

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 10 August 1989

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. G.L. Bruce)** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION: HARTLEY LANDFILL

A petition signed by 90 residents of South Australia praying that the Council urge the Government to undertake any necessary action to stop the proposed sanitary-type landfill at Hartley gaining approval, to stop the development of the proposed landfill at Hartley and to ensure that the councils involved, namely, Stirling, Onkaparinga, Mount Barker and Strathalbyn, and other councils adopt total recycling and reuse of refuse as the only environmentally sound alternative was presented by the Hon. M.J. Elliott.

Petition received.

SUPREME COURT PRECINCT

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

Supreme Court Precinct—Courtroom 12.

PAPER TABLED

The following paper was laid on the table:

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

Australian Formula One Grand Prix Board—Report and Financial Statements, 15 November 1987 to 31 December 1988.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The **PRESIDENT**: Before I open Questions, I draw to the attention of honourable members the fact that we have in the gallery the Hon. Clive Griffiths, President of the Legislative Council of Western Australia. I extend my cordial welcome to him on behalf of members of this Parliament and ask the Attorney-General and the Leader of the Opposition to escort the Hon. Mr Griffiths to a seat on the floor of the Council on the right of the Chair.

The Hon. Mr Griffiths was escorted by the Hon. C.J. Sumner and the Hon. M.B. Cameron to a seat on the floor of the Council.

The **PRESIDENT**: I also draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that we are very honoured, too, to have in the gallery the Hon. Michael Polley, Speaker of the House of Assembly in Tasmania. He has just been elected Speaker and everybody knows the political scene in Tasmania, so I do not need to elaborate on that. On behalf of this Council I wish him a happy visit to the Parliament.

QUESTIONS

COUNCIL BOUNDARIES

The **Hon. M.B. CAMERON**: I direct my question to the Minister of Local Government. Because an independent survey in June this year showed that 74.3 per cent of

residents in the Brighton council area want no change to their council boundaries, and following the precedent the Government set yesterday in relation to the Mitcham council, will the Government make a submission to the Local Government Advisory Commission asking it not to proceed with proposals to amalgamate the Marion, Brighton and Glenelg councils into the City of Sturt?

The **Hon. ANNE LEVY**: If a poll has been taken in the Brighton area with the results indicated, it has certainly not been drawn to my attention. I have no knowledge whatsoever of this poll, who conducted it, what were the results or how many people took part in it. In consequence, I cannot make any comment.

FINANCE BROKERS

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

Leave granted.

The **Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN**: In June of this year a landbroker, Brian Winzor, who was also a finance broker, became bankrupt. Reports suggest the losses of creditors could be as high as \$5 million, matching the Hodby and Schiller cases. I am told that there are about 700 licensed landbrokers in South Australia, of whom about 50 are also mortgage finance brokers. New regulations came into effect on 1 January 1989 to place tighter controls on mortgage finance brokers and to extend audit requirements of trust accounts to them.

However, I am told that the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs, which has the responsibility for administering legislation covering landbrokers and mortgage finance brokers, has only two financial examiners for all the legislation the department administers—that includes builders licensing, motor vehicle dealers, credit providers, land agents, landbrokers and others. There is no involvement in the case of landbrokers and land agents of their respective professional bodies in surveillance of trust accounts as there is with lawyers and the Law Society. I am also told there are now only three lawyers in the department when previously there were six or seven, and of those three, one is the Acting Registrar of the Commercial Tribunal.

The lack of resources in the department raises serious questions about the department's capacity to comply with and perform its obligations under the Land Agents, Brokers and Valuers Act and, in particular, the responsibility with respect to mortgage finance brokers. Creditors of Winzor, Hodby, Schiller and other defaulters have raised with me the question how serious the Government is about undertaking surveillance to try to minimise fraud in this area. In the light of the experience with Hodby, Schiller, Winzor and others, they also ask how many other mortgage finance brokers are in trouble. My questions to the Attorney-General are:

1. Since 1 January 1989, how many finance brokers' trust accounts have been audited or inspected by departmental officers?
2. What surveillance of brokers has been undertaken by the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs since 1 January 1989?
3. How many other mortgage or other finance brokers are in financial difficulty?
4. What procedures and guidelines are in place to deal with the audit of finance brokers' trust accounts?

The **Hon. C.J. SUMNER**: Obviously I cannot answer those questions without taking them on notice and getting

the information. However, I can say that with respect to the matter of Winzor the department was notified by the Commonwealth Bank that cheques drawn on his trust account had been dishonoured and, as a result, a financial examiner was appointed to examine his trust account records on 22 May 1989. Over the following 2½ weeks, the examiner tried, without success, to examine the records and documents and obtain a satisfactory explanation of discrepancies. The fact is also that his audit reports have not disclosed any deficiencies.

It is all very well for the honourable member to say this is the fault of the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs. There is not even continuous examination of trust accounts with respect to legal practitioners. One hopes that auditors appointed to audit the books of finance brokers and other professional people who handle public moneys would be able to ascertain whether or not there were any discrepancies or problems with those accounts.

With respect to Mr Winzor, I am advised that his audit reports, which were required under the legislation, did not, in fact, disclose any deficiency. Of course, that emphasises the problem that we have in this area if people deliberately set out to defraud the public. Unfortunately, that has happened with respect to Winzor, Field, Hodby and Schiller. Of course, the situation is quite outrageous and, obviously, additional measures to protect consumers and investors will have to be put in place. At the present time, discussions are being held with the Landbrokers Society to that end. One can only suggest to people that they take extreme care in deciding to invest with a so-called finance broker. Finance brokers seem to be in a position to offer greater security because they say that the moneys invested are secured by mortgage on the property with respect to which the money is lent. That should happen and, therefore, on the face of it, it should be a secure investment. Unfortunately, because of the fraudulent activities of these so-called finance brokers, that security has, in many cases, been non-existent.

Apart from the fact that this is causing significant trauma and financial loss to a number of investors, it also means that the Agents Indemnity Fund, which has been established with the interest from the trust accounts of landbrokers, is being used up. Of course, at this time, there is insufficient money therein to meet all the fund's obligations. However, that fund is being significantly supplemented on an annual basis. When the Winzor matter is finalised, I would expect the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs to sort out exactly what repayments can be made from the Agents Indemnity Fund. I hope that, in time, sufficient funds will be available to meet the demands thereon. The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs has sent a newsletter to all people involved in the earlier defalcations, outlining the situation with respect to the status of the fund and the repayments expected to be made from it.

However, quite clearly, this is an outrageous situation, whereby these people have defrauded the public in a quite appalling way. It would appear that the sentences imposed by the Supreme Court in relation to Hodby and Schiller were not sufficient to act as a deterrent to other people behaving in that way, despite the fact that significant gaol sentences were imposed. Obviously it is a totally unsatisfactory situation. As I have indicated, the audit reports did not, in the case of Winzor, show any deficiency and, after all, that should be the primary means whereby deficiencies are shown up. Auditors doing their job should be able to ascertain whether or not trust funds are being properly kept or whether there are any defalcations. But it just shows, as I said, the problem that exists when people deliberately set

out on a course of fraudulent behaviour, as has happened in this case and indeed in the earlier cases.

We must examine whether the legislation is satisfactory. Perhaps we will have to do something to tighten up the audit requirements, although those requirements are already quite tight in the existing legislation. Obviously, we must do what we can, and I have certainly instructed the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs in this respect to ensure that those people who have lost as a result of this and other defalcations are compensated. I will have to refer the specific questions to the department and bring back a reply.

ART GALLERY

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for the Arts about the Art Gallery.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: At the 1985 State election the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Mr Bannon, promised to proceed with the Living Arts Centre on North Terrace and, as all honourable members will recall, this unequivocal promise has not been kept. Another commitment made by the Premier in the Labor policy of 1985 relating to the Art Gallery of South Australia was as follows:

The main exhibition spaces of the Art Gallery of South Australia have recently been refurbished and the gallery's promotion of existing collections has been reflected in growing attendance numbers. The gallery is at full capacity at present but during our next four years Labor will investigate a solution to this problem. A new and exciting possibility is the renovation of the Torrens building in Victoria Square. Depending on the outcome of a feasibility study currently under way the Torrens building could be used to house the gallery's excellent Australian collection. It also could be used to receive special exhibitions of art and non-art material.

The sad fact is that four years later there has been no further announcement about expanding the exhibition space available to the Art Gallery of South Australia. The plan to develop the two buildings almost directly opposite the Art Gallery in North Terrace (and that includes a rather fine Italian building) for additional exhibition space appears to have been scrapped, and the Torrens building option, from what I can ascertain, appears to have fallen out of favour. There has been a lot of talk but no action.

The successful Bicentenary Great Australian Art Exhibition which recently concluded at the Art Gallery underlined the superb quality and comprehensiveness of the Australian collection held by the Art Gallery of South Australia. Arguably, it is the best of any gallery in Australia. That exhibition also emphasised the quality of curatorial staff and the leadership of Art Gallery Director, Daniel Thomas. However, the Art Gallery of South Australia is able to hang less of its collection than any other gallery in Australia. The gallery is almost provincial when compared with other capital city galleries when it comes to exhibition space.

There is understandably growing concern, Mr President, in visual arts circles that no positive steps have been taken to provide additional hanging space for the visual arts flagship in the Festival State. As a result, many fine paintings remain unhung and unseen. One option for additional space which has been canvassed is an expansion on the site of the Art Gallery. Can the Minister advise the Council why no progress has been made in the important question of providing additional exhibition space for the Art Gallery of South Australia over the past four years?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: In response to the question from the honourable member, I am pleased to see that there is complete bipartisan agreement as to the value of the Art

Gallery to South Australia. There is no doubt that we have an excellent Art Gallery, with absolutely top staff recognised as such right around the country who could stand up well in any international comparison.

Likewise, the value or the excellence of the collection of the Art Gallery in South Australia is undoubted and, while it is true that not all items in the collection would merit permanent display, there is no doubt that a great store of material is owned by our Art Gallery which cannot be on permanent exhibition because of lack of space.

Unfortunately, our Art Gallery is a rather confined building, unlike, for example, the Art Gallery in New South Wales which, being set in the Domain, had plenty of space available in which to expand when some rather magnificent additions were made recently. Our Art Gallery has the university on the one side, the Museum on the other, other buildings at the back and North Terrace to the front, so that the possibilities of expansion are not the same as those which apply in other capital cities.

Certainly, examinations have been made of a number of possible solutions for enlarging the hanging space available to the Art Gallery. As the honourable member mentioned, there has been talk of the Torrens Building perhaps being available but, after investigation, it was decided that this was not a feasible proposition on a number of grounds, not the least of which was expense. In addition, being a heritage building, there was a limit to the renovations that could be done. These would not necessarily make it suitable to provide hanging space for the Art Gallery.

Similar considerations apply to a property owned by the Government on North Terrace, almost opposite the Art Gallery. It also has a heritage classification, so there is a strict limit to the renovations which can be performed. Consequently, the available hanging space after renovation was judged not to merit the expense involved, even though that building would be very much closer to the main Art Gallery and would facilitate easy communication.

I can assure members that I am as concerned as anybody to try to improve the situation for the Art Gallery, but I point out the difficulties and some of the limitations. Discussions are continuing, and I certainly hope that, before long, these might bear fruit and extra hanging space might be provided for the Art Gallery of South Australia.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Local Government, representing the Minister of Employment and Further Education, a question about employment in the South Australian automotive industry.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Speaking at the recent launching of the new Toyota Lexcen, the President of the Toyota Motor Corporation of Australia announced that his company had made a decision to build the new Lexcen exclusively in South Australia and indeed, to be more specific, at Holden's plant in Elizabeth. Given that this will mean that the plant will be required to produce an additional 40 cars per day, or 11 per cent more cars than it is currently producing, and that the Toyota company anticipates selling 15 000 of its new Lexcen over the next 12 months, can the Minister ascertain what this additional work will mean in respect to security of employment for the present work force at Holden's in Elizabeth? Further, what, if anything, will this decision mean by way of creating new jobs at Holden's?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I shall be happy to refer that question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

SPEED LIMITS

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Transport a question about speed limits for semitrailers.

Leave granted.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: Through my involvement in the Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management, I have become aware of some work done by the South Australian Road Safety Division on research into the consequences of increasing the upper speed limit for heavy vehicles and, in particular, semitrailers, known in the trade as 'articulated'. I also indicate that there is cause for considerable concern as a result of the recent rise from 80 km/h to 90 km/h and, eventually, from 90 km/h to 100 km/h. In South Australia there has been measured in two locations a direct increase in speed of both car travel and semitrailer travel, as a result of the legislation. We were persuaded that the aim was to make roads safer by decreasing the differential between cars and semitrailers as they travelled along the open road. This has not occurred and the differential has remained virtually the same, but everything is going faster now—faster to the extent that cars have increased from 103 to 110 in the Callington measurement, whereas semitrailers have gone up from 100 to 104.

Therefore, it is important to look at the statistics, and the statistics of accident rates involving semitrailers show that, since the increase in speed limits, their involvement in fatal accidents and serious casualties has risen. My information indicates that, in 1987, after the first stage rise, they were involved in 28 fatal accidents, and 71 serious casualties; in 1988, 16 fatal accidents and 80 serious casualties; and up to June this year, they had been involved in 14 fatal accidents. It is important also to remind members that the track record in general for semitrailers, in their involvement in accidents, is lethal and the South Australian Road Safety Division has indicated in its statistics that, on average, up to 1987, the rate per 10 000 registrations of fatal crashes was 2.7 for cars, and 44.3 for semitrailers.

Members may say that is all right for registrations but what about the actual equivalent distance travelled? For that, the rate per 100 million vehicle kilometres was: for cars to semitrailers, 1.26 to 13.98 for urban vehicles and 3.42 for cars to 4.33 for semitrailers in rural areas. The overall average was 1.76 for cars compared with 5.97 for semitrailers. It is a serious matter and it cannot be left to chance that this measure, on spurious and erroneously interpreted statistics, leaves us with a speed limit which is exposing us to a higher rate of fatality and serious injury. It is shown in the South Australian figures that, of all vehicle types (including cars and rigid trucks) the semitrailers have shown a steady rise in their involvement in fatal accidents and serious injury, whereas others have shown a steady decrease.

I am sure members will agree that it is of paramount importance that we get it right. If we do not know what the effect will be, we should desist until it becomes clear. On that basis I ask the Minister to revert to the pre-1987 speed limit of 80 km/h for heavy vehicles. We do not have adequate and properly analysed data (partly because of the inadequacy of police accident records) to make a proper calculation, particularly in respect of passive vehicles—those

not directly involved in the impact. There must be a more detailed study and, therefore, I ask the Minister to study the Coroner's data for the past 10 years in respect of the 200 fatal and serious accidents involving semitrailers.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I will refer the question to my colleague in another place and, if possible, bring down a reply. I am impressed by the thoroughness with which the Hon. Mr Gilfillan presented his case. I point out that he did not—unlike this morning's newspaper—make a distinction between male and female drivers, which may have produced results similar to those in this morning's newspaper.

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE FUNDING

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Health a question about Home and Community Care (HACC) funding.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: On Tuesday of this week the Bannon Government announced that it had achieved a budget surplus of \$106 million in the past financial year. In part, this figure represents windfall taxes that the Government collected from home buyers and small business, but it also represents funds gained at the expense of the aged and disabled—arguably the most vulnerable people, in social justice terms, in our community.

Last financial year the Bannon Government failed to match, by \$2.1 million, the available Commonwealth HACC funds, which members would appreciate are designed to provide vital home services to the frail aged and young disabled. The Government's failure to match this funding deprived the State of the ability to attract additional unmatched Commonwealth funding. It also deprived the frail aged and young people with disabilities of services vital to their quality of life to assist them to maintain their independence for a longer period in their own home.

During debate on the Supply Bill earlier this year I highlighted concerns in relation to domiciliary care and I noted that Eastern Domiciliary Care, for instance, had to cut back its home cleaning service from 1½ hours per fortnight to 1½ hours per month because of the State Government's failure to match Commonwealth funding. Further, domiciliary care services throughout the State stopped advertising because they did not want to raise the expectations of the aged in our community. They refused to meet referrals from doctors and hospitals and, in some instances, reduced services in addition to Eastern Domiciliary Care's cut-back in home cleaning services.

The lack of funding for country areas meant that domiciliary care for those areas failed to attract the qualified staff necessary to administer the very important HACC service for the young disabled and the frail aged. In the forthcoming State budget, and given the surplus that the Government has boasted about for the last financial year, will the Government match Commonwealth funding for the HACC service and therefore increase our ability to gain from the Commonwealth's additional unmatched funds? Will this sum also include the shortfall of \$2.1 million that the Government failed to match in Commonwealth funds last financial year?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I am not sure whether the honourable member is suggesting that the Government is somehow at fault in that we have been able to accumulate a surplus in this year's budget, or is she suggesting that when we do accumulate a surplus it should all be promptly

spent in some area of Government with no concern given to what might happen in the following financial year.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: This Government takes a rather more responsible view of financial management than that and certainly in the areas in which she has made comments, this Government has a very good record in terms of the things it has been able to achieve over a number of years. However, I will refer her question to my colleague the Minister of Health in another place and bring back a reply.

IMPARJA TELEVISION STATION

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs a question about the Imparja television station.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: I understand that Imparja, Australia's first Aboriginal-owned and controlled television station, may be forced to close within six months due to financial difficulties. The chairperson of the Imparja Board, Ms Freda Glynn, has stated that the continued operation of Imparja was in doubt because of crippling Aussat satellite charges. I understand that Imparja, which is owned by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, now owes \$2.5 million to Aussat. I also understand that the Federal Government covers about half the transponder costs with a grant of \$2 million a year and that the Northern Territory Government has also made a financial commitment. Around 40 per cent of Imparja's audience is in South Australia. Given that a large part of its audience is in this State, is the Minister able to state whether there are any plans to assist Imparja?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I will refer that question to my colleague in another place. The South Australian Government has demonstrated its commitment to the Imparja television station by providing funding already which has gone towards its establishment. I understand that some \$300 000 has already been provided for that purpose. Currently a review of the Imparja television station is under way, which I understand is under the auspices of the Commonwealth Government. When the results of that review are known, the State Government will be in a much better position to know exactly what role it needs to play in supporting Imparja.

As I have indicated, the Government supports the television station. We would like to see it continue. We are waiting for the results of the review and I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague in another place as I am sure that he will be able to provide further information about progress made.

O-BAHN

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Premier, a question on the opening of the final stages of the O-Bahn track.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: This morning the Premier announced on radio news that on the occasion of the opening of the O-Bahn on Sunday 20 August travel on the O-Bahn track would be free. He went to the Tea Tree Gully

terminal this morning to make that announcement—I wonder why! It could have been made anywhere, I would have thought. The announcement that travel on the O-Bahn on that day would be free took the State Transport Authority by surprise.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: No reason to tell them.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: They were amazed—they heard it on radio. The STA was not aware of it until it was announced on the radio. Some heard it and wondered when they would be advised officially so that they could complete their rosters and administration for that day. Ticket sellers will not be required if it is free, so the whole aspect changes. It will therefore probably be cheaper for the STA if it is free as it will not have to employ ticket sellers. People will walk on to the buses and away they go. My questions to the Minister are, first, when will the State Transport Authority be advised, as it has not yet been advised and, secondly, is it an economy measure?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The honourable member has asserted that the State Transport Authority has not been advised of this matter. I do not know whether or not that is the case. I will refer the question to the Premier to ascertain whether or not the STA was advised. Be that as it may, I would have thought that the Hon. Mr Burdett, being a member of the Tonkin Government which claims great credit for the initiation of the O-Bahn system, would have wanted to do everything possible to promote its use. It seems strange that he is apparently critical of a measure or a proposal to promote the use of the O-Bahn public transport on a day when it is completed. He apparently does not want people to have free rides on the O-Bahn on that day or any other day.

I would have thought that if on 20 August there is an official function, to which I assume the honourable member may be going, to celebrate the completion of the O-Bahn, it would not be a bad promotional exercise to allow the general public to travel free of cost on the O-Bahn on that day.

The Hon. J.C. Burdett: Why not advise the STA?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I do not know that the STA has not been advised. Maybe the honourable member had lunch with the general manager of the STA today and is privy to such information. I will ascertain whether or not his assertion that the STA was not advised is correct. Rather than quibble about this matter or about whether or not the STA was notified, I would have thought that he would be congratulating the Government on its promotion of the O-Bahn by this means.

DISABLED PERSONS EQUIPMENT SCHEME

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Tourism, representing the Minister of Health, a question on the disabled persons equipment scheme.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: Following on from a question asked a short time ago by the Hon. Ms Laidlaw. I have been speaking to a number of disabled people who expressed concern about cut-backs they have suffered over recent times and they gave me a couple of examples. For instance, in the past many people have had equipment supplied via hospitals. They are now being told that that is no longer available and, in their words, they are being 'shunted to other suppliers'. They say that the hospital funds have diminished to practically being out of existence. There have also been reports that domiciliary care offices in some dis-

tricts have under-used their funds set aside for this purpose, and the surplus has gone back to the Health Commission. There is a great deal of frustration that what these people are asking for is simply small percentages, and it angers them that nothing is being done to encourage people to get into the workplace.

Many people, once they go out to work, are being denied any form of assistance at all. In fact, they argue that a form of poverty trap is being set up. They have now been advised—although not officially at this stage, of course—that the coming State budget offers no respite in an area already cut back quite severely.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Sounds like a social justice measure.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: We had social justice in the last budget, so we will not get that one again. I ask the Minister, with the budget forthcoming and with an obvious surplus that the Premier has bragged about, will these people who have in fact suffered cutbacks at least have a return to the position that they enjoyed—I do not think the word 'enjoyed' is appropriate—or an improvement on their current position and can we be sure that we will not have this continual redirection of funds away from one lot of people in need to another lot of people in need as has been the case?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: During the last budget, the social justice component that was outlined by the Government was a package that incorporated not only existing programs but also new money which was put into various areas of Government designed to bring better services to those groups of people—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Conversation is too audible. I do not know how *Hansard* cope with it—I have a job up here. I ask that there be a little bit of indulgence and a bit more quiet in the Chamber.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: —who have been identified as suffering some disadvantage. I am sure there will also be, in the forthcoming budget, a component of funding directed towards those groups of people who are also most in need. So, I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and I am sure he will be able to provide a reply for the honourable member that will surprise him.

PUBLIC SERVICE RATIONALISATION

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Local Government, representing the Minister of Employment and Further Education, a question on the subject of departmental rationalisation and Education Department-TAFE cooperative programs.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Information supplied to the Liberal Party today indicates that there is to be a major rationalisation of the Public Service involving the imminent amalgamation of the Office of Employment and Training and the Department of Technical and Further Education. Staff within the Department of TAFE today have heard the rumours and are anxious from their own viewpoints to know what the Bannan Government plans for their futures.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: They're going to spend another five million bucks on furniture.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Hon. Dr Ritson hopes we do not have a coalescence debacle as we had with Health and Community Welfare. At the same time, most people involved in policy development for young adults have agreed

that there is a great need for much greater cooperation between the Department of TAFE and the Education Department. Indeed, two years ago we saw what is known as the Agers report which highlighted the extremely poor performance of the Bannon Government in relation to cooperative programs between the Department of TAFE and the Education Department. It called for significant action in relation to cooperative programs between TAFE and the Education Department. Sadly, in the ensuing two years, we have not seen significant change or action as a result of that report. My questions to the Minister are:

1. Will the Minister confirm that an announcement is imminent that the Office of Employment and Training will be amalgamated with the Department of Technical and Further Education?

2. Will the Minister take urgent action to ensure that there are more cooperative programs between the Department of TAFE and the Education Department and, indeed, a greater level of cooperation between the Department of TAFE and the Education Department?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I shall be happy to refer that question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

INDUSTRIAL BLACKMAIL

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question on the subject of industrial blackmail.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: Today I have been contacted by several employers advising me of the campaigns being adopted by the unions to force employers to join the Birst redundancy scheme. At a large construction site, workers reporting for work this morning were confronted by a group of union heavies demanding to know if they were in the Birst scheme. As some of the workers were not members of the union controlled redundancy scheme, they were told they could not remove their tools from the site, nor could they leave the site themselves or, if they did, they could take the consequences and be banned from working on any other site in Adelaide. They were given the direction that they could stay in the lunchroom until their employer paid the redundancy contributions into the scheme.

At this particular site, there were more than 20 workers in the lunchroom at 8.30 this morning, most of them being forced to remain on site against their will and under duress with the fear that they may lose their job if they left the site. I am advised that, as a result of the union's action, there were several incidents of physical confrontation. As the Attorney-General has always held himself to be the champion of human rights, my questions to him are:

1. Will he serve notice to the unions that his Government will not tolerate their behaviour, particularly as it relates to the wrongful detention of workers on building sites?

2. Will the Bannon Government intervene in this dispute before the building industry falls into total disrepute placing further investment interests at risk?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The first point that needs to be made is that under the Bannon Government South Australia has, during the whole of its period, had a lower rate of industrial disputation than any other State in Australia. This is a result of the approach to industrial relations adopted by the South Australian Government. Our approach to industrial relations was one of the major factors which led to our securing the submarine project for South Australia. Our record in dealing with industrial disputes and resolving

them was undoubtedly one of the important factors in securing that project for South Australia. So, the general point needs to be emphasised for the honourable member's edification in case he was not already aware of it.

I have said before that I do not support any action by unions or other people that involve breaches of the law of the land and, in particular, breaches of the criminal law. The honourable member has made certain assertions which I am not in a position to check today, but I will certainly refer them to the appropriate Minister to see whether or not the matters referred to or asserted by the honourable member are in fact correct.

The Hon. J.F. Stefani: All you have to do is walk across the street and have a look at it.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The honourable member has made the assertion. I have no information to verify that assertion, but I will refer it to the Minister, which is all I can reasonably do at this time, having made the comments that I have already made.

Finally, I am sure that the Minister is monitoring this situation very closely. Clearly, the dispute will have to be resolved by some means and, hopefully, as soon as possible. I have no doubt that the Minister is monitoring it, but I will refer the honourable member's question to him to ascertain whether or not the matters to which the honourable member has referred are correct and ascertain what action the Minister has taken with respect to this dispute.

COUNCIL BOUNDARIES

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Local Government a question relating to advisory commission reports.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: The Minister said in a reply to a question yesterday, and continues to say, that the commission has made 35 reports to the Minister on its investigations and she has accepted the commission's advice on every one of them. I cannot properly analyse that figure because the 1988-89 report of the Local Government Department containing the Local Government Advisory Commission's report for 1988-89 is not available to me. However, I have attempted to analyse the reports from 1984-85 to 1987-88. I say 'attempted to', because the reports are a little confusing, especially the early ones, and that is understandable, considering the new provisions of the Act. I especially allude to sections 26 and 27. Section 26 provides advice to the Minister concerning general boundary changes, and section 27 concerns any matter affecting local government.

My analysis to June 1988 shows that the commission had reported on 17 proposals and the commission had not reported on 14. There were six matters affecting ward boundaries and two related to the position of Mayor and the abolition of a position of alderman, making a total of 39. I am not questioning the Minister's figure of 35 because I would think that is up to the present. Further analysed, my calculations show that of the proposals reported 14 are rural, one is metropolitan and two are part rural. Of the proposals not reported, nine are rural, two are metropolitan and three are part rural. For 31 major reports, 28 are rural or part rural, which represents above 90 per cent.

In view of yesterday's statement by the Premier that the Minister will ask the commission to give particular weight to community concern that has been clearly expressed (in other words, people voting with their feet), does the Minister agree that rural committees affected by the commission's

decisions have had and still have little hope of influencing the Government by demonstrating with their feet as would be, and indeed is, the case in the metropolitan area? Will the Minister make available to me an analysis of the advisory commission's reports from 1984-85 to the present day?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: My information is that there have been 35 reports relating to changes in boundaries. Of course, this does not include ward boundary changes or other matters. That is why the report relating to the establishment of the City of Flinders was report No. 114 from the Local Government Advisory Commission and not No. 35. Of the 35 previous reports, in 21 cases the commission changed the boundaries; in four cases it accepted a proposal for change but made slight modifications; and in the other nine cases it rejected the proposals that had been put to it. In each case the Government accepted the decision made by the advisory commission.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I am very pleased to confirm that the Hon. Mr Irwin said yesterday that he, too, supported having a Local Government Advisory Commission.

WAREHOUSE LIENS BILL

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced an Bill for an Act to provide for a lien on goods stored in a warehouse. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It seeks to reform and simplify the law relating to the provision of a lien on goods deposited and stored in a warehouse. In doing so it seeks to repeal the Warehousemen's Liens Act 1941 and express the language of the law in conformity with contemporary drafting principles.

In summary the Bill repeals the 1941 Act; establishes the right of an operator of a warehouse to have a lien on goods deposited for storage in his or her warehouse; describes the lawful charges covered by a lien; protects the rights of persons who may have an interest in the goods deposited; and prescribes procedures in respect of the sale, and disposition of proceeds of sale, of goods covered by a lien.

The major difference between the Bill and the 1941 Act is as follows. Under the 1941 Act the warehouseman was obliged, within three months after the date of deposit of the goods, to give notice of the lien to:

- (a) persons who had notified the warehouseman of their interest in the goods;
- (b) the grantee of a bill of sale over goods (that is, in effect, the mortgagee of goods); and
- (c) any person of whose interest in the goods the warehouseman had knowledge.

By contrast, the Bill abolishes the requirement of a notice of lien. There appears to be no useful purpose for it and it is an extra obligation on business. It seems absurd that the lien is completely lost if the notice is not given within three months. Instead, the Bill provides for the giving of notice only where the lien is to be enforced (that is, by sale). In that event anyone who has an interest in the goods (of which the warehouse operator is aware) must be notified, as well as anyone who has a registered interest in the goods. Thus, the warehouse operator would need to search the Bills of Sale Register and the Goods Securities Register. In this sense, the Bill is less regulatory than the 1941 Act and, if passed, would require considerably fewer regulations to be promulgated under it.

In nearly all other respects the Bill reproduces the existing law on the topic. The Senior Judge and Chief Magistrate have seen a draft of the Bill and approved it. The Bill, if it becomes law, will come into operation only after the Senior Judge has prepared appropriate rules of court which will regulate proceedings in local courts under the new Act. I commend the Bill to honourable members and seek leave to have the detailed explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1 and 2 are formal.

Clause 3 repeals the Warehousemen's Liens Act 1941.

Clause 4 defines 'operator of a warehouse' to mean a person lawfully engaged in the business of storing goods as a bailee for fee or reward.

Clause 5 provides that the measure does not limit or derogate from any civil remedy.

Clause 6 establishes that the operator of a warehouse has a lien on goods deposited for storage in the warehouse.

Clause 7 sets out the charges covered by the lien, namely—

- (a) lawful charges for storage and preservation of the goods;
- (b) lawful claims for insurance, transportation, labour, weighing, packing and other expenses in relation to the goods;
- (c) reasonable charges for any notice or advertisement required under the measure;

and

- (d) reasonable charges arising from sale of the goods pursuant to the measure.

Clause 8 requires a person depositing goods for storage in a warehouse to notify the operator of the warehouse of the name and address of each person who has an interest in the goods, to be best of the depositor's knowledge. The penalty provided for non-compliance is a division 8 fine (maximum \$1 000).

Clause 9 provides that goods stored in a warehouse may be sold to satisfy the warehouse lien on those goods if an amount has been owing in respect of the goods to the operator of the warehouse for at least six months.

Clause 10 requires the operator of a warehouse to give notice of intention to sell to the debtor, to any person who has served on the operator written notice of a claim to an interest in the goods, to any person who has a registered interest in the goods and to any other person who has an interest in the goods of which the operator is aware. The clause also requires certain matters to be contained in the notice and makes provision for the manner in which the notice may be given.

Clause 11 sets out further procedures required for the sale of goods to satisfy a warehouse lien. If the amount owed remains unpaid, the operator of the warehouse must advertise the sale of the goods in a South Australian newspaper at least once a week for two consecutive weeks. The sale can be held after 14 days have elapsed since the first publication of the advertisement. The mode of sale is to be by public auction unless the regulations specify otherwise. Provision is also made for the opening of packages containing the goods where necessary.

Clause 12 enables any person with an interest in the goods to apply to the local court for an order prohibiting any further steps being taken for sale of the goods.

Clause 13 provides that no further proceedings for sale of the goods may be taken if the amount owing to the operator is paid in full. If payment is made by a person

other than the debtor, provision is made for it to be recovered by that person from the debtor.

Clause 14 sets out the manner in which the proceeds of sale must be distributed. The lien is to be satisfied and the surplus (if any) must be paid to persons who put in written claims. If the validity of any claim is disputed or if there are conflicting claims, the surplus must be paid into a local court. If no claims are made within 10 days after the sale, the surplus must be paid to the Treasurer. If the operator of the warehouse does not comply with the provision, the operator is guilty of an offence, the penalty for which is a division 11 fine (maximum \$100) per day of continued default.

Clause 15 makes it an offence to furnish false or misleading information for the purposes of the Act. The penalty provides is a division 7 fine (maximum \$2 000).

Clause 16 provides that offences against the Act are summary offences.

Clause 17 contains regulation making powers.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 8 August. Page 53.)

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON (Leader of the Opposition): I guess that this will be the last opportunity for me to be on this side of the Chamber addressing a Government of the day because at the next election I will be leaving here and moving to the other side of the Chamber. One of the reasons for that is that the Government—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Don't worry about the polls. You know as well as I do that the polls are not showing what was said in the *Advertiser* today; they are the June polls. This Government's stewardship of an area of particular interest to me, namely, health, has been absolutely appalling. In my time in this portfolio I have seen the most rapid deterioration that one could ever believe possible in a civilised country.

In South Australia we have always boasted that we had the best health system. Sadly that has gone. Which people are suffering from what this Government has done to the health system? It is not the wealthy people, who are still able to insure privately. Goodness knows there is few of those now—46 per cent; they have nearly halved in number. It is the ordinary people in this society of ours who can no longer afford insurance who are now waiting for very serious operations and treatment for other problems.

Why is this so? It is because this Government was determined to walk wily niley into an arrangement for health which has ended up with our receiving the rather poor result from the Commonwealth. We have gone from 12.5 per cent of Commonwealth Medicare funds in this last year to 9.3 per cent, and the Premier of the State was the first one to sign the new Medicare agreement. He was the first one to leap into bed with the Government. Why? Because he is President of the Australia Labor Party and therefore is obliged to do so. As a result, South Australia has ended up on the other end of the amount of money available from the Commonwealth, that is, the lower end.

That is very sad because it involves a drop of \$94 million to this State. When I raised this question last year in this Council and when it was raised with the Minister of Health

in another place in August last year, they said, 'No, you don't understand, the figures are different to that; you don't know the full story.' Well, Mr Acting President, I now know the full story, that is, that what I said was absolutely correct. Sadly the Government, rather than admit that, and go on fighting for additional resources for South Australians, just gave in.

SACOSS has just put out a document, in which, relating to tax receipts, it says on page 10:

Given the 3 per cent cutback in South Australia's share of Medicare revenues, extra funds for health programs will be required.

Now that 3 per cent involves a drop from 12.5 per cent to 9.3 per cent. So, we have in this State, as I described last week, people waiting in queues. I will just take members back through a little bit of history. When a former Minister of Health (Hon. John Cornwall) went to New Zealand in 1986, I suddenly realised that quite a problem was being hidden in the health system; that is, that people were on what I call waiting lists. This was vehemently denied by the Minister, who said, 'No, there is no such thing as a waiting list.' I was talking to surgeons who said, 'That is strange. I have waiting lists at the hospital. I do not know what he is talking about.' The Minister finally admitted, 'Yes, there are people there, but they are not on waiting lists; they are booking lists.' That is the difference. I was terribly wrong. I got the word wrong. They were not waiting lists but booking lists. What were those people on the booking list facing up to?

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: A long wait.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Yes. If you have a general surgery problem to be dealt with at Flinders Medical Centre, the maximum time you must wait is 1 836 days, that's all! It is not too bad, really! I mean, you might eventually get in. The sad thing is that, if you have a general surgery problem and you are privately insured, you will get into a hospital tomorrow.

The Hon. J.F. Stefani: Anywhere.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: Anywhere. This is what this so-called socialist Government has done to the people who have always looked to it for assistance, and that is one of the many reasons why people will not look to them at the election. How members opposite can have allowed this situation to arise is quite beyond me. They have no heart at all. If they did have, they would be receiving, I am sure, the same telephone calls that I received day by day, and they would be doing something about it.

The Hon. Mr Roberts looks at me in disbelief. Let me give him an example of what happened today just before I came into this Chamber. A woman over 90 years of age came down from a country town. I will name the town because I am sure that it will not identify the person involved. She came down from Whyalla for her son's birthday party. Her son is not a young person, and she had a problem overnight. She went to the Flinders Medical Centre, and while booking into casualty her son said, 'Of course she comes from Whyalla.'

The Hon. J.F. Stefani: They went to pieces.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: No, they said, 'We cannot admit you. You have got to go back to Whyalla.' This lady, who was 90 years of age, had then to be put into a small vehicle, and be taken back to Whyalla. There she had another six hour wait, but that is another story. Do you know why Flinders did not want her there, and I do not blame them? It was because they had been instructed to keep within their budget and, to do so, they must restrict activity. To do that, they must ration health care to the citizens in that area. But, of course, if they are rationing

health care to the people in their catchment area they cannot afford to take people from outside.

I was down at Flinders recently and the casualty division was absolutely full. Every cubicle was full, with two people outside in the corridor in casualty. Every bed in another section of the hospital that is not classified as having beds was full. Indeed, every bed in the hospital was full. Because the hospital has been restricted so much in funds, it must do something about the services to its community. In fact, the Administrator of Flinders has said just that. He said that there will have to be rationing. He said, 'It is all very well to be the popular hospital but treating patients well is self defeating if we are forced to treat fewer of them.' They are not my words. They are the words of the hospital, and last year it had an emergency work load that increased by 9 per cent. They practically got to the stage where very little elective surgery was being done. They were having to ration services so that they were dealing almost entirely with emergencies.

The Royal Adelaide Hospital is no different. It has the same problem. Yesterday, I noted with some interest, in a ministerial statement made in this Council and in a letter written in another place, a letter written by the Administrator of the Royal Adelaide yesterday. It is amazing to me how quickly various Ministers of Health who have come and gone in the time that I have been responsible for this shadow portfolio, immediately they receive any indication that an administrator is criticising me or our particular thrust on hospitals, rush it into the House and say, 'See, you are wrong.' It is sad that they do not recognise that there is a problem and, until this Government sits down and recognises that there is a problem and stops trying to defend itself, the people of this State will continue to suffer.

This morning, the doctor of a woman who has had back pains for three years rang Flinders to get her into the pain clinic. This woman is in very serious pain. How long do members think a person with pain must wait to get into the Flinders Medical Centre? I am not being critical of the centre, but the waiting time is six months. You have got to swallow a lot of aspirins while you are waiting for the Flinders Medical Centre to cope with its load.

Does the Hon. Mr Roberts agree with that? Does he think that that is a reasonable and fair go for the ordinary citizen of the State? Does he think that public patients should be made to put up with this, or does not the Government care about them? I do not think it does.

Following what I said in August, I raised in November a question of hospitals running out of money, and the Government said, 'No, that is no problem.' Finally, it admitted that the Children's Hospital was \$3 million over budget. The Government still said that there was no problems with the other hospitals. Apparently, it was quite normal in January, when the subject was raised again, for hospitals to readjust their budgets in the middle of the year once they knew what they were getting.

There was a denial of any problem. In April, suddenly the money was cut off. For the first time in the history of this State, we had health rationing. We had the Royal Adelaide Hospital turning away patients for the first time in 150 years. What a record for this Government to look back on when it departs to the Opposition benches! It has managed to achieve something that no other Government in the history of this State has managed to achieve, and that is forcing our major public hospital to turn patients away. It was turning them away at the rate of 100 a week.

The Hon. R.R. Roberts: It would be terrible if you introduced all these cut-backs.

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: I will not introduce cut-backs; the only cut-backs I will make will be in the area that the honourable member's Government has allowed to fly out of control, and that is at the administrative level. His Government has so forced administrative people on these institutions that that side of the expenditure has gone totally out of control. So the health dollar is not spent on the coal-face of medicine but on administration. If members do not believe me, they should visit the Port Pirie Hospital and ask the administrator there about the amount of detail he has to provide to central office. For what purpose? I am sure nobody knows.

Certainly, no benefit seems to come out of it. I do not get any information, and none is offered to the Opposition to enlighten us. A certain amount is available, but it falls off the back of trucks. This is such a secretive Government that there is no way in the world that one can get information through normal means. Fortunately, some very decent public servants feel that the truth should be made known to the people, and provide information on a daily basis. The situation has been even better since the Opposition installed its own fax machine downstairs. It is amazing what comes out of it.

As I said, Mr Blevins indicated that there were no problems. Suddenly in April we had a major problem. Headlines appeared: 'RAH surgery crisis grows', 'Some hospital wards shut', 'South Australia's big two-act to beat budget squeeze', 'Hospital funding crisis spreads', 'Hospitals at point of no return', and even an editorial headed: 'Wanted—a Health Minister'. One could not agree more. Where was the Health Minister? Where was the Premier, Mr Bannon, during all this time? Do members know what they were saying? They were saying there was no crisis; not a problem. It was just a beat-up by a few doctors and administrators to try to get a bit more money. The Opposition had an answer to that. Now that the letter has been read out from Dr Carnie yesterday, I think I should read out what the Acting Chairman of the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board had to say:

To all staff—Royal Adelaide Hospital budget—closure of services. The board of the Royal Adelaide Hospital considers the recent published criticism by the Minister of Health, Dr Hoppood, of senior hospital staff, is inaccurate and unfair. The board and the South Australian Health Commission have been fully involved over a number of months in all the matters leading finally to the closure of beds and restriction of hospital services for budgetary purposes. All staff are to be congratulated for the constructive way they have responded in the interests of patient care to a most difficult situation. The board has full confidence in and supports the staff in their efforts to continue working in the current crisis and in the steps being taken to resolve the future of the hospital.

It was signed by B.L. Sallis, Acting Chairman, and all the other board members, and was written on 30 May 1989. That sort of letter, from a unit which is supposedly under the control of the Minister under the Health Commission Act, is a fair indication of how much misleading information was being provided by the Minister of Health and this Government to the public. They were not prepared to accept that they were wrong and that they were ruining the health system and, in the process, hurting people—hurting citizens of South Australia in a way that has never happened before. The Royal Adelaide Hospital closed 84 beds. It placed a freeze on replacing staff and, in doing that, it added to the elective surgery waiting list by cancelling up to 100 operations a week. That has gone on from then to this day.

They have stopped all outpatients bookings; no more people are going on the waiting list. That is another trick to try to stop the waiting list exploding while the hospitals are virtually shut down and doing only emergency surgery. The end result is that staff morale at our major public hospitals has never been lower, and it is not because of any

headlines: it is because the people in those institutions know how bad it has been. They have had to work in areas seriously understaffed. They have had to cope with more than normal patient loads, and this State has lost in the process some very valuable people. Some of those people had years and years of expertise in specialised areas and they have gone interstate or shifted anywhere but stay in a situation in which they could not cope.

It got to a stage where even people who were sick reported to work because they could not let the people they were working with down. There were people in those wards who should not have been at work, but came back to work just to ensure that their fellow workers' work loads were not increased. This is what this Government has done, a Government supposedly composed of union people, people who believe in the workers. They no more do that than I believe in the man on the moon.

The Government has shown utter contempt for the people who have carried the workload during this period. At the Flinders Medical Centre 150 operations were cancelled in one month in a bid to contain a budget overrun. In May, the hospital had to close 32 beds, it placed a freeze on replacing staff, curtailed the purchase of new equipment and placed restrictions on elective surgery. At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital 14 beds were closed to contain its budget overrun. I am told that further closures were strongly resisted only because it was felt that further cutbacks would seriously compromise the hospital's role of providing services to the public in the western suburbs. Nevertheless, that hospital, too, had to delay and defer elective surgery and even put off paying some of its bills for the past month in a bid to hide its budget overrun.

Through all of this we had a Government, a Premier and a Health Minister denying that there was a crisis. It is very hard to understand. Further, the Premier bluntly refused to visit the Royal Adelaide Hospital to look at the problems. The Leader of the Opposition and I visited the RAH to discuss the problems of patients and staff. The Health Minister's response was:

Mr Olsen's tour of the RAH was a cynical attempt to cash in on the alarmist predictions of a small handful of hospital administrators and doctors.

That is what he said in the *Advertiser*. We were invited to that hospital because it could not get the Premier or the Health Minister to visit it—they would not attend. The Leader of the Opposition and I were the only people interested in the problems at that hospital. Mr Bannon, according to his minders—we rarely hear from Mr Bannon; it is mostly his minders—would tour the RAH when he felt that it was necessary, but a visit was not yet needed. Goodness me, if Mr Bannon had visited that hospital he would have seen whole wards shut down. The gynaecology section of the hospital was shut down and no operations were being done in that valuable area. The specialised staff from that section were shifted willy-nilly all over the hospital. Some of them had to handle cardiac patients, for which they were not trained. If Mr Bannon had seen all that, he would have understood.

This is a prime example of the arrogance that has become a hallmark of this Government. It shuts itself off from the criticism of people who work in the health system and know the problems. However, the Government describes them simply as 'alarmist'. The Government does not only criticise the Opposition's concern about an issue—which I suppose is par for the course with this Government—it wants to kill the messengers. The very people working in the hospitals who highlight the problems are accused of making alarmist predictions.

All that the hospitals received from the Premier were assurances that they would receive no more money until the new financial year. So patients would have to continue to have operations cancelled and staff, working under extremely stressful conditions, would have to soldier on. The Government would not provide any more money, yet it has the audacity to say, 'Look at our budget surplus, aren't we careful?' However, part of that surplus has been built on the backs of the people who are suffering. Where was the Health Minister while all this was going on? Most of the time he was nowhere to be found—and when he was, as I have already demonstrated, his inept comments did little to smooth over relations between the Government and hospital staff—comments such as it was 'utterly ridiculous' to say the hospitals system was in a state of crisis. Comments by the Health Minister included:

It seems to me that a lot of this is about position in the health service pecking order rather than about actual services to patients. I would have thought that the concern should be about the welfare of patients, not about the medical pecking order of staff.

What an incredible statement given the problems within the system. That is all the Minister of Health can come up with. That inane statement from the Health Minister of the illustrious Bannon Government comes from the *Advertiser* of 29 May.

Of course the welfare of patients comes first. That is what staff at the major hospitals have been trying to tell the Government for some time. They were telling the Government, and anyone else who was prepared to listen, 'We haven't got enough funds to cater for the huge increase in demand for our services. We are going to have to cancel patients' surgery, we are going to have to close wards, we are going to have to freeze staff numbers unless we get additional resources.' What did the Government do? Nothing. It just uttered platitudes about additional resources that would be provided to hospitals in the new financial year, and hospitals would have to tough it out until then! And then the Premier made his big announcement—a supposed rescue package to help the hospitals out of their difficulties.

At the time he said that \$43 million or thereabouts would be provided. However, we have discovered that that is not the case, that it would be over four years. In fact, it turned out to be \$11.5 million. In the previous year the hospitals had an overrun of \$7.8 million. That fact was hidden by the Premier—he denied that there was any problem. What a joke. Out of that package, \$3 million is to be allocated to reducing waiting lists—three years after a former Health Minister promised to cut the lists by half within 12 months. We all know how successful the Government has been in that area—waiting lists are now over 7 000 for the first time in the history of this State. In 1984 there were 3 400 patients on waiting lists and when the former Minister made his prediction there were 6 800. In 1986 the then Minister said that he would halve the number of people on waiting lists, but by January 1987 the number had risen even further. That is part of the deceit that has been practised on the people of this State.

Of the \$11.5 million, \$2 million is to be used for equipment replacement. I understand the system of equipment replacement. It includes one area described as 'items under \$50 000'. It was indicated that some of this money would be used for that area. Over the next five years the Royal Adelaide Hospital will need \$10.5 million just to get back to square one in respect of items of equipment under \$50 000. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital needs \$7.8 million. I do not think that anyone in the Government understands the situation in hospitals in respect of equipment. If they did, they would be alarmed indeed. Members of the Government should visit these hospitals and talk to the people who

practise in them to find out what is happening. They should go into the wards and the bathrooms and see the chairs with rusty legs. People have no idea how bad it is until they visit these hospitals and sit down and talk to the people.

In relation to equipment, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital alone needs one item worth \$1.6 million—a CAT scan. At the moment, the existing CAT scan at that hospital is so old that it breaks down four or five times each week, so it is mostly not used. A person who needs a CAT scan at that hospital must become an inpatient and take up a hospital bed for one week before the scan can be done.

So, he fills up a bed for a week before diagnosis. The cost of those beds per day is about \$350 to \$380. The cost of a CAT scan at the QEH is about \$1 500 to \$2 000 before one gets to the CAT scanner. That is because this Government has failed to consider the problems it has caused in equipment by continuing to restrict hospital budgets. The Royal Adelaide Hospital needs to spend \$2.5 million per year. The Flinders Medical Centre needs \$2 million for urgently needed replacement equipment over the next year and \$10 million over the next five years. Those figures are available—anybody can ring those institutions and will be told that.

So much for the \$2 million equipment replacement contained in the so-called rescue package! Rescue from what—from the ravages of this Government! That will occur because the people of this State are sick to death of the way the Bannon Government has been operating the health system and they will throw it out. This so-called extra funding has to be weighed against the repeated cuts received by public hospitals in recent years. Those cuts have been enacted in hospitals year by year because the Bannon Government has failed to get a better deal on health from the Federal Government. For verification, we need look no further than the Premier's minders, because finally they have admitted something that we have been saying for ages, namely, that South Australia has repeatedly had its health funding cut by the Commonwealth.

We have the weakest set of negotiators in this Government that this State has ever seen. Members opposite should be ashamed of themselves for supporting this Government. They should be standing up in Caucus and speaking loud and strong against what is happening. However, instead they sit back in silence. We have heard not one word of criticism from any Government member of the actions of this Government in the four month period. Not one word! Members cannot tell me that they have not had the same sort of messages that I have been getting in my office. My desk is loaded with names of people complaining about their treatment. I was phoned yesterday by someone who has been a Labor supporter all his life. He would have known the Hon. Mr Crothers as he used to attend his State Councils. He will never attend again after the treatment he received at the Flinders Medical Centre as a result of what this Government has done to that hospital. If members think it has been run properly, I feel very sorry for the people of this State if by some terrible chance this Government is returned to office.

I refer to an article in the *News* of 17 May headed 'Bannon fund cut plea' which states:

The Adelaide hospital cash shortage crisis was a classic example of what happened when the Federal Government slashed State funds year after year. This was the claim by a spokesman for the Premier, Mr Bannon. Mr Bannon flies to Canberra today in a bid to persuade the Treasurer, Mr Keating, that SA cannot take any more cuts.

It is amazing—the penny had finally dropped. One wonders whether the Government has been told. That is exactly what the Opposition, and I as health spokesman, have been saying for years. However, the Government has steadfastly

refused to admit that South Australia has been done like a dinner over funding. The Hon. Mr Blevins was unprepared to admit last August that we had had the dirty done on us by Canberra in health funding. In June this year Dr Hopgood was still refusing to admit that funding had been cut.

On 16 June in the *News* Dr Hopgood was quoted as saying that the Liberals claim of a funding cutback was wrong and that I had made a 'silly but basic error' over hospital funding cuts. Even the good doctor's figures (not a medical doctor) showed total grants to South Australia of \$1598.2 million in 1988-89 compared with \$1599.5 million for 1987-88 which, when I went to school, was a cut of \$1.3 million in cash terms, let alone in real terms. I sometimes have difficulty with figures, but I think I am right with that one. It is a cutback of \$1.3 million. It is clear that this State had real cuts to hospital funding this year over previous years.

I refer to a chart in the *Australian Quarterly*, summer 1988, page 443, which sets out the *per capita* allocations to all States for health funding in 1987-88. It clearly shows South Australia's total health funding per head of population has fallen from \$1 132.60 in 1987-88 to \$1 121.30 in 1988-89. That is \$11 per head in actual terms but in real terms it is \$90 a head less that we are getting from the Commonwealth.

I turn specifically to major public hospitals. Government minders have tried to play down the fact that there have been substantial real cuts to hospital funding. In an article in the *Advertiser* of 17 June, headed 'Bannon rejects health hysteria', a Government spokesman (notice that it is never the Minister or the Premier but always a Government spokesperson being quoted) stated that expenditure on metropolitan hospitals had risen in real terms after adjustment for inflation. Figures were then quoted which supposedly showed funding to metropolitan hospitals had risen from \$490 million in 1985-86 to \$631 million in 1988-89. Those figures demonstrated the danger in rushing to journalists to try to quieten any opposition to what the Government is doing.

The Government spokesperson had erroneously overstated the money allocated to metropolitan hospitals in 1988-89 by more than \$142 million. That is not a big error for a Government with 500 public servants in the Health Commission to assist it, as they should! I do not know from where they got their figures, but I know that they inadvertently or otherwise included money allocated to 68 country hospitals, the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science and the St John Council of South Australia. They did not put in those figures for the previous years, but did so for 1988-89 in trying to show an increase. They have now admitted to the journalists that they made a mistake. They did not apologise to me.

In fact, this year metropolitan hospitals received \$488 million compared with \$499 million in real terms last year—a cut. Metropolitan hospitals had a \$7 million cut for 1988-89, which comes as no surprise to the many people who have had surgery cancelled in our hospitals over the past five or six months. It comes as no surprise to the more than 7 000 people waiting for surgery within the hospitals system, that is, for the major public hospitals apart from the Children's Hospital. If we add in the Children's Hospital the figure is almost 8 000. On top of that, many people are not on the waiting lists because they have to wait to get on to the waiting list. One can wait up to 60 days to get into outpatients.

It would not come as a surprise to many of the over-worked hospitals staff who have been trying to drum into this senseless Government the fact that there is something

drastically wrong with funding for our public hospitals. Nor will it come as a surprise to the hospital administrators who repeatedly have to cancel the purchase of vitally needed medical equipment. In summary, the recent hospitals crisis indicates the final outcome of 6½ years of the Bannon Government's continual running down of the South Australian health system. It has wrecked it. The Government has been prepared to see patients suffer, hospital staff suffer and our public hospitals run down to a point where fine institutions, such as the Royal Adelaide Hospital, have had to turn away all but emergency patients because of funding restrictions. This is the first time in its illustrious 150 year history.

The Bannon Government is prepared to run down the public hospital system to the point where staff morale is at an all time low, where the infrastructure of plant and maintenance is badly neglected and will need tens of millions of dollars injected in coming years to stop it from grinding to a halt. This Government has demonstrated in the health area, as in other portfolios, that it has lost touch with ordinary people. It no longer believes that it is accountable and believes that, if its minders tell the media that talk of a hospital crisis is simply Opposition scaremongering, they will believe them.

The Bannon Government has done great damage to the health system, not only in the past few months but in the long term. It will take some time to restore our health services to their former high standard. It will take a Government of conviction prepared to stand up for this State's rights and, quite frankly, I know that this Government does not have that conviction any more. The public of South Australia will remember this Government's attitude in recent months and we will certainly be reminding it. It will remember this Government as prepared to make the elderly, the sick and the disadvantaged suffer so that the hospitals could come in on budget, even when they have a rise in the number of people who want the services.

The Flinders Medical Centre had a 6 per cent rise in people wanting to use the system last year, but they had to be catered for within a budget that was set for the previous year on the lower intake. The public of South Australia will make the decision as to whether this Government should be trusted with looking after their health and welfare for the next four years, given they have made one hell of a mess of that trust during the past six years.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: Are you saying that is Dr Cornwall's fault?

The Hon. M.B. CAMERON: No, it is the Government's fault. The Attorney is the Leader of the Government in this Chamber and Mr Bannon is the Premier, the Leader of the Government in the other House. All Government members have a responsibility, but not one of them has been prepared to stand up and say that what is happening is wrong. Not one of them stuck up for the staff; not one of them stuck up for the people. They will get their answer. It is because they have introduced a system, and made certain that the system introduced depreciates the number of people privately insured. In doing so, they have added that number of people straight on to the public hospital system and they have done nothing to assist that system to cope with the load that, through their philosophies, they put on it.

If they are going to have the system and are determined to do it, then they have to be prepared to fund it. They have to be prepared to make certain people do not get less service, but they are not prepared to do that. They have said to the people, 'Don't worry, we will look after you. You don't have to worry any more. We have a levy with Medicare and you won't have to worry any more.' And

people believed them. That is the sad thing—they believed them, and now we have the end result of their neglect and the neglect of the people who trusted them. That is a shame, because the hospital system in South Australia was the best, and they have turned it the other way. They have made it extremely difficult for the people and the system to provide the necessary service. As members of the Government, they have an awful lot to answer for.

Whether they are prepared to look at it and be honest in doing so is a matter for them and their consciences. I know what I have said publicly and the matters I have raised publicly arise from real problems. I do not have to beat up the stories. I do not have to introduce any facts that are not correct because they are all there and anybody in the health system knows it. Members opposite do not have a single supporter within the major public hospitals who does not recognise that they have created a problem. In fact, they have very few supporters left because of what they have done, and it is their own fault and their own doing. I support the motion.

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: This is the third occasion on which I, as a member of this Chamber, have participated in the Address in Reply debate. On this occasion I think it entirely appropriate that I endeavour to cover two elements of this Chamber's activities over the past 12 months. They are, namely, environmental matters and the role of the Opposition in a Parliament which operates under the Westminster system. First, I would like to talk about environmental matters and the urgency with which I believe they should be addressed. Indeed, when one talks about the environment, there is such a lot that could be said it becomes difficult to know where to start in order to get the type of balanced and affordable approach which I believe is the only way to go in order that we can start repairing the damage that has, in most instances, been done to our environment over the past 100 years or so.

The Hon. M.B. Cameron: How long have you been in Government?

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: It is seven years this time and the next term will make it 11 years. This damage has been accelerating at ever increasing speed, and regrettably, because of inattention in the past, some of it is now almost irreversible.

However, over the past decade or so, more and more people have become concerned with the global environment in which we all live and, indeed, must continue to live. It is not trite to say that the very capacity of our planet to sustain life as we presently know it is what is at risk. This, more than any other factor, has been the catalyst to stimulate the mind of the public to a position of understanding, which will enable people like us and people in all other Parliaments worldwide to commence preparing legislation to ensure the survival of future generations on this planet. However, we cannot optimise our effectiveness if we only act unilaterally.

It is in my view essential that we act in unison with other State Governments, our Federal Government, and indeed, all sovereign Governments worldwide. Otherwise, anything that we can do here may have the effect of Australia in general, and South Australia in particular, taking two paces forward whilst the rest of the world takes four paces backwards. What I am saying is that the short term approach, that is, politicians using environmental matters as a political football, such as we have just witnessed by the interjection from Mr Cameron, should be condemned out of hand but, unfortunately, it does happen. Mr President, my own personal belief is that if we are fair dinkum then environmental

matters must be placed above politics and any political or philosophical considerations.

At the same time people still have to be fed, have to be productively employed, have to be clothed, and have to be given shelter. It is baying at the moon if some members of the community believe that we can afford in one fell swoop the amount of moneys required if we are to repair the damage of hundreds of years of degradation and destruction. We must, however, proceed without any waste of time, but we must proceed in a balanced and considered fashion, at a pace which not only stems the tide but reverses the problems which we as a society have inherited and in some instances inflicted upon ourselves. But, I stress, the redress has to be made globally, with priorities in mind, with long term plans of action in mind, and as quickly as affordability will permit.

I further believe that we must understand just what are life threatening environmental matters and be able to differentiate between those matters and other matters which some people in try to give status to as life threatening environmental issues. It is important that the community differentiate between the things that can really affect the survival of the planet, such as the recent giant oil spills in Alaska, dioxins, and land degradation, which in its turn leads to such things as widespread salinity. Something that is not an example of life threatening environmental disasters is the development of the tourist industry in this State. In some cases opposition to development projects in this State has been based on the view of a minority of people who do not happen to find the developments visually appealing. I do not mean that those objectors do not have the right to voice their opinion, but it is my view that they should not attempt to elevate their personal opinion to the level of environmental life or death.

People who object to something because they have a notion that it is not what they personally want must not be allowed to confuse the rest of the community into believing that what they are saying is the same as objecting to something that will affect the survival of our planet. I say this because it appears to me that even some members of the Opposition in another place, over the past 12 months or so, have fallen into that very trap. The State Government, in conjunction with the Federal Government, intends shortly to introduce a Bill for the protection of our atmosphere.

This legislation, in conjunction with other measures legislated for by this State Government, serves to illustrate the commitment that this State Government has for our environment. It is also true that our Federal Government has shown a similar legislative commitment to the environment. The Federal Government's record has shown an awareness of the consequences of environmental inactivity on the part of previous Governments. Australia has truly magnificent environmental treasures: the Flinders Ranges, the Great Barrier Reef, the Queensland rainforests, the Tasmanian Wilderness, and the Kakadu National Park, to name just a few. But, if Australia has some magnificent environmental treasures, then she also has inherited and created some environmental disasters.

Surely, nothing could be more serious than our present problems with soil degradation. It comes as no surprise to me that our National Government has declared next year the year of land care. The first year, I might add, in a planned program for a decade of land care. The removal of our forests by early settlers has played a considerable part in soil erosion and for that reason a program will be implemented Australia-wide to ensure the planting of one billion trees over the next decade. This program, which will be one of many, will assist in slowing down the greenhouse effect,

provide habitat for endangered species, form magnificent wilderness areas, and ease the burden on Australia's virgin native forests as a source of commercial timber. It will further assist in saving the remnants of our native forests.

I could go on and on, but time does not permit; suffice to say a good start has been made. The will of the people is favourably disposed to more beneficial environmental legislation, but we can only go forward with it if the collective political will is there. It is not our side of the Chamber that lacks the will. The Democrats have a commitment to it. I challenge the Opposition to adopt the principle of all-Party support for matters environmental. I hope that we get it, but I have some grave doubts about that. It should be supported, not only because it makes good sense to do so, but I have it on good authority that, when one is run over by a bulldozer, that creates a permanent type of situation which is truly environmentally irreversible. I understand that a member in the other place made that offer which, unfortunately, she was talked out of.

I turn now, Mr President, if I may, to the other subject matter of my speech: the role of Opposition Parties in our Westminster system and, in particular, the role and reality of the South Australian Opposition and how it has performed, or, I suppose in this instance a better description to use would be 'how it has behaved over the past 12 months'. I have to say, Mr President, from the outset, that I have been both very surprised and indeed disappointed as a relatively new member of this Chamber by the behaviour of the members of the Opposition in this State Parliament. I try—believe me, I try—to find some good in everyone, and it may well be that their behaviour has been triggered by what they and their Leader know is their last desperate grab for political power in South Australia. The word 'reprehensible', in my view, would not be too strong a word to use in describing their tactic of personal smear, innuendo, and every other form of vilification which can be devised by the human mind.

Now, I want it clearly understood that, under our system, Oppositions do have a legitimate role to play. It is their task to formulate alternative policies, to root out any graft or corruption which may permeate our system and which may have gone unchecked. Their role equally is to ensure that the Government of the day is performing to its maximum ability on behalf of the people it serves. These, Mr President, and other matters, are the legitimate concerns of an Opposition. However, when an Opposition, without having thoroughly checked the integrity of its sources of material, brings them to this place and indeed into the other place, to attack the character of individuals causing untold damage to their families and their reputations, then all I can say is that such behaviour is despicable, outrageous, and will probably prevent the Opposition under its present leadership from regaining the Treasury benches in this State.

If any of the Opposition members think there is a shadow of corruption lurking in the background of the two persons whom the Opposition have endeavoured to summarily deal with here in Coward's Castle, I call on them to repeat the statements which they have repeatedly made in this Chamber, outside the House and let the State courts determine the veracity of the attacks or otherwise. I know that they will not be prepared to do that.

The Opposition seeks to use the tactic of smear and innuendo. They are people of the ilk of Gobbels, who are determined to tell a lie often enough so that some mud might stick and the people might believe them. I know that they will not be prepared to do so. They will not be prepared to go outside this Chamber. Men of straw are never prepared to exhibit some moral courage. The Opposition has been

absolutely shameless in its pursuit of innocent people in the belief that somehow or other the persistency of these attacks will assist it in satiating its burning desire to become the Government of this State. But I have a great and abiding faith in the people of this State and their judgment. I know that come election day they will see the Opposition's tactics for what they are, and that is simply something that it believes will help it into office. I do not believe it will. I believe that it will hurt the Opposition's chances and I rejoice in that, because until such time that it shows it has the interests of the people of South Australia at heart, then the Opposition is not deserving of the Treasury benches of this State's Parliament. People will understand—

The Hon. J.C. Irwin interjecting:

The Hon. T. CROTHERS: Well, we will see about that, Mr Irwin. We will see who is right and I think that you are doomed to another dose of disappointment. People will understand that all that I have described has been done, as a result of aspirations to power for power's sake. The Opposition has done what it has done, not for what good it can do for the people of this State, but in order to grab power for the sake of exercising power.

I think that the broader South Australian community understands full well what has been going on and will reject that. I am well aware that there are a couple of principled people within the ranks of the Opposition who will not stoop to those tactics. However, desperate people use desperate measures. It is to be hoped that there will be a better quality of parliamentary debate ahead. But I fear, as the State election comes ever closer, that the unjust vilifying tactics of the Opposition will continue as unabated as they have before. It makes me very sad indeed that the issues that Parliaments should be about—the betterment of the State for the people they represent—are cast into second or third place by an Opposition that does not believe in the Westminster traditions; an Opposition that simply seeks to behave in a manner which is coldly and calculatedly designed to serve its aspirations to grab power, just for the sake of exercising power. This Opposition deserves to be in opposition and I know that that is where it will continue to be, even after the next State election.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I rise to support this motion. In doing so I want to address a number of matters in the time that I have available. First, I want to refer to the ministerial statement made by the Premier in another place and by the Attorney-General on behalf of the Premier and Treasurer in this place, on Tuesday of this week. In that statement the Bannon Government indicated that, in 1988-89, it had achieved a recurrent account surplus of \$83 million—\$27 million more than the surplus that was forecast. Further on in the statement there are a couple of interesting paragraphs that I will quote in full for honourable members. The Premier said:

The original budget estimates provided for a SAFA contribution of \$300 million from its 1988-89 surplus. The actual draw on the SAFA surplus has been reduced to \$220 million. This has allowed \$60 million to be transferred to the 1989-90 budget, with the balance being allocated to provisions and general reserves. SAFA's retained profit reserves and provisions will now exceed a healthy \$225 million.

This matter and the other matter that I want to refer to from the ministerial statement are matters that escaped the attention of economic and political commentators. As members will be aware, the SAFA draw, or contribution, to use that phrase, of \$300 million from its 1988-89 surplus was the balancing item, if you will, that the Bannon Government used for its 1988-89 budget. The Government allocated \$300 million, when it budgeted last year, to be the contri-

bution from the SAFA surplus. What that paragraph is saying to us is that at the end of the financial year 1988-89 the Bannon Government had a look at the impending size of the surplus which was achieved or accumulated for a number of reasons (and I will explore those in a minute) but looked at the impending size of that surplus and decided to indulge in a touch of creative accounting.

It is clearly politically insensitive for a Labor Government, as the Federal Labor Government is finding at the moment, to be talking in terms of surpluses of \$6 billion to \$11 billion, particularly at a time when the Australian community is suffering the hardships of Federal Labor and State Labor economic policy, and to a smaller degree the Bannon Labor Government had the same problem. It did not really want to come to the end of the financial year just prior to an election when it has been creating havoc among essential services in South Australia for the past four years, and have trumpeted across the front page of the *Advertiser* a surplus of somewhere between \$150 million and \$200 million. So what they have indulged in is, as I have said, some creative accounting to try to reduce the size of the surplus to make it look a little better from the community's viewpoint, and the major item it has used (not the only one but the major item) is the SAFA contribution or the SAFA draw.

So instead of \$300 million being taken from the SAFA surplus and put into the budget, thereby giving a surplus as high as \$163 million instead of the \$83 million that has been announced, what the Government has done instead of the \$300 million balancing item is put in \$220 million; with the other \$80 million it has transferred \$16 million to next year's budget, 1989-90. The other \$20 million has been allocated to something called provisions and general reserves.

The other matter that is referred to in the ministerial statement refers to total recurrent expenditure having been reduced from an estimated \$4 157 million to an actual \$4 123 million. That statement says, 'This result includes an additional contribution of \$20 million towards the future cost of superannuation.' However, it is not entirely clear because not all the detail obviously is provided in the ministerial statement, and we will require the budget papers to analyse further exactly what that statement means, but there is certainly again a suggestion that there could be a further example of creative accounting there, where over and above the budgeted items for 1988-89 the Bannon Government has decided to allocate an extra \$20 million towards the future cost of superannuation.

Now, I concede there could equally be an argument that that may well have been justified. It is not immediately apparent from the ministerial statement whether it is or it is not, but certainly the net effect of that is to increase the expenditure side of the 1988-89 budget by an additional contribution of \$20 million towards the future cost of superannuation. We are looking just at those two balancing items there. Instead of having a surplus last year of \$83 million, it has a surplus somewhere between \$163 million and \$183 million.

I am sure that, when we go through the budget papers in greater detail, we are likely to find further examples, obviously not as significant as the SAFA contribution, of creative accounting on the part of the Bannon Labor Government (such as the use of the 'hollow log', as a morning newspaper indicated this week) to try to cut, at least superficially, the size of the reported surplus, and put a little in the kitty for what they hope to be a very generous election budget in the next week or so. The reasons for our having before us a ministerial statement indicating a significant surplus of \$83 million, or perhaps as high as \$160 to \$180

million, are numerous, and I wish to address just two of them. One is an issue that members on this side of the Chamber have raised for the past four years. The Hon. Mr Cameron has just spent his time in this debate referring to the harsh cutbacks in the essential services area of the health portfolio.

The Hon. Mr Cameron very adequately outlined how a policy of perpetual and continual cutback in our hospital system has not only saved money for the Government but has also created human misery of monumental proportions for many South Australians and, sadly, for many frail aged citizens of South Australia. The Hon. Di Laidlaw today during Question Time gave another example of where the frail aged have again been hit by cutbacks, or a reluctance by the Bannon Government to meet its share of the HACC program's costs, and how the frail aged have suffered as a result of that lack of care on the part of the Bannon Labor Government. Although time did not allow during today's Question Time, the Hon. Di Laidlaw could tell many a sad story of examples in the community welfare area and in the Home And Community Care program where the human effects of the Government's cutbacks in those service areas can be seen.

I wish to spend some time not merely talking about health and community welfare and HACC programs, but also talking about the Government's attitude and policy in the other important essential service area of education. Again, we have seen in recent State budgets a concerted program on the part of the Bannon Labor Government to cut teacher numbers within our schools and education system. More than 500 teacher positions have been cut over the past three State budgets. This comes from a Premier who had the gall to stand before the people of South Australia at the Norwood Primary School in 1985 and promise earnestly and fervently that there would be no cutbacks in education; that there would be no cutbacks in teacher numbers. The history of the past four years indicates that the word of Premier John Bannon cannot be trusted; that the word of any of the Ministers of the Bannon Labor Government cannot be trusted; and that the word of the Bannon Government itself cannot be trusted in relation to election promises.

During the next weeks or months leading up to the State election I am sure that we will hear further promises being made by Premier Bannon and his cronies. They will promise that no further cutbacks in education will be made; they might even promise to try to keep up with the excellent policies of the Olsen Liberal team, of increases in education spending. The reality is that no-one who has had any experience at all in education during the past four years will believe a word the Bannon Government says in relation to education spending or teacher numbers. The Government has had its opportunity, and it has failed. It made these promises and did not keep them and no-one—teachers, principals, parents or students—would believe the Government again, if it were to make similar promises.

Morale in the teaching service of South Australia is at an all-time low. That assessment comes not from me as the Liberal Education spokesman but from any number of teaching veterans of 20, 30 or 40 years experience within the Government school system. Pick any school, ask teachers who have been in our Government schools for 20 to 40 years what they think of the Bannon Government, what they think of the Minister of Education, what they think of the Education Department, and what they think is the level of morale in South Australian schools at present. One will get a very sad and sobering assessment. Those teaching veterans have seen the ups and downs over their teaching careers: Governments that have cut and Governments that

have spent. They were there during the period of great growth during the 1970s. They were there during the period of the Harold Allison budget of 1981, which put education spending at the highest percentage level of Government spending in the past 20 years, when it peaked at some 30 per cent to 31 per cent.

Sadly, we now see a Bannon Government—supposedly a Labor Government—committed to the rhetoric of social justice and equity where the commitment to education and related portfolios has been reduced from that figure of 31 per cent to something of the order of 25 per cent. Sadly, we have seen over 500 teachers cut from the teaching service with a resultant cut in important curriculum programs and other programs, and services within Government schools.

The recent strike related not only to the latest curriculum guarantee package—in my view, for many teachers, that was really the straw that finally broke the camel's back. Some very conservative teachers and schools in some of the most conservative areas of this State, particularly the country areas, for the very first time took the hard decision that, because they despised the education policies of Premier Bannon and Minister Crafter so much and contrary to their own views of in some cases 40 years of teaching, strike action was necessary on Friday 4 August. Virtually 400 South Australian schools voted a big 'No' in respect of the education policies of Premier Bannon. I understand that Harold Allison was mildly disappointed that his previous record of some 170 schools going out on strike during his term as Education Minister in the 1979-82 Tonkin Government was smashed by Minister Crafter. As I said, almost 400 schools went out on strike against Minister Crafter's policies and the policies of the Bannon Labor Government.

The curriculum guarantee package has stirred up a hornet's nest in education in South Australia. My time this afternoon does not allow me to traverse all the areas of the curriculum guarantee package. I am sure that many members, like me, have received dozens—and probably hundreds—of submissions from schools, teachers, parents and principals protesting at one aspect or another of the Bannon Government's latest education package. I have raised publicly and in this Chamber the particular problems of students in the country areas of this State. The curriculum guarantee package was meant to be something for country students. It was meant to offer South Australian students a curriculum guarantee. It was seen as the lifeboat for country schools and country students. In reality, Premier Bannon and his Government have tried to sneak through, as part of this package, further staffing and administration cuts for South Australian area schools.

Area schools have led the protest against the Bannon Government's education package. As I have said, many of them decided for the first time that they had to take industrial action against this proposal of the Bannon Government. Under the proposal, the school at Keith is to lose 1.3 teachers. That school has calculated that it may well lose about 45 lessons per week with reduced subject offerings for its students. It knows that it will receive less ancillary staff time. The Kingston Community School believes that it will lose up to four teachers, with reduced subject offerings and an increase in the number of subjects that will have to be offered through distance education techniques. It will also lose library time for its librarian.

The Bordertown High School believes that it will have a staff cut of 1.2, that it will lose 36 lessons per week and that up to six subject choices will be lost to its students. Parents and staff in the Bordertown area are so concerned that there is to be a mass meeting tomorrow evening to protest at the policies of the Bannon Labor Government.

In respect of administration time, the East Murray Area School has been told that its staff allocation of 1.5 for administration will be reduced to .5. The school at Cook has been told that its administration allocation will be reduced from one to .2. The principal of the Cook school has been told that his increasingly onerous administrative responsibilities as principal must be achieved in just one day per week, even though he has been flat strapped throughout 1989 when trying to do it in five days.

There have been cutbacks in staffing, librarian time and administration. In respect of administration, a very strong submission from the principals association argues that at the very least even the smallest school should have an administrative component of .5 rather than .2 (the allocation to schools like Cook in the Far North). It is no wonder that parents, students and staff in country areas protested long and loud and will continue to protest at the reduced offerings for country students under this new package.

I turn now to the virtual removal of all levels of negotiable staffing for schools. For the uninitiated, negotiable staffing is that component of staffing over and above a school's staffing formula. It is negotiated between a school and the department to provide extra curriculum offerings or extra assistance in respect of quality education in this State. Some schools use it to provide instrumental music programs; some schools use it for special education and remedial education; some schools use it for teacher support programs; and some schools use it for community liaison programs. For example, in some schools staff are hired to liaise between the staff and students and the parents at home to try to improve the quality of life and the quality of education of students in the lower socio-economic areas of metropolitan Adelaide. The Government has replaced negotiable staffing with its new concept of level 2 staffing, which will be directed towards those schools that have some kind of need, those with a high percentage of Government assisted students or Aboriginal students.

The opposition to the new proposal is not that those schools do not deserve extra assistance; it is that it is not only those schools that deserve extra negotiated staff to provide extra programs. Many other schools have justified, through negotiations with the department, the need for extra staffing. It will be those schools and students who will suffer as a result of the policies of the Bannon Government.

I refer to a letter from the Walkerville Primary School. It is addressed to parents and it states:

Our school will be staffed only at a basic level. Whilst we support the need for schools which have greater diversity and need than ours to receive over-entitlement staff, we will no longer be able to support as effectively curriculum initiatives such as the instrumental music program or direct teacher support (for example, the work being done by . . . in the junior primary area this year).

The Walkerville Primary School indicates that it will suffer a reduction of one day per week in librarian time and that its second language program will have to be managed from within the basic staffing allocation. There will be no additional salary component, as is the practice with the existing policy. A number of further criticisms of the Bannon Government education package are noted. In many other areas there have been harsh and significant cuts in special education, cuts which will mean that students in those schools who require additional remedial education, students with disabilities who require extra special education, will not be able to receive next year under these proposals the extra assistance to help bring them up to a level where they are able to compete equally with other students in trying to achieve a certain quality of education within that school.

The package also includes a proposal to limit to 10 years the amount of time a teacher might spend in one school. It is my view that this proposal, if proceeded with, will rip out the heart of many of our best and most stable schools in South Australia. Whilst that might seem an extreme statement, I will indicate for the benefit of members a number of schools and the percentage of staff in those schools that will have to be moved on in a strict interpretation of the 10-year limit policy. I refer to Tanunda Primary School with 60 per cent of its teachers having been there for 10 years or more and Murray Bridge High School with 48 per cent (47 out of 99 teachers) having been there for 10 years or more. Woodville High has 44 per cent or 37 teachers affected, and Campbelltown has 35 per cent affected. At Kilkenny Primary School 50 per cent of the staff will have to be moved on under the 10-year provision.

This aspect of the Bannon package would mean that many of our best and most stable schools will have somewhere between 35 per cent and 60 per cent of their staff moved on to other schools within a short time. Now the department is talking about tying to phase in changes over three years, but even if it does it will rip out the heart of the best and most stable schools in South Australia.

At Campbelltown High School currently 35 per cent of teachers are over the 10-year limit. If the department says that it will try to phase in this policy to reduce the extent of dislocation for students, staff and parents, the percentage of teachers will increase from 35 per cent to over 50 per cent affected by the 10-year move-on provision. Teachers and parents are alarmed at the prospects for their schools of this Bannon Government policy. Many of them are saying to me and to the Government, if it would only listen, that one of the attractions of schools like Woodville, Murray Bridge and Campbelltown is that they have a stable staff. Parents know that there will not be massive dislocations from year to year in those schools. Parents have some degree of certainty for their children that there will not be that dislocation, with new teachers coming in all the time in great numbers (obviously there has to be changeover), and redirecting the educational program of the school in a very short time.

Those parents and staff are protesting long and loud at this policy in the Bannon education package. It is hypocritical of this Government to be pretending that it is concerned about the levels of contract teachers in schools on the basis that contract teachers promote or introduce instability within the staffing structure of the school, whilst at the same time seeking to overturn up to 60 per cent of staff in schools like Campbelltown, Woodville, Tanunda and Murray Bridge as a result of this other aspect of its education package. There are many half-baked and ill-considered aspects to the curriculum guarantee package, as it is called.

I have only been able to touch the surface this afternoon in highlighting some of the more significant criticisms of the package. I will take the opportunity on other occasions to address the problems and concerns in relation to the yo-yo principle in promotion positions and other aspects of the Bannon Government education package. With those words, I indicate my support for the motion.

The Hon. G. WEATHERILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.47 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 15 August at 2.15 p.m.