by interested parties and individuals. It will then go to Cabinet with recommendations for acceptance or rejection and, based on the recommendations and the Cabinet review of the situation, there will be drafting instructions to Parliamentary Counsel and it is my clear intention that amending legislation will be introduced into this Chamber before the year is out.

### HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

**The Hon. R.J. RITSON:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about vocational training of health professionals.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.J. RITSON:** Recent press reports have indicated that the physiotherapists are unhappy with the output

from their training scheme and that there are insufficient physiotherapists who meet the needs of the community. More significantly perhaps, more than a year ago I raised the question with the Minister of the totally insufficient supply of speech pathologists and the small number of speech pathologists being trained.

It is a fact that several hundred persons, mostly women, apply for positions in the School of Speech Pathology. It is a fact that they represent the top stream of matriculants. It is a fact that this is a field of academic and skilled endeavour in which women have been proved to be excellent; indeed, better than men. It is a fact that when I raised this matter the Minister corresponded with his federal counterpart and was able to forestall a proposed cut of four places in that school; nevertheless, we are left with the ridiculous position that hundreds of superbly qualified students are applying for places in that school.

I know, as a practising medical practitioner, that it is extremely difficult to obtain the services of speech pathologists for the wide variety of conditions and the wide groups of patients who would really benefit from treatment, yet nothing is done. Nothing is done because no-one is particularly responsible. It is a fact that tertiary institutions loudly proclaim their independence and autonomy—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! In asking a question it is not only that facts only can be stated, according to Standing Orders, but they must be relevant to explaining the question.

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** That is in the question, not the explanation.

**The PRESIDENT:** Yes, I am talking about the question to the honourable member who has the floor. The financing arrangements for tertiary institutions seem to me to be fairly far removed from the stated purpose of the question or the motives in allocating funding for tertiary institutions.

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** With respect, Madam President, the question involves action that I wish to request so that something can be done about this anomaly, and it is not possible for the question to make sense unless I am allowed to explain to honourable members the problem. The problem is that responsibility falls in so many areas that the whole question falls between three or four stools. Therefore, I respectfully ask you to allow me to continue my explanation, which by now would have been completed if you had allowed me to continue.

**The PRESIDENT:** I only make the comment in relation to upholding Standing Orders. All you have indicated to me is that your question is about the training of health professionals. Whether something is relevant or not I can judge only according to that title.

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** Madam President, I submit to you that funding of schools of training is relevant to the training of those individuals. I submit to you that the division of State and Commonwealth responsibility is relevant in so far as the State Minister of Health has an interest in this and an influence in this, and it is that area upon which I wish to question the Minister of Health. Therefore, I seek your indulgence and ask that I may be allowed to continue. Indeed, I put it to you, Madam President, that if I am ruled out of order on this point then Question Time will be almost entirely emasculated in this place. I seek your permission to continue.

**The PRESIDENT:** I am certainly not preventing you from continuing. I am pointing out the Standing Orders and I ask you to keep them firmly in mind. I felt you were bordering on going against the Standing Orders.

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** Thank you for your guidance, and I shall keep the matter in mind. When I raised the matter of the cuts more than a year ago the Minister joined with me in writing to the federal authorities and, as a matter of influence rather than as a matter of law or administrative

control, those cuts were restored. I put it to the Minister that it remains ridiculous that hundreds of students want to enter these courses, that practitioners are aware of the gross shortage of these people's services, yet the whole system of tertiary education is one that is not geared to its responsibility to the community as a whole, and the whole system of ministerial responsibility is one in which Ministers, in various portfolios, have a passing interest but little or no power. I ask the following questions:

Is the Minister happy with the situation in which health professionals who are required in great numbers are being turned out in small numbers, despite the existence of large numbers of applicants for such courses?

Is the Minister happy with the situation whereby, as the Minister responsible for the health of our community, he has little or no influence and power in tertiary institutions or within the halls of federal power from which money is allocated?

Does the Minister envisage doing anything behind the scenes to increase his influence with Canberra and with the institutions and, in particular, what efforts has he made to rectify the situation since I raised it more than a year ago?

**The Hon. J.R. Cornwall:** In the general sense, let it be said that in 1986 I am nearly always happy. However, with regard to the specific questions concerning speech pathologists, I have initiated investigations. The Hon. Dr Ritson would be aware—he made this clear—that as a result of my representations to the SACAE the intake of first year students was maintained, I think, at 23—

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** It was 24—

**The Hon. J.R. Cornwall:** There were some numbers to be sacrificed in order that they might establish a post-graduate course. I think that was deferred—not cancelled. However, the numbers were kept constant at the original quota. However, I received conflicting reports, as a result of inquiries made, about job opportunities versus supply. It is not quite as simple as the Hon. Dr Ritson may have been led to believe. Certainly, there can be situations in which people report difficulties in obtaining employment on the one hand and, on the other hand, institutions, particularly public institutions—notably hospitals, health centres, and so on—reporting difficulty, and in some cases grave difficulty, in recruiting adequate staff. It is hard for me to know at this very moment wherein the truth lies. The area within my health portfolio, significant and vast though it may be, is only one area of employment for speech pathologists.

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** It's almost—

**The Hon. J.R. Cornwall:** I do not agree with that. Following the initial advice that I received, I asked the Health Commission to inquire further and to provide me with some sort of adequate picture and, more importantly, to recommend a firm basis for action. At the moment I am involved in reviewing the whole question of supply of health professionals. That is a very important matter. We do not have any control, for example, over how many medical undergraduates are admitted to the faculties each year. However, when they graduate the Health Commission and the State Government are expected to provide an adequate number of internships to complete their training. That is unsatisfactory. I do not have any control over the learned college, which restricts the number of registrar positions that are created for orthopaedic surgeons, for example.

**The Hon. R.J. Ritson:** You still have service positions, though.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. J.R. Cornwall:** Over the past 15 years there has been a shortage of orthopaedic surgeons in this State, for motives which at this moment at least are not clear to me. A whole range is involved. Whether we are

talking about speech pathologists, physiotherapists, specialist surgeons or dentists, right across the range of health professionals there is a need for much more accurate and timely information, and there is a real need for us to be sure about the integrity of that information. Incidentally, that is one reason why I called the Chief Executive Officers, the Chairmen and the Medical Superintendents of hospitals into the Health Commission last week in what was in some ways a historic meeting, and might I say a very productive, very positive—

**An honourable member:** Very friendly.

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** —and very friendly meeting. That is one way that we intend to address the matter. The Hon. Dr Ritson is quite right: the whole question of the supply of health professionals is very important. It is also fundamental to the conduct of a rational and adequate health service. It is a matter that is being addressed. I thank the honourable member specifically for the question regarding speech pathologists. However, at the moment I do not have an answer which in my view is sufficiently specific to handle that adequately. I will make sure that I obtain a quite specific answer to the question about speech pathologists and their training in particular and bring it back to this Chamber next week.

#### FERTILISERS

**The Hon. PETER DUNN:** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Tourism, representing the Minister of Agriculture, a question about the anti dumping charge on fertilisers.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. PETER DUNN:** The anti dumping charge invoked by the Government has been widely reported in many newspapers along with the fact that the Prime Minister of Australia in his wisdom decided to apply an anti dumping charge on all States bar Western Australia, seeing that Western Australia was having an election. It was reported that that was pork barrelling. However, after considerable pressure from the other States the Prime Minister applied a bounty, which meant that all other States were able to purchase at a common price high analysis phosphatic fertilisers containing nitrogen.

The Minister of Agriculture in this State approved that decision by the Prime Minister and it was reported that there would be two inquiries into anti dumping and the use of fertilisers in Australia. However, in concluding a press release the South Australian Minister of Agriculture said:

I for one would like to be totally convinced that farmers have access to the best and most appropriate fertilisers available.

Does the Minister have confidence in his departmental officers to provide the correct and most useful advice on the type of fertilisers that should be used in South Australia? Is the Minister waiting for advice from the Federal Government inquiry to become enlightened on fertiliser use in South Australia? Will the Minister and his officers make a strong and forthright submission on behalf of the South Australian farming community?

**The Hon. BARBARA WIESE:** I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague in another place and bring down a reply.

#### HENLEY BEACH JETTY

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Marine, a question about the safety of the Henley Beach jetty.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** For a number of years it has been my privilege to represent my Party at the annual blessing of the waters ceremony conducted at Henley Beach.

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** Not any more.

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** We will see about that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** I have never seen the Hon. Mr Sumner there.

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** I have been there.

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** Well, it was a long time ago.

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** No.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Question Time is for asking questions, not for conversation across the Chamber.

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** The Minister interjected. I have represented my Party with pride at this function in January each year. Members will know that the service at Henley Beach is conducted by the Greek Orthodox community, which has its headquarters in Franklin Street. The main part of the ceremony is conducted at the far end of the jetty, and members would be aware of the procedure: the Archbishop, assisted by his priests, conducts this very ancient and meaningful traditional ceremony. The specially invited guests and officials release their white doves—

**The Hon. C.J. Sumner:** I remember.

**The Hon. C.M. HILL:** I added that to see whether or not the Attorney-General could remember whether he was actually there. I think it was two years ago when the weather was extremely rough and hundreds of people were assembled on the jetty, mostly at its far end. I thought I felt the jetty lurch. I looked around at that moment and there was some fear in the eyes of the other people attending. However, I put that experience down either to extreme wind from the elements or just some misconception by myself and others.

In January this year once again, and during very calm weather on this occasion, in the middle of the service I thought I felt some movement at the end of the jetty. It might well be that the design of the actual structure allows for some extreme tide or pressure from the sea to permit some movement under circumstances such as an extremely large number of people being on the jetty.

I do not think annually there would be more people on this jetty on one particular occasion than during this festival. Having had this experience for a second time and also on this occasion the weather having been calm, I am prompted to inquire whether or not, in the interests of public safety, the Minister can give an absolute assurance that that structure is safe. Can the Minister of Marine assure the public that, despite the number of people on the Henley Beach jetty, that jetty is perfectly safe?

**The Hon. J.R. CORNWALL:** I do not know very much about lurching jetties, although I could claim to have some expertise in the matter of flatulence. However, the question having been raised by the Hon. Mr Hill, if there is even the remote possibility that the Henley jetty may not be safe, the matter needs very serious attention, particularly since it is in the stretch of beach on which I jog on weekends. I thus have a personal interest. I shall be pleased to refer the matter to the Minister of Marine in another place and bring back a reply.

#### SESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Sessional committees were appointed as follows:  
Standing Orders: The President and the Hons G.L. Bruce, M.B. Cameron, K.T. Griffin, and C.J. Sumner.

Library: The President and the Hons J.C. Irwin, Diana Laidlaw, and C.A. Pickles.

Printing: The Hons Peter Dunn, M.S. Feleppa, C.A. Pickles, R.J. Ritson, and T.G. Roberts.

The House of Assembly notified its appointment of sessional committees.

**ADDRESS IN REPLY**

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

That a committee consisting of the Hons M.B. Cameron, J.C. Irwin, C.A. Pickles, T.G. Roberts, and C.J. Sumner be appointed to prepare a draft Address in Reply to the Speech delivered this day by His Excellency the Governor and to report on the next day of sitting.

Motion carried.

**JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE**

The House of Assembly intimated its appointment of four members to the Joint House Committee.

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General):** In accordance with section 4 of the Joint House Committee Act 1941, I move:

That the members of the Legislative Council on the Joint House Committee be the President and the Hons G.L. Bruce, Diana Laidlaw, and R.J. Ritson.

Motion carried.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION**

A message was received from the House of Assembly requesting the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation.

**The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General):** I move: That the members of the Legislative Council on the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation be the Hons G.L. Bruce, J.C. Burdett, and M.S. Feleppa.

Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 5.38 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday 12 February at 2.15 p.m.