LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 20 August 1992

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

FISHERIES LICENCES

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE (Minister of Consumer Affairs): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement concerning the marine scale fishery licence.

Leave granted.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: In response to a question asked by the member for Goyder yesterday in another place, the Minister of Fisheries can now provide the following information. Before providing this information, I will take the opportunity to point out that this information does, in effect, reflect what the Minister said in his answer yesterday.

Under the Scheme of Management (Marine Scalefish Fisheries) Regulations 1991 a licence in respect of the fishery expires on 30 June following the date of its last renewal. This means that the licence is renewed until 30 June next upon payment of the prescribed annual fee (currently $878) or upon payment of the first quarterly instalment (currently $219.50).

A licence holder has the option of choosing to pay the fee in full or by four equal instalments as prescribed in the regulations—the prescribed instalment payment dates are: date of lodgment of renewal (usually 1 July); and 1 October, 1 January and 1 April following renewal.

Where a second, third or fourth instalment of a renewal fee is not paid in full within 21 days of the instalment becoming payable, the Director of Fisheries may impose an additional amount (late payment penalty) not exceeding 10 per cent of the instalment; Where an instalment or an additional amount (late payment penalty) is not paid in full on or before the due date, the amount unpaid may be recovered from the holder of the licence or the person who last held the licence as a debt due to the Crown (for example, court action).

If at time of renewal the licence holder is in arrears, the Director of Fisheries cannot renew the licence unless the licence holder has paid the current prescribed fee (or first instalment), and the amount of any previous renewal fee remaining payable in respect of the licence together with any additional amount payable for late payment. The quarterly instalment provision was introduced in August 1991, at the request of industry to assist licence holders with fee payments that better matched the actual cash flow situation in the fishery. The Government was pleased to assist industry in this manner.

ASER

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I seek leave to table a copy of the ministerial statement which has been given by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, in the House of Assembly, relating to SASFIT's involvement in the ASER project.

Leave granted.

QUESTION TIME

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OFFICE

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I seek leave to make an explanation prior to asking the Minister representing the Minister of Children's Services a question about the central office of the Children's Services Office.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: In 1990 and 1991 the Children's Services Office commissioned consultants, McGregor Marketing, to undertake a study into whether disadvantaged groups in the community were aware of services offered by the CSO and whether they would use them; if so, why and, if not, why not? The consultants, who were paid more than $25 000 during 1990 and 1991, not only discovered that the CSO was faced with 'a massive challenge in taking its message and functions to the people of South Australia' but also unearthed a remarkable lack of communication among CSO staff. McGregor Marketing found that CSO staff:

> . . . are reluctant to contact regional representatives—and vice versa—because of widespread uncertainty over just where (and with whom) the responsibility lies. As one staff member put it: 'If you come from central office, you're an alien.'
>
> Some [staff] who held positions involving important decision-making were often confused over regulations and responsibilities. In one dramatic example . . . a senior staff member at our discussion began taking notes furiously; she had just learnt, from a CSO colleague across the conference table, about some regulations which had a vital bearing on her area of responsibility. These two CSO officers both work at head office, yet had never spoken to each other before.
>
> Staff are reluctant to offer advice to prospective clients, as a direct result of the internal communication breakdown. One CSO representative [said] 'From what I've learnt today, we need the information first—before we start giving information to the community.'
>
> Communication is further hamstrung by confusion over boundaries of responsibility . . . Woodville, where three centres with separate names are allocated adjoining/overlapping territories, was identified as a classic example.

These are, quite clearly, alarming revelations about the administration and organisation of a Government department. While I am aware that subsequent reports by the consultants have shown that there has been some progress in obtaining an improved public profile about the role and services provided by the CSO, I am unaware of any report to date that shows that the above gross staff communication problems discovered by the consultants have been remedied. I therefore ask the Minister:

1. As the Minister responsible, why did he allow such significant communication problems to develop at the CSO head office and why did it take him almost four years to appoint consultants to tackle the problem?

2. What steps has the Minister now taken to address these serious staff communication problems?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

COURT TOURS

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about court tours.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN: In the previous session, I raised with the Attorney-General some concerns among legal studies teachers that tours conducted by Courts Services Department officers—I think it was from the Sheriff's Office—have been cut and that this is having a prejudicial effect on matriculation students studying the courts system as part of the year 12 legal studies course.

The Attorney-General has said that, notwithstanding the withdrawal of funds for a tour guide, tours have not been stopped. He has also said that guidelines have been established to control and coordinate large groups of students. I have had access to the guidelines and I note that they provide for booking for visits to be taken by the Sheriff's staff, and they provide for student groups of no more than 25 persons, no access to empty court rooms (which previously could be entered by students in conjunction with the tour guide in explaining the functions of the court room) and access to court rooms where a court is sitting in situations where the orderlies regard it as appropriate.

It has been put to me that, while there are visits to the courts, there are no longer tours which previously gave access to the various types of courts (civil and criminal courts in particular), the jury room and cells, and a contemporaneous explanation of facilities and their purposes. It has also been put to me that such limitations do make it difficult for students to gain an adequate appreciation of the system and facilities from first-hand experience—an appreciation which would assist in demystifying the courts and the justice system.

The suggestion in a letter from the Sheriff's Office is that perhaps the Education Department should provide the funds for a suitably trained tour guide, or that a fee on a user pays basis should be imposed.

In view of the concern about the inadequacy of the new system and the abolition of court tours, will the Attorney-General seek a review of the concerns with a view to developing a more satisfactory but informative and educative alternative means to ensure that legal studies students receive the level of instruction which previously was provided when visiting the courts, and can he indicate whether the proposition by the Sheriff's Office that a fee of about $30 should be imposed has in fact been considered by him and, if so, with what result?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I will obtain a report on the matter and bring back a reply.

STATE TRANSPORT AUTHORITY TIMETABLES

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Transport a question about STA timetable information.

Leave granted.

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: Last Sunday the STA introduced the biggest shakeup in bus, tram and train services for possibly two decades. Since the changes were first proposed in April, the STA has had four months to prepare and four months to work out how to inform the travelling public about the changes. But the changes in timetables have been a public relations disaster.

Last week, the STA paid for the delivery to 350 000 households in the Adelaide area of a map outlining the new routes. But the map is no good without a timetable. The map informed people to ring 210-1000 for timetable information, but this number has been constantly engaged for six days. Irate constituents have rung my office (at least they can get through to my office) complaining about the inadequate number of telephone lines and operators—there are between five and eight at any one time—and the inadequate system for answering and queuing calls.

Today I rang Telecom directory assistance and was told that, since the new timetable was introduced, Telecom operators have been inundated with calls asking that they check the 210-1000 line to see if it is working. It is working. But the problem is that there are not enough lines and operators to meet demand. The STA knows that its manual system of providing telephone information is time consuming and out of date. A year ago the STA awarded a contract to a locally based computer systems company at Technology Park to develop the Public Enquiry Timetable System (PETS).

PETS was scheduled for commissioning in June this year (three months ago) to coincide with the move of the Telephone Information Centre from the Traffic Control Building to head office. Now I understand the installation of PETS has been delayed until January next year, and so has the transfer of the Telephone Information Centre. I ask the Minister:

1. What is the reason for the six month delay in commissioning the new computerised PETS or Public Enquiry Timetable System?

2. As the STA knows its current telephone inquiry system is outmoded, why did the STA not make provision for more telephone lines and more operators from last week to meet the anticipated extra demand from the public for information about new routes and new timetables?

3. Why did the STA not supply copies of the new routes and timetables for distribution last week to passengers on bus, tram and train services as such forethought would have avoided so many of the problems experienced by passengers over the past week?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I certainly received the information from the STA in my letter box—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member has asked the question.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: —and I am sure a very large number of people did also, but I will refer the honourable member's questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. CAROLYN PICKLES: Will the Minister for Local Government Relations say how the Federal Government's budget allocation to local councils for employment initiatives will affect South Australia?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Information regarding this very important initiative by the Federal Government, which was announced the other evening, has been circulated particularly to the Local Government

Association, as the capital works funding is being provided through the Australian Local Government Association and, in South Australia, through the Local Government Association without involvement of the State Government. However, I understand that the State Government will be working with the LGA to ensure that the capital works programs will create the greatest number of jobs possible by use of this money.

Certainly, the $350 million which has been allocated is being targeted at the councils with above average employment. It is interesting to note that Dr Hewson and a number of his Federal Liberal colleagues have been claiming that the employment creation money given to local councils is simply being aimed at marginal seats. This is a very interesting comment on his part, and I am sure a lot of people will be delighted to know that their Federal Leader considers them to be in marginal seats. Messrs Peter Arnold (member for Chaffey), John Oswald (member for Morphett), John Olsen (member for Kavel), and John Meier (member for Goyder) are obviously in marginal seats, according to their Federal Leader, because councils in all those electorates are receiving some of the highest *per capita* funding under this Federal Government initiative. Of course, other areas are receiving similar high *per capita* funding in South Australia, including the State seats of Adelaide, Napier, Baudin (or Kaurna as it will be), Eyre, Elizabeth, Price, Spence and Peake—and so they should. This is where unemployment resides, and that is what is being targeted.

It is interesting to note that members opposite are talking about marginal seats. It is the first time I have ever heard it suggested that the Federal seat of Wakefield is a marginal seat. Obviously, though, the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Hewson, regards Wakefield as a marginal seat, as in that electorate very high *per capita* funding is being provided to councils. Certainly on the calculations, the Adelaide, Barmera, Berri, Coober Pedy, Enfield, Glenelg, Hindmarsh and Wallaroo councils are all receiving funding between $40 and $50 *per capita*. These are surpassed only by the funding to the councils of Elizabeth and Thebarton. On the other hand, there are seats which we would more usually class as marginal, such as Unley, and Unley council has missed the list completely. But I am sure the Hon. Mr Mayes will not mind, because he, as I am—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Council will come to order.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: —is completely dedicated to employment opportunities being provided where they are really needed. As a Government, we are dedicated to real social justice, not to the political point scoring in which Dr Hewson and his colleagues obviously believe. I am certainly pleased for all the councils who will receive employment and initiative money. I have not mentioned another 30 councils. The reason I am pleased is that the money will help people in areas in real need of jobs where there is high unemployment.

Unlike Dr Hewson, I do care about the unemployed in the State seat of Chaffey and the Federal seat of Wakefield. Unemployment is more than just a political point scoring tool. Both the State and Federal Labor Governments have a philosophy of working with local government, and sadly the Opposition does not seem to share our confidence in local government and its genuine potential to contribute to Australia's economic future.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: The cynical and quite depressing comments made by the Opposition show this, Mr President. The Opposition might also like to ask the Local Government Association what its view is on this employment initiative. If it did it would find that the Local Government Association, like the Australian Local Government Association, is delighted with this initiative and takes this to be a genuine attempt to help Australians and South Australians achieve a much better future. If the Opposition does deign to consult with local government I am sure that it will find that local government is delighted with the scheme.

HOUSING FUNDING

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Housing and Construction a question relating to the funding of the Housing Trust.

Leave granted.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: The Federal Government in its budget has played a cruel hoax on South Australia by claiming increases in funding for public housing. On Tuesday night Federal Treasurer John Dawkins claimed that the Government had delivered significant funding increases for public housing and that States such as South Australia would be a major beneficiary. Scrutiny of the budget figures shows this to be not true. In 1986-87 Canberra provided $173 million in funds to South Australia; last financial year the allocation had fallen to $87 million; and now this particular budget has cut funds further by providing South Australia with just $85 million. So, instead of an increase there is actually a reduction in funds for public housing.

The Hon. M.J. Elliott: This is a reduced reduction.

The Hon. I. GILFILLAN: That may well be so, reduced on what was originally contemplated. It is still clearly a reduction. Last financial year the Housing Trust built 1 010 new dwellings but will manage to build only 890 new houses this financial year. The Housing Trust would need $200 million at least from the Commonwealth to build a minimum of 2 000 new dwellings to make any dent in the 44 000 plus families on the trust's waiting list.

Public housing is a major asset to South Australia which, in recent years, has been faced with less and less Federal assistance, forcing fewer new homes to be built while the waiting list blows out. Proper funding of public housing provides a stimulus for employment, a vigorous flow-on effect for associated industries, creates valuable assets and addresses a dire social need. Without adequate funding for public housing, those needs cannot be met and the South Australian economy suffers. Public housing funding in this State is facing an uncertain future, as can be confirmed by any examination or questioning of the Housing Trust in South Australia, with demand rapidly outstripping the potential supply from the funding available. My questions are:

1. Does the Minister agree that there will be a decrease in public housing numbers this financial year as a consequence of the Federal budget?

2. Is the State Government satisfied with that situation, and what action is it taking to increase housing numbers to give relief to the 44 000 families on the waiting list?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DUTY

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Treasurer, a question about financial institutions duty.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: Interest rates have fallen to their lowest level for many years. Generally speaking, moneys invested at call can attract, at the current time, no more than 5 per cent. As the Attorney-General presumably would know, South Australia has the highest financial institutions duty of any State in Australia at .1 per cent. However, it has been brought to my attention that a combination of this high financial institutions duty and low rates of interest are a lethal deterrent to investors who have not inconsiderable sums to invest for short periods.

For example, if an amount of over $50 000 is available for investment, financial institutions duty is levied at an effectively much lower rate than if the amount is under $50 000. If $40 000 is invested at call for seven days, the amount of interest at 5 per cent on this investment is $38.36. However, financial institutions duty is levied at the flat rate of .1 per cent per annum on that investment. This means that the investor has to pay $40 in financial institutions duty. In other words, an investor of $40 000 for seven days actually loses money because he or she has to pay more for financial institutions duty than he or she receives in interest. That is an extraordinary situation. He pays $40 in financial institutions duty and earns only $38.36 in interest. However, if the amount invested for seven days is $50 000, the financial institutions duty is only $1.12, a dramatic difference. My questions are:

1. Is the Government aware of the negative and highly undesirable impact that the highest financial institutions duty in the land is having on small investors at a time when Australians are being urged to make investments to benefit the nation?

2. In the forthcoming State budget, will the Government review the unfair and discriminatory impact of financial institutions duty on small investors in South Australia?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The honourable member will have to wait for the State budget. However, I will refer the examples that he has given to the Treasurer for assessment and bring back a reply.

PORT STANVAC REFINERY

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Heritage, representing the Minister for Environment and Planning, a question relating to refinery maintenance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: My question relates to a diesel spill that has been detected today from the Port Stanvac Oil Refinery in Adelaide's south. I have been told that the spill is coming from a rusty pipe in the refinery's wharf and that, although a collar has been put on the pipe, it is still leaking slowly. Apparently, diesel has collected on the water in the refinery launch dock area and has spread along the coast to Christies Beach. Callers from the southern suburbs have told me that boats are running through the spill now in an attempt to clean it up.

To my recollection, this is the third emergency at the refinery in recent months, the others being a spill of oil into the sea and a spill resulting in a large fire. The most concerning aspect of the information that has been relayed to me is that the breach in the pipe was caused by recent storms. I am told that this was possible because of the poor state of repair of the wharf and the network of pipes leading from the refinery on the hill to it. My questions are:

1. What opportunity for prosecution exists, given that the spill appears to have been the result of negligent maintenance?

2. Will the Minister investigate maintenance and safety standards at the refinery given the spate of environmentally damaging incidents?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

BETTER CITIES PROGRAM

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking the Minister for Local Government Relations a question about the Better Cities program.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: It is inevitable that there will be some confusion in local government about the funding for the Better Cities program and the recent Federal budget allocation for the local capital works program. My understanding is that they are different although some of the Better Cities program bids will be the same as those that will receive local capital works grants and some councils may, in time, receive double grant allocations. It is also my understanding that a substantial amount of the Better Cities money for South Australia was allocated to the MFP project.

Earlier this year I asked the Minister for Local Government Relations two questions relating to the Better Cities fund and I received much the same answers as I did to my question yesterday relating to the local capital works program, that is, that the Better Cities funding is a matter between the Federal Government and local government. It was another 'it has nothing to do with me' response. In a letter to me in March this year one large southern council had this to say:

> This council read with interest the information distributed by the Commonwealth Government to councils regarding the Better Cities program and it waited eagerly for the expected and promised consultation with the State Government. It first

received formal advice of the program on 27 November 1991, about which time it also read in the daily paper of the proposal to direct at least a substantial part of the money to Elizabeth/Munno Para. The advice received by the council on 27 November 1991 advised, under the heading 'Roles and responsibilities', that State and Territorial Governments have prime responsibility for developing, coordinating and implementing the Better Cities program.

My questions to the Minister—and I understand that she is representing the Minister for Environment and Planning are:

1. Is the Minister for Local Government Relations aware that State and Territorial Governments have prime responsibility for developing, coordinating and implementing the Better Cities program?

2. Does the Minister for Local Government Relations know if she has any part to play in the Better Cities program, or is it the responsibility of other Ministers on behalf of the Government?

3. Has the 1991 Federal budget allocation for the Better Cities program been received by the State Government yet?

4. Will the Minister obtain a reply from the Minister for Environment and Planning to my question asked about Better Cities as long ago as 27 February this year?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I have indicated to the honourable member, as he quite accurately states, that I do not have responsibility at the State level for the Better Cities program. We agree on that. The State role is being undertaken in other agencies. Certainly the Minister for Environment and Planning has a role, but I think some of the coordination is being undertaken by the Deputy Premier. Consequently, I am not quite sure whether this question should be referred to the Minister for Environment and Planning or to the Deputy Premier. But I will ensure that it reaches the right home and bring back a reply.

The Hon. J.C. IRWIN: I ask a supplementary question, Mr President. The first question I asked the Minister for Local Government Relations was whether she has any part to play in the program. Is the Minister saying that she will not have any part to play in the Better Cities program as part of her responsibility for local government?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I imagine that an examination of *Hansard* will show that I have already responded to that by saying that the State involvement in the Better Cities program is not through my office but through that of other State Government Ministers. As I also said, the Minister for Environment and Planning is certainly involved and also the Deputy Premier has a leading role in this matter. So I shall refer the honourable member's questions to whichever Minister is the most appropriate one to answer them and bring back a reply.

KENSINGTON PARK TAFE

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Housing and Construction a question about the Kensington Park College of TAFE.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.F. STEFANI: Earlier this month the former TAFE college at Kensington Park was sold at public auction by the Bannon Government for $2.3 million. The nearby college car park was also sold separately for $541 000. The sale took place before a crowd of about 100 people. Seconds before the auction began a man responded to the auctioneer's invitation for questions by stating that he had three queries about the property. He asked whether the soil on the site was contaminated, whether there was any asbestos in the buildings and whether the union had slapped a site allowance demand on any future building work on that site.

Mr Booth, the auctioneer acting for the Government, was quoted as saying that he was sure that any prospective buyer would have researched any possible hazards. He then consulted with a Government officer and assured the people who were present that the buildings were free of asbestos, but tongue in cheek he went on to say that he was not sure that they were free of white ants. I have been advised that some time ago SACON undertook removal of asbestos from the buildings at the college.

On 14 March 1991, following the enactment of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act, regulations were published in the *Government Gazette*. These regulations, which were enacted and made operative on 1 April 1991, required, amongst other things, that any owner was to identify and remove asbestos from a building. The regulations also dealt with the duties of building owners and other persons in possession of asbestos and required that they take reasonable steps to identify any asbestos that was installed in the building.

I am informed that many years ago the Government established a register of public buildings containing asbestos. However, this register is incomplete and unreliable. Will the Minister confirm that the SACON Asbestos Liaison Unit arranged for the monitoring and removal of asbestos from the college buildings during 1986-87? Was an asbestos survey carried out at the Kensington College of TAFE? Will the Minister provide a copy of the asbestos register and the asbestos management plan which should have been developed by the Government on this public building? Finally, will the Minister give Parliament the assurance that the TAFE buildings at Kensington College are free of asbestos, consistent with the assurance given to the public by the Government officer through the auctioneer who is acting for the Government?

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

DOG SHOOTING

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Emergency Services, a question about the shooting of the dog, Kanga.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.C. BURDETT: On the opening day of this session, my colleague the Hon. Robert Ritson directed a question to the Attorney-General representing the Minister of Emergency Services about this matter. The Minister responded that, amongst other things, a report had been compiled by the department—presumably

the Police Department—and forwarded to the Internal Investigations Branch. He said then, and repeated at the end of his reply to the question that if anyone had a complaint they should take it up with the Police Complaints Authority. He did not undertake to pass on anything to the Minister of Emergency Services.

In the meantime, the owner of the dog has contacted me. There are still some questions to be answered. I am very supportive of the South Australian police, and that is one of the reasons for my asking the question. It seems to me that some formulation of procedures to be followed might be helpful to the police. As I said, on the opening day of the session, the honourable Attorney said that a report had been compiled by the department and forwarded to the Internal Investigations Branch and that, if people were not satisfied they should complain to the Police Complaints Authority. This was good advice, and the owner of the dog has done that, but this will only resolve a particular complaint against a particular officer; it will leave unanswered the general question of rights, duties and procedures of the police and rights of citizens.

The owner informed me that the dog was regularly walked and had caused no problems. It was used as a watch dog and had saved the family from an intruder at night on one occasion. He was savage towards one particular person—this has been referred to in the press—who she told me, had teased and provoked the dog. The whole family is extremely upset to the extent that the owner is considering moving from the neighbourhood. Her three children are part Aboriginal and share a special attachment to dogs common to the Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement has investigated the matter, exhumed the body of the dog and is conducting a post mortem investigation.

At least two police officers were present on the occasion when this happened. I am informed by the owner that both were from the CIB, although it was said that the police were there in connection with a warrant. The owner and the children were at an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders athletics meeting when the incident happened. There was a 'beware of the dog' sign on the gate, and the dog was behind not one but two gates. The questions that I would like to be directed to the Minister of Emergency Services are:

1. What was being investigated by the police?

2. If a warrant was the subject of the police business, why were two CIB officers involved?

3. Will the report of the Internal Investigations Branch be made public?

4. Will the Minister clarify police procedures and the position between police and members of the public in such cases?

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: I will refer those questions to my colleague and bring back a reply.

LIBRARIES

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Local Government Relations a question about State libraries.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: During the obituary contribution of the Hon. Mr Lucas on Tuesday, he mentioned my interest in libraries, especially in country areas. I am always interested in finding out the supply of literature that is available for people in country areas. I understand that a new computer system has been installed in South Australian libraries. Will the Minister outline the purpose of the new system and what effect it will have on library users, especially in country areas?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I appreciate the interest which the Hon. Ron Roberts shows in library matters. For some time now, all public libraries throughout South Australia have been connected to the PLAIN computer system (the Public Libraries Automated Information Network) so that the catalogues of all 135 libraries can be accessed by the computer at any one of those libraries. This week, the State Library opened its own computer system. I think they call it Salinet. This will mean that the days of microfiche and card catalogues are pretty well over in the State Library and that the catalogue for the past 10 years can now be searched by means of the Salinet computer network.

It will also provide access to data held on CD ROM and, very importantly, it will provide access to indices and information resources from networks which have been established right around the world. So, by means of the computers in the State Library, clients will be able to access worldwide information networks. It is furthermore expected that, in a couple of months, there will be interlinking between Salinet and PLAIN so that, by means of the computers of the PLAIN network in all the public libraries, people will be able to have access into Salinet, that is, the online system in the State Library and through links to worldwide indices. This will greatly increase the information sources available to people right around South Australia by means of their local libraries.

We are very proud indeed of our libraries system in South Australia. Both the State Library and the public libraries are something of which all South Australians can be proud. The installation of this new Salinet in the State Library has cost $2.8 million over a period of four years and the fact that it has now come online will be of enormous benefit to all people who use the State Library and, also, in a couple of months, to all people who use any public library in South Australia. This will be of great benefit, particularly to country people who will thereby be able to access all the catalogues of the State Library through their own local library.

INDUSTRY TRAINING ADVISORY BOARD

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Children's Services a question about the Industry Training Advisory Board.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: Approximately 18 months ago an Industry Training Advisory Board, otherwise known as ITAB, was established for community services and health. This body has five divisional councils—acute care, community health, residential and home care, community services and children's services. ITAB is responsible for the development of competency standards for workers in the relevant industry and the specification of training needs.

I have been approached by quite a large number of workers in the children's services sector who are deeply concerned about the ramifications of their inclusion in the community services and health ITAB. Children's services are primarily concerned with early childhood education. The importance of a high standard of education in early childhood has been recognised by the OECD education committee. The committee has stressed in its communique of February 1991, as follows:

. . . learning is pivotal to contemporary progress and initial education and training systems need to be of such universally high quality that all young people secure the foundation of knowledge, skills understanding and values to enable their full participation in meeting different challenges.

Given the importance of Children's Services in providing early childhood services, it has been seen by people in the area to be inappropriate to include Children's Services in the community services and health ITAB. They argue that the rightful place of Children's Services is within an education ITAB. An education ITAB would ensure that training for the education is determined within a common framework. It would also ensure that defined skills determine career classifications and wages so that a trained kindergarten teacher is classified as such and not a child-care worker.

If Children's Services were placed in an education ITAB, it would also ensure that appropriate emphasis is placed upon the education of children within the broad notion of Children's Services. I ask two questions of the Minister:

1. Will an education ITAB be established to set competency standards and determine training requirements for employees in the education sector?

2. Will Children's Services continue to be placed within the community services and health ITAB against the wishes of the workers in the area, or will it form part of an education ITAB?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I will refer those questions to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS

The Hon. PETER DUNN: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Local Government Relations a question about budget grants to local councils.

Leave granted.

The Hon. PETER DUNN: In the past couple of days I have been in contact with several local government communities in my own area, and they are at a loss to know why some of them received funds and some did not. However, the recent Federal budget contained grants for a local capital works program of $35.4 million. Councils in three categories were allocated grant amounts. Released at the same time were guidelines for the applicants.

In other words, the amounts were detailed and only those councils identified by the Federal Government were entitled then to submit projects up to the total amount allocated, and that is the argument. About half South Australian councils receive allocations, and one wonders what criteria were used to do the drafting. Many councils were not consulted. The guidelines of the local capital works program state:

'Proposals will be accepted from individual councils or groups of councils, or with the approval of participating councils, regional organisations, to the total amount listed in this document.' You may wish to seek guidance from the State local government advisory facilitator before completing your proposal form. The program requires projects to be given priority and commenced by 1 December 1992.

Proposals are to be forwarded to each State and Territory Local Government Association. The facilitator will place the proposals before the State/Territory advisory committee which will be responsible for determining suitability against selection criteria. A State advisory committee will normally comprise representatives of the State Local Government Association, the Commonwealth Office of Local Government, a State observer and co-opted specialists as appropriate.

My questions therefore are:

1. Did the Minister have any discussion with her Federal counterpart on this proposal and the State's part in the advisory committee prior to the Federal budget?

2. Has the Local Government Association announced a facilitator and, if so, who is that person?

3. Does the Minister know how the facilitator and the advisory committee will be funded?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: The answer to the first question is certainly 'No', Mr President; it is not normal for people to release information pertaining to budget announcements before a budget is released. I know the Hon. Mr Davis keeps asking questions about what is going to be in the State budget. He has never received an answer, of course, in that regard before the budget, but it does not stop him trying again. He must be a slow learner. It is not normal for disclosures of this nature to be made before a budget is brought down.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R.J. Ritson interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Is everybody deaf in this Chamber?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Thank you, Mr President. As I indicated, there was no discussion with me prior to the bringing down of the Federal budget, and nor would I have expected there to be, given the sensitivity of budget announcements.

The Hon. L.H. Davis interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: It was the Hon. Mr Dunn who asked me. Perhaps you could discuss the matter with him. I am not aware at this stage whether an LGA facilitator has yet been appointed. The person from the State Government who will be observing the working committee has not yet been determined. But obviously discussions will take place regarding the setting up of this committee as soon as possible, so that it can get to work.

With regard to how that advisory committee will be funded, I will have to seek advice from either my Federal colleagues or the Local Government Association. The Federal Office of Local Government is administering the program and setting up these committees with local government in each State. I presume that any costs of the committee will come from the grants themselves, but that is presumption only on my part. Perhaps one of the honourable member's Federal colleagues could take up that matter with the Federal Minister to get the precise information.

PRIVACY

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I understand that the Attorney-General has an answer to a question I asked on 18 August concerning privacy.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER: The privacy principles issued in December 1988 do not apply to the State Bank. As I indicated, I am prepared to write to the State Bank requesting that members be allowed to view their own files and make any corrections necessary. As members will be aware the Ombudsman's report has been received and, further, the Ombudsman has indicated that he will pursue the matter further if presented with additional information. It may not be considered necessary to write. However, if any member still wishes me to do so, please let me know.

TRAMS

The Hon. DIANA LAIDLAW: I understand that the Minister for the Arts and Cultural Heritage has an answer to a question I asked on 6 August regarding trams.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: The Minister of Transport has provided the following response:

1. The State Transport Authority has no plans to introduce driver only trams. Consequently, no date has been set for the introduction of such arrangements.

2. As no plan exists for introduction of a driver only operation, the question of relocation of employees does not arise.

3. Similarly, no plans are in place to redesign the trams, nor estimates.

CENTRE HALL DOORS

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking you, Mr President, a question about the Centre Hall doors of Parliament House.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: As you, Mr President, and members would be aware, there has been some ongoing debate over the years about the Centre Hall doors. You might also be aware that there is one particular member of Parliament whose obsession, life's work and every waking moment seems to be devoted to this very lofty subject of the opening of the centre doors. It is a very great cause, particularly at a time of great unemployment, and so on.

Mr President, you will also be aware that we have had a spate of protests at Parliament House against the various actions of the State and Federal Labor Governments. On Tuesday we had an education protest on the steps of Parliament House. I think they are booking space at the moment. The unemployed were there on Wednesday, and I think the SAGASCO workers were there today. As I said, I think the various groups are booking space to be able to protest on the steps of Parliament House.

The Hon. Anne Levy: They have always—

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: Well, they are continuing to do so. During those periods the centre doors, if they were the access, would be blocked off to members of the public, members of Parliament, staff and the media. The question has been raised with me that, if access to Parliament House is to be via the centre doors—and I personally do not oppose that—

The Hon. Anne Levy: That is a change from the previous Leader.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: We are entitled to our own views—it is important that the question of access to Parliament House during periods of protest be considered during any reconsideration of the question of the opening of the centre doors. A number of suggestions have been made that perhaps protesters may well have to be moved away from the central part of the centre doors to Parliament House and the central steps. Perhaps a pathway could be made through the crowd but, certainly with some of the angry crowds protesting against the Government, there would be some concern about safety. An alternative is that, if the main access is to be through the centre doors, in times of protest alternative access could be organised through perhaps the Legislative Council or the House of Assembly door. There may well be other alternatives as well.

As I understand that ongoing discussion is occurring with others about the question of the centre door access, will the President indicate that, during those discussions, he will consider the important question of access to Parliament House during periods of protest, particularly when we have unpopular governments like this one?

The PRESIDENT: I can assure members that the Speaker and I are in consultation constantly over the matter. In this year's budget for expenditure in Parliament House, we have allowed a certain amount for security for centre hall and the doors. My main concern, and that of the Speaker, is with security. Members may not know, but this week we had a person come into the Legislative Council and the police were called in. We would find it a very unsatisfactory practice if those doors were open without the appropriate security and if the money required for that appropriate security were not in place.

I am also very concerned about the outlook of the Centre Hall, and I have entered into private negotiations with members to see whether we can have a better entrance if we do open the Centre Hall. I can assure members that whatever happens members on both sides of the Parliament will be consulted, and both the Speaker and I are concerned that we have proper security and that we do have accessible centre doors for the public and for members.

MEMBER'S LEAVE

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I move:

That three days leave of absence from 8 September be granted to the Hon. T.G. Roberts on account of absence overseas attending the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Tenth Australian and Pacific Regional Seminar.

Motion carried.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 19 August. Page 148.)

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: I thank Her Excellency the Governor for her speech on the occasion of the opening of this session of Parliament. We meet in very constrained economic circumstances, where we face the prospect of a grim State budget, which is to be presented next week, a Government which has lost its way, as is illustrated by the paucity of the program for the next 12 months and, of course, the extraordinary financial disaster, which is confronting this State. If there is one thing that characterises the Bannon Government, it is financial naivety, and that is exemplified in the amount of losses that have been suffered by the State Bank of South Australia which, of course, is now the subject of a royal commission, the ongoing and well-publicised problems of the State Government Insurance Commission, the emerging difficulties of the ASER project and, of course, the well-publicised fiasco of scrimber.

Today, I want to highlight some areas of importance in South Australia, a small regional economy of just 1.45 million people, arguably travelling as badly as any State in Australia at the moment. There has been some evidence of economic recovery, albeit modest, in Western Australia. Queensland is looking quite prosperous. There is some glimmer of recovery in New South Wales and some evidence that the Victorian economy is bottoming out. But there are very few lights on the horizon in South Australia. As I have said, one of the reasons is the financial naivety of the Bannon Government.

If there is something that can be said about the financial wisdom of the Bannon Government it is that it is a few sandwiches short of a picnic. It really does not understand what financial management is all about. The approach that it has adopted in the case of the State Bank, SGIC and Scrimber has been about as useful as a scratch on a glass eye.

I want to mention perhaps a dozen areas of importance to a regional economy such as South Australia in planning for the remainder of this decade. One of the very big arguments in favour of the South Australian economy is quality of life. Mr Bannon, when he was re-elected in 1989, argued that he would introduce some flair and light into his Government. Well, we have had more flight than light, and flair has been rare. Certainly there has been no vision splendid from this Government.

The Government has failed to build on the obvious quality of life which is a feature of South Australia. On more than one occasion in this Council, I have referred to the lamentable approach by both the South Australian Government and the Adelaide City Council to the refurbishment and promotion of North Terrace, arguably the most impressive and unique cultural boulevard in Australia. On more than one occasion I have referred to other regional areas of the world that have deliberately chosen to promote their particular cultural assets and quality of life to economic advantage. I have mentioned places such as San Diego and Glasgow.

Today I want to refer briefly to Wales, which has its own regional success story. Over the past 10 years, Wales has restructured its economic base and achieved international recognition. It is one of Europe's more successful economic regions. Wales, particularly South Wales, was known for the strength of its coal and iron operations. It was one of the key factors for the surge of industry in the era of the Industrial Revolution of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. At that time, South Wales produced 40 per cent of Britain's pig iron.

In fact, by the early twentieth century South Wales was producing about a third of world coal exports. It had over 250 000 mine workers, 40 000 in the Rhondda Valley alone, working in nearly 500 collieries, an extraordinary concentration of industry in coal and iron. But, with maturing economies around the world, Wales did not have any insurance against a downturn in demand for coal and iron, and when heavy industry slowed down in the 1970s and early 1980s Wales was left facing a very stiff economic breeze.

But, what it has done, to its credit, is to diversify through a deliberate program of attracting other industries—electronics, information technology, engineering, financial services, aerospace, packaging, cosmetics and health care. An impressive list of international and national companies have relocated or expanded in Wales. Particularly interesting is the success with which they have viewed Japanese companies which, of course, take a longer term view than many other countries.

One of the impressive features of the growing diversity of the Welsh economy is that it has sought to adopt a vertical market approach. It has identified market sectors where Wales has strengths or potential. It has worked hard to overcome weaknesses and has marketed Wales as a suitable location point both within Britain and overseas. In an area which perhaps may be controversial these days it has achieved great success—for instance, 15 000 people today are employed in Wales just in the cosmetic industry.

One of the important reasons for success is that Wales has the Welsh Development Agency. At a time in Australia when we can look at Government failure in attempting to compete with the private sector—we have notable examples in WA Inc and Victoria Inc—in Wales the Government has worked alongside the private sector in developing industry, attracting inward investment, providing appropriate sites for property development, renewing the environment, assisting existing businesses, particularly emphasising the importance of small business, and most importantly offering a one-stop shop for potential investors in Wales—the one-stop shop that the Bannon Government has been talking about for the past decade.

One of the fascinating factors about Cardiff is that it has sought to redevelop Cardiff Bay as one of the most ambitious waterfront developments in Europe in the past decade. That involves refurbishing some 2 700 acres or almost four square miles of the capital city of Wales, Cardiff. That strategy is underpinning the argument that I have advanced, that the cultural base of a city can be used to economic advantage.

In the enormous redevelopment program which takes in the waterfront of Cardiff, with a mix of development, housing, light industry and retail it has aimed to achieve a harmonious balance of buildings and open spaces. It has put a high premium on top quality architecture, quality of life, and impressive surroundings, believing that taken together they will contribute to economic prosperity. For the first time—and I think it is quite a unique first—it set up a design and architectural review

panel to support the development corporation and local authorities in raising standards of architecture. Not only has it sought to put a premium on architecture and design, planning, landscaping, furnishing, the use of proper and appropriate materials and maintenance but also it has established an independent Cardiff Bay Art Trust to encourage the integrated use of art within the development area, to encourage high quality landscaping, planting of trees, shrubs, waterside plants and so on.

That program, taken over a 10 year period, has seen Cardiff become a landmark in Europe, which underlines the success that can be achieved by having a deliberate program, and vigorous and visionary leadership, the sort of vigorous and visionary leadership that one hoped the Bannon Government would have demonstrated over the past decade. Cardiff, being the capital and centre of Wales, has an existing infrastructure and a private sector that supports it. As my colleague the Hon. Terry Roberts remarked, it has a very strong, well regarded university and a major media centre. Taking all those things together, we can see that the reworking of Cardiff with a vigorous and enlightened goal of economic development, hand in hand with the development of its cultural assets, has been an inspiration for many people. The quality of life, flair, light and vision are areas where South Australia should have prospered over the past decade. Sadly, we have not.

A second area of emerging importance is the role of local government. With the devolution of power from the State Government, particularly, there is an exciting and important challenge for local government. It is picking up many functions that, traditionally, have been the province of State Government. Unfortunately, as we know, that devolution of power has not always been accompanied by money to give it the ability to implement properly and carry through those important functions. I hope that, in the years ahead, local government will have the resources necessary to follow through on issues such as heritage and environment, for which it is becoming increasingly responsible.

In many areas local government will become a focus in the future. For example, with respect to care for the ageing, local government is developing valuable community services to encourage our more senior citizens to stay in their homes as long as possible. Using local government as a focus, the networking of State, Federal and voluntary agencies in the area of aged care is a particularly good example of the importance of local government. The old adage that the closer one is to the problem the better one is to be able to cope with it is particularly true in the case of aged services. One can mention councils that have already achieved notable success in the area of aged care, namely, Enfield and Noarlunga.

There is a particular challenge for local government in the country. An increasing number of people are moving into regions close to the city because of cheaper housing and a cheaper cost of living, so councils are faced with a burgeoning demand for their services, not only economic services but also community services. People who have, perhaps, a lower socioeconomic status are changing the nature of many towns near Adelaide. This is a challenge for councils and, again, it will severely test their resources.

Another area of great importance in South Australia is that of tourism. Tourism is one of the most rapidly growing areas of the economy and success has been achieved in niche markets. The convention market has been particularly strong and South Australia has achieved quite reasonable success with the Adelaide Convention Centre, which is a good example. The leisure side of the economy will continue to grow as more people retire earlier with more money and, of course, with the ability to travel at leisure. The buzz phrase at the moment is cultural tourism. South Australia, not having an Ayers Rock, a Barrier Reef or a Sydney Harbor, has to concentrate on the areas that are particularly impressive.

The Hon. I. Gilfillan: We have Kangaroo Island.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: As my colleague the Hon. Ian Gilfillan says, we have Kangaroo Island. It is a splendid example of a unique tourist resource in South Australia, along with the Flinders Ranges. It saddens me that economic circumstances and other events have conspired to see no development at all in the Flinders Ranges. In fact, it is true to say that, of all the States in Australia, South Australia alone has no major tourist resort of international standing. That saddens and disappoints me.

One area in which I have been very interested for some time is that of small business. With the right economic circumstances and the right approach from State Government, South Australia could benefit from small business. Our quality of life means that it should be a magnet for small business seeking to relocate or establish here. The world trend has been for small businesses to establish in places where quality of life is most amenable. That has been the pattern in North America. Indeed, the trend has been towards small business the world over. In Canada and America, 75 to 80 per cent of new employment is in the area of small business. In a visit to Canada and the United States earlier this year, that fact was brought home to me very clearly in discussions with Government officers and people in the private sector. Sadly, Australia generally does not yet recognise the importance of small business.

I do not believe that any Government in this country, with the possible exception of the New South Wales Liberal Government and the Queensland Labor Government, has recognised the importance of small business. The rhetoric of the Hawke Government and of the Minister for Small Business and Customs (David Beddall) has been just that. Little has been heard about the Beddall report, little has been heard about small business under Keating, and nothing has been heard about small business under Minister Wiese in South Australia. That is a matter of great sadness for me, that the Bannon Government has fumbled the ball. It has not recognised the importance of small business and crippling taxes, financial institutions duty, land tax, the highest workers compensation premiums in Australia and the second highest electricity charges in Australia have all conspired to be a negative for small business in South Australia. There has been no vision, flair and light in advertising South Australia in other States as the centre for small business. There is a very good reason why there has been no advertising of that fact: it would not be true, certainly under a Labor Government.

The Hon. R.I. Lucas: Instead of flair and light, we have had flight.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: As I said, flair has been rare so we have had flight instead of light. One other matter that I think is important, and it is related to the matter of small business, concerns the importance of having a cost advantage in South Australia. In the past we have claimed that we have been geographically disadvantaged, and that is true. In historical terms we are geographically disadvantaged. It has been seen as a disadvantage by people in manufacturing, but in this post-industrial society geography matters much less, and so I would argue that South Australia, with the present information technology, biotechnology and other services, can compete quite easily with Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, if the cost advantage is there.

Geography does not matter so much. A design company, for example, can set up in Adelaide and do business in Bangkok just as easily as if it was set up in Sydney, because so much business is done by fax and through other methods of communication. So that is something that has dissipated under a Bannon Government: the cost advantage which was said to be 5 to 7 per cent under the Playford Government is something that we do not hear any more under the Bannon Government. One can mount an argument to say that establishing a small business in South Australia is arguably more expensive than in many other places in Australia.

The education system is obviously a starting point in developing a clever country, in developing a clever State. I sometimes sense that the education system is not always on the same track as the business sector. It is important that the education system is in tune with the needs of the business sector. I have been pleased to see that a large number of business programs and training programs have been developed in recent years, some of them, sadly of course, in response to the extraordinarily high youth unemployment rate. But the education system has a special relevance in training and retraining people for today's work force, and I hope that teachers, particularly in the secondary education system, are continually updating their skills so that they are relevant in serving the society of the 1990s.

One of the ingredients that is unfashionable to talk about is hard work, and I refer to the debate that was engendered by Dr Hewson's discussion on the subject of a minimum youth wage of $3 an hour. I must say that I was saddened to see a large number of young people say that they would prefer to be on the dole rather than work for $3 an hour. That is an attitude that one can perhaps partly understand: if the dole is $117 a week or thereabouts, why work for little more than that amount? Surely it is a matter of attitude. Is it not better to have a job on the curriculum vitae than no job at all? I think there is a feeling on the part of some people that the world does owe them a living. I know that that is not true for the majority of young people, who face frightening economic times, but I think hard work is going to be one of the ingredients that will ensure that Australia does compete at an international level successfully in future years.

Another factor which does unfortunately raise its head in South Australia is provincialism. We are a small regional community, with 1.45 million people, in a large geographic area. Some one million people are concentrated in Adelaide, the capital city, and there is less than half a million people in country South Australia. It is all too easy for South Australia to be inward looking rather than outward looking and to be provincial and narrow in our approach. If ever there was a time to do away with provincialism it is now. We have to accept the notion of world best practice in our manufacturing standards. Manufacturers have to accept that for some of them it must be export or perish. Provincialism in our attitudes and ideas is something to be discouraged. It is one thing to be parochial and to support the Crows, but another to be provincial and not accept that there may be another way of doing something.

Another area that has received a lot of attention in recent times, particularly at the national level, concerns the importance of microeconomic reform. The Labor Party has been slow to recognise that and, of course, ironically, many States have been dragged screaming to the alter of microeconomic reform not because of any inherent belief in its virtue but out of economic necessity. One can see the socialist, left wing leader of the Victorian Government, Mrs Joan Kirner, actually becoming the high priestess of privatisation. She has perhaps done as well as any of the Premiers around Australia in terms of privatising Government assets—a splendid job. One may have thought that perhaps by now she would be the patron for the H.R. Nicholls Society, for the enthusiasm with which she has embraced privatisation—for example, selling off 40 per cent of the Loy Yang B Power Station to American interests. That must have taken the Hon. Terry Roberts' breath away.

It is interesting to see how quickly Federal Labor and indeed State Labor around Australia have shifted ground on some issues which for them, a decade ago, were sacrosanct. I refer, for example, to work practices. Let me give just two examples of changing work practices—one in Western Australia five or six years ago and one in South Australia much more recently. The issue to which I refer in Western Australia is obviously one of the landmark issues in industrial relations in Australia's 203 years.

I think it will come to be seen as the turning point in industrial relations in Australia and, hopefully, in time it will be seen as the beginning of Australia's fight back as a nation, so that it could again can compete on international markets successfully. I refer to the Robe River dispute. At the time of the Robe River issue in 1986 and 1987 some extraordinary statements were made. I understand that Brian Burke was the Premier of Western Australia at the time, and when the issue first broke back in August 1986 the Western Australian Government said that it was planning to sue Peko Wallsend over a dispute that had seen the dismissal of 1 100 Robe River iron workers in defiance of the Western Australian Industrial Commission.

The Federal Government also announced that it was going to intervene. Frank Blevins, who was the Minister of Labour in the Bannon Government in February 1987, during the second leg of the Robe River dispute, was quoted as hitting at the Robe River Rambos. He told a meeting of the Industrial Relations Society in early February 1987 that:

> . . . the New Right was seeking the complete removal of existing formal arbitration institutions, both Federal and State, and the subjugation of the trade union movement.

He said:

The New Right argues that if such changes are implemented then free market forces will more efficiently regulate the employment relationships between employers and employees.

He went on to say:

Whilst these Robe River Rambos—as they have been ingeniously labelled—may be dismissed as ideological extremists, their handful of outwardly spectacular industrial successes of the recent past and their evident and growing influence on the Liberal Opposition means that they cannot be totally ignored.

That is absolutely true. I do not think Mr Blevins would be seen saying that again today. It just shows how much Labor Governments around Australia have recognised that if we do not have a few Rambos in the industrial relations movement, we would be going down the plughole even more quickly.

Let me instance briefly some of the rorts that existed in Robe River. We laugh about them now, but they occurred only five or six years ago. Some leading hands selected by unions, not management, worked only an hour each day and got paid for a full day. A crew would be called out one hour before lunch, then have to stop for lunch, and then another crew had to be called out thereafter, and both were paid for eight hours. At Robe River, which of course was the nation's third largest iron ore producer, water trucks were being driven to settle dust even during the rain. All ancillary equipment had to be handled as a priority, and that usually meant overtime for truck drivers. Workers were bussed regularly from the site into town in mid-shift because they did not like the quality of the meals provided on site. Workers away from site were entitled to what was known as 'the two man crib', which consisted of two steaks, four chicken pieces, six eggs and bacon, cold meat, bread and butter, milk, salad, four pieces of fruit plus tinned fruit and pre-cooked snacks.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: Did that take time?

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: Yes, presumably that lasted some time. The overtime roster required that individual workers could be called out in turn for overtime. This meant that if a worker missed his turn he would be paid for the hours worked by the person who actually did the overtime. This was extended to mean that if one person got overtime during a given period everyone else should be entitled to overtime, regardless of whether or not the work was there.

The Hon. R.J. Ritson: That is very much like the painters and dockers.

The Hon. L.H. DAVIS: That is right, the painters and dockers probably got inspiration from the Robe River rackets. Closely related to the overtime roster arrangement was the 'one job, one call-out' policy. When a worker was called out on overtime to do a job, he was paid a minimum of four hours overtime. If three jobs were required to be done, although they might take a total of only 15 minutes, the worker would be paid for four hours at double time for each job. So, it was a pretty good system.

Then there was the situation of the power shovels. Two drivers were employed to operate each, but in practice one driver drove while the other stayed in the crib room, and they changed places every two hours during the shift. This was a clear case of over-manning, or I suppose in these days we would call it over-personning. Then there was the famous case of the power switch. In the book entitled *The Power Switch at Robe River* it is stated:

On 28 May 1986, a substation fault caused all alternators to 'trip'. Power to the community was temporarily cut off. Powerhouse superintendent Ray Knapp went to the substation and pressed a switch, resetting the circuit breaker and restoring power to the community with the minimum of inconvenience. He was well qualified to do the job and had done it in the power-house control room on many occasions without any objection.

However, the ETU had successfully maintained for many years that only an ETU tradesman was entitled to reset a circuit breaker in a substation. It would have been inconvenient to the company and the community for Ray Knapp to find an appropriate tradesman to reset the circuit breaker because the ETU were taking part in a 24 hour strike as part of an ACTU national day of protest against delays at the hearing in the Federal Commission of claims for a 2.5 per cent CPI wage increase and 3 per cent superannuation. There was no certainty that the ETU would have cleared the job and allowed someone to reset the switch [which of course, would have left everyone in darkness]. If the ETU had been willing to clear the job it would have taken some time before power was restored. In the circumstances Ray Knapp had acted prudently and sensibly.

The ETU representative nevertheless told management that Knapp should have called in an ETU member to press the switch, notwithstanding the delay this would have caused. The union demanded that Knapp be disciplined with a five day suspension for performing wages work. The company conceded the ETU demand in part and suspended Knapp for two days. ETU members went on strike for six days claiming that the suspension was inadequate.

That was the extraordinary situation that existed just six years ago in Robe River, which is a development, 1 000 kilometres north of Perth, that provides 15 per cent of Australia's iron ore with an annual output of 20 million tonnes. The majority (85 per cent) of the exports from Robe River went to Japan because Robe River had Japanese shareholders including Mitsui Iron Ore Development, Nippon Steel and Sumitomo Metal. The Robe River development was an exciting one which built two townships 160 kilometres from Cape Lambert on the coast in the Pilbara region, a 120 kilometre-long freshwater supply, a 120 000 kilowatt generating plant and a very livable life-style for the workers who, on average, earned $40 000 a year six or seven years ago.

At the time that Robe River management decided enough was enough, the Japanese steel output had fallen dramatically and was expected to fall by 15 per cent over a four-year period from 1985 to 1989. The pressures on the Pilbara producers were obviously going to be severe in terms of both price and quantity of iron ore exports and in the face of increasing competition from such places as India and Brazil, and the fact that productivity in the Pilbara was not good. In the event, the abolition of over 200 restrictive work practices by management has led to the Robe River project now producing over 40 per cent more ore with two-thirds of the pre-1986 work force. In other words, Robe River has doubled the productivity in terms of tonnes produced per wages of employee. It has become efficient and competitive at an international level. It has succeeded in restoring profitability to an operation that was facing great difficulties.

Whilst Charles Copeman was the controversial architect of the dramatic reforms of restrictive work practices that were so heavily criticised at the time by Premier Brian Burke, who has his own problems, and Frank Blevins in South Australia, who I suspect also has his own problems, and whatever one might think of the method, the result has certainly been satisfactory and the

abolition of restricted work practices essential. Charles Copeman said:

There has been a feeling of helplessness in the community—

and I take it he means the South Australian community—

arising from a deeply perceived knowledge that, although the sun shines most of the time and we get three feeds a day, somehow we are slipping down a slope that we know is largely of our own making.

This put it accurately for me; it is the feeling that I have. I suspect it might have even been the feeling that Paul Keating had when, in a more frank moment some years ago, he said that Australia was on its way to becoming a banana republic—and bananas are very slippery indeed. The Robe River experience underlines what can be achieved by resolute management and, ultimately, realism on the part of the worker.

I want to refer to one exciting example in our midst in South Australia of a reappraisal by both management and workers of existing work practices, namely, the City Council of Tea Tree Gully. It is a good news story on work practices, on privatisation, if you like, in our own backyard. In 1991, the City of Tea Tree Gully resolved to privatise its domestic waste collection service and put the collection of waste from its 27 000 households out to tender. Initially, they planned to bring in private contractors, to tender it out and have private sector operators collect the refuse. The existing workforce reacted to this; they thought they were perhaps in jeopardy of losing their jobs. They reacted to the challenge and they put forward a submission of their own which was adopted by the council with dramatic results.

As from 1 July 1991, council introduced a 240 litre mobile garbage bin on an optional basis and introduced a fortnightly kerbside recycling service carried out by contract labour. The enterprise agreement, which was initiated by the garbage worker and entered into between the council and the Australian Workers Union, was ratified by the Industrial Commission. This enterprise agreement sees the cost of collection and disposal of rubbish reduced from $77.54 a tonne in 1991 to less than $60 a tonne in 1992—a reduction of at least 23 per cent.

The number of staff was sliced from 18 full-time and six casual workers working an average of five days a week in 1990-91 to an estimated 15 full-time workers and casuals in 1991-92. The number of trucks, which had been 6½ in 1991, was reduced to five this year. The wage agreed to cover all public holidays, overtime and other penalty rates and, interestingly, it provided a 20 per cent increase over the previous base rate wage.

A one-off payment of $5 000 was made for compensation for the loss of bottle money, which is no longer collected by the staff but by a private contractor. That was an obvious time saver. A voluntary redundancy inducement package was offered to garbage workers before 1 July, and some of the staff took up that offer. A bonus pool was allocated to each crew of three, and the first 10 days sick leave and the first 10 days compensation is subtracted from the pool, and the funds remaining at the year's end are to be divided amongst the crew.

I understand that, as from 1 July 1992 (a year after this original agreement came into effect), there is now weekly rather than fortnightly recycling, and it covers a wide range of items. The side benefits of this recycling program have been enormous. The council estimates that it is receiving five more years life out of its hard-fill dump, and it is saving eight, 12 cubic metre trucks going to the dump every week. There has been a remarkably high 25 per cent participation rate in the recycling program, and this has been through the efforts of the council and the workers getting together sensibly and talking about their bargain, which is being kept on both sides, with even better results than were foreshadowed when the program was first entered into in mid 1991.

I understand that further research is being carried out into recycling, even as I speak, by KESAB and other private parties. Hopefully, this is the new and enlightened face of South Australia, both management and labour working together, an exciting arrangement which I understand has resulted in a lower rate of absenteeism. It reflects on my long-held view that, whether it is called commercialisation or privatisation, it offers many opportunities at Federal, State and local government levels.

Hopefully, the debate about the merits of privatisation is over and, of course, I readily accept that privatisation is not suitable for everything ultimately. We must look at the economic rationale of privatising a State, local or Federal Government function. Some economic merit must be contained in that privatisation process. If the debate on the merits of privatisation is over, the next step is to implement it in a sensible and sensitive fashion so that a community, such as the community in Tea Tree Gully, as a whole will benefit through lower taxes, greater productivity, profitability, stronger competition and better service.

It is stating the obvious, but Australia is hanging grimly onto the rapidly growing and prosperous Pacific rim basin economic region. If we are to be competitive as a nation, we must accept the urgency and the necessity of microeconomic reform. In South Australia, we must also accept the importance of the other matters which I have canvassed today.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: I support the motion that the Address In Reply as read be adopted. In doing so, I reaffirm my loyalty to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Australia and to her representative in South Australia, Her Excellency Dame Roma Mitchell. I join with other members in expressing condolences to the loved ones of those members who have died, and I do sympathise with them in their bereavement.

The occasion of the Address in Reply is used in various ways by various members as one of the two main grievance debates of the parliamentary year. One can make a detailed analysis of Her Excellency's speech, one can take a broad thematic approach, or one can discuss a series of specific issues in detail. I propose to take a broad thematic approach on the role of Government and the role of Parliament, on the question whether the thematic democratic term change of control actually works, and apply some of the conclusions to the State of the present Government of South Australia.

As I have said before in this place, it was Gladstone who said, 'It is not for Parliament to govern but it is for Parliament to call to account those who do govern.' The burning issue of the day is the accountability of those who do govern, namely those with executive and administrative powers to run the engine of the State.

It is not expected that members of Parliament have all the skills necessary to either legislate or comment on exactly how operations should be performed by doctors or how students should be taught, but it is expected by the people who elect us that we exercise some broad directional control, as members of Parliament, and that the Ministers of the Crown, who are both members of Parliament and executives, exercise enough critical questioning and control of this State engine to ensure that it performs in accordance with the wishes of the people who voted those members into office.

If one thinks about it, the theory is that the ordinary people in society, who are the heart of society, have the right and the freedom to associate and form political Parties, either individually or corporately as members of those Parties, to support the election of various members of Parliament into this place. From those members so elected, a Cabinet is chosen and the members of that Cabinet, wearing their executive hat, direct in broad principle and question in response to community actions the policies of the Party to which they belong.

That sounds very nice in theory, but what if it went wrong? What if, instead, the policies were generated from within the Executive by the people seeking to build themselves a power structure? What if those policies were then fed to a Minister who was dependent on the exclusive knowledge of such people and needed to get along smoothly in the department and not rock the boat? What if those policies were fed backwards from the people who are supposed to take the direction from the ordinary citizens through this chain? What if then the Ministers brought those policies into Cabinet where they were endorsed out of joint group loyalty and not necessarily because they were terribly good ideas? After all, there is Cabinet solidarity and you must support your ministerial colleague, right or wrong. What if then the Party was expected to be loyal to its Ministers and the voter was expected to be loyal to the Party he belonged to just because he had always been so? In such a situation, the whole thing runs backwards, Sir. The citizens lose their admittedly attenuated right somehow to have collective control of the instrument of State.

It is called inversion of the chain of control, and I believe that it is liable to happen in any Government that has been in office for a long time. The sequence of events in turning around this chain of control, seems to be that a Government when newly elected is entitled to appoint to advisory committees or statutory authorities people whom it thinks will carry out its directions and policies because the public has voted for those declared policies. Such people, when first appointed, are usually quite enthusiastic about their work. They frequently ask the Minister what to do and happily accept directions from the Minister. But after a few years they move into stage 2—they get very confident that they know how to run the State and they start to tell the Minister what they are doing. At stage 3 they tell the Minister what they have done. At stage 4, they start to conceal what they have done from the Minister, and at stage 5 the Minister or the Premier has to pick up the *Advertiser* each day to find out which new disaster has occurred that he did not know about. Sir, the State of South Australia has reached that point.

Government burnout (which is what I call it) is not peculiar to this Government or to any one Party. After the Menzies years, where the Menzies doctrine presided over unprecedented growth and prosperity and where the politics of that time were the politics of the Cold War, the Liberal Party hardly knew what to do with itself. We had a period of confusing Government I think, historically, with the Gorton Government and the McMahon Government. Gough Whitlam quite correctly observed 'It's time', that the Liberal Party had reached a burnout stage and the public saw this.

The Whitlam Government did not fall entirely because of burnout; it tried to do too much too quickly. A number of its own Ministers shot it down. It was not a Government with Sir Humphrey out of control; it was a Government that internally could not handle the relationships between the Ministers. So, instead of burning out I think it imploded. Then, we got the Fraser years—which were good years—but then after some eight years we had a bit of a Liberal burnout, and we got Mr Hawke.

In South Australia there is a lot of parallelism. During the post war long boom we had the Playford Government. Its style was not bread and circuses or social and photo opportunities: its style was very practical, industrial and pragmatic. But times change and along came Mr Dunstan. The people were starting to get sick of 6 o'clock closing, limited theatre and a lack of sport on Sundays, and Mr Dunstan was really brought forth by those times and that new mood of the people. He held the State together fairly well for a number of years, but his Government burnt out.

Along came Dr Tonkin. The Tonkin Government is a little bit of a phenomenon because, in my view, it never got the credit for the good Government that it was. The only thing Mr Sumner could say about that Government was repeatedly to point out how the Government had reduced the revenue base of the State by its election promises. If one is to be critical of budget deficits, you ain't seen nothing yet!

The Bannon Government has burnt out. It has fed and nourished itself politically on the politics of bread and circuses and photo opportunities and on the politics of the long distance runner. Underneath that layer of jazzy, popular Government, the State and country have been decaying. Our commodity markets are threatened.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: That wasn't the Government's fault.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: The Attorney-General has interjected and I think he means that external factors have done this and that it is not the Government's fault.

The Hon. C.J. Sumner: You cannot blame the Government for the commodity markets. That is the only point.

The Hon. R.J. RITSON: I will just take that up because the markets of the world are changing. The world is organising itself into new and different trading groups, power groups and political groups. The rest of the world, if not Australia, is securing new contracts and new arrangements with newly emerging countries across the whole field of trade, and we are sitting here watching the buses go past. I do not know whether there is another bus. I advise members that, if they want to understand this in detail, they should read the retirement speech of

and the address to the Canberra Press Club made by Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, because he said it all. There is a grave danger that Australia will be left here as a pimple on the bottom of the world with its ever decreasing share of world trade, and it has been decreasing since the end of the long boom through Governments of all persuasions.

Let us get back to South Australia. We have witnessed the most extraordinary examples of fiddling while Rome burns, of a burnt out Government, of Ministers who hardly have the courage to question officials in the public sector. We see this reported, and I will not get into the merits of the arguments before the royal commission, but everyone who has a television set or buys a newspaper can see the repeated arguments that justify non-intervention by this Government in that matter. Photo opportunities with shorts on will not turn back that clock.

However, some Ministers throughout the life of this Government have had a style of questioning and watching carefully the processes of government. The Hon. Dr Cornwall, for all his outspokenness and willingness to join in an argument over almost anything, was an effective Minister from the point of view of the Labor Party and of the medical profession because he would receive people, believe and understand their criticisms, call people in the public sector to his office and thrash out the matter. He had no fear of ruffling the feathers of public servants. If one was wrong in one's grievance, one might have some fear of the sort of reply one would get from John Cornwall, but the mice did not play while he was in that portfolio.

The Hon. Mr Sumner also has demonstrated that he is a person who will receive reasonable matters put to him by members of Parliament or the general public and give them an intellectually honest appraisal and a considered reply. They are exceptions, and there are a couple of exceptions in the other place, too. The general style of this Government has been one of receiving a criticism or a request, passing it on to Sir Humphrey Appleby of *Yes Minister* fame, and, when the defensive half answer comes back, it is delivered eloquently in Parliament in defence of Sir Humphrey.

That attitude is the rule rather than the exception in the present Cabinet and the Premier is not one of the exceptions. He is the rule, and that is being demonstrated. While some Ministers have taken an intellectually honest and critical approach to their own departments over matters raised, the general rule is that Parliament is disempowered from calling to account those who govern us. Since it has thus been disempowered, we have had the State Bank issue, Scrimber, SGIC, WorkCover and whatever else is waiting around the corner as a disaster in that other budget, that other couple of thousand million dollars for which the Government may be liable and which does not appear in the budget, that is, the money that underwrites all the quangos, the Electricity Trust, the sale and lease-back of the power stations, etc.

This Government, having been burnt out, needs to be purged. Governments of all political persuasions can get into that situation where they have lost control, where more than half their Ministers are too tired or too scared of their machine of State to analyse it critically, to purge it themselves. We have reached the stage where the citizens of this State have to stand up and say, 'It's time again'. I support the motion.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I rise to support the motion to adopt the Address in Reply. I also offer my condolences to the families of the recently bereaved former members of this Parliament. This Address in Reply may be the last one of the current Government. We may have an election before we get another chance for this sort of discourse and it may be the last one during my current term in Parliament.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It may be your last ever.

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: Not according to the opinion polls. We may see an extra Democrat here, the way things are going.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: You have just to look at the figures. The Liberal vote has not lifted since the last election, according to the polls. The Labor Party vote has crashed. However, that is an aside. This is an opportunity towards the end of a term to look back at the things that were causing concern and ask whether those things have been fixed. I must say that things are worse now than when I came into Parliament. That is a matter of grave concern. It reflects badly, not on individuals in this place but on Parliaments, both State and Federal. We are significantly worse off now in this State and nation than we were six years ago, which is the time frame at which I am looking.

On 12 February 1986 I was concerned that the disparity of wealth in the community had increased markedly. I noted at that time that over the previous seven years the number of people in poverty increased by 50 per cent. I do not have the numbers on the last couple of years but, quite plainly, that situation has not improved. There is no doubt that the disparity in wealth in this State and nation has increased and that there is no sign of things getting better.

When the Jubilee Point project was on the horizon I expressed grave concern about that, and I must say that I was pleased to see its demise. Yet, the Government will not give in. It has now resurrected another project on the same site and it will attempt the same sorts of things—building large breakwaters out to sea on an active sandy beach. For goodness sake, if Government members would go to Port Macdonnell and see what a breakwater has done to an active sandy beach, they would realise that to do this would be a terrible mistake. But it seems that people cannot learn from those sorts of lessons.

I expressed concern at the time about the current trend of Governments towards deregulation and free markets, and during the past six years I have seen the deregulation by the Potato Board and the quality of potatoes in shops deteriorate. Not so long ago we saw the deregulation of eggs, and it was only a couple of days ago that we noted in the *Advertiser* that there is now an impending shortage of eggs, and it is likely that egg prices will go up dramatically. That is quite the opposite of what the Minister predicted—but exactly what the Democrats predicted when debating the issue. There has been deregulation after deregulation through so many industries and some have already proved to be counter-productive, and others will prove to be so in due course, I believe.

When I entered this place I had just come from the Riverland and I spent some time talking about the wine industry, and I expressed some concerns there. The vine pull was under way at the time and I predicted that we would pull out too many of the wrong vines. I asked the Minister—and I did so by writing to him personally as well—to slow down the vine pull process and to make sure that we did not pull out too many vines and of the wrong sort. We did pull out too many vines of the wrong sort—a dreadful mistake. I expressed concern about the level of monopoly that we had in the wine industry. Well, it has only got worse. In the Riverland at that time one could have sold grapes to about five companies, although two or three were dominating, whereas now, effectively, there will be only two wine companies buying grapes in any volume out of the Riverland. The grape growers have not got a chance, and this place, not that long ago, totally deregulated the marketing of wine grapes. Deregulation does not work when you have monopoly situations.

I expressed concern about our marginal wheatlands in particular, suggesting that it was time at that stage for the Government to explore alternative crops, that wheat growing was going to become increasingly marginal. Unfortunately, there has been no sign of that sort of research going on. I expressed concern about the high capitalisation on farms, making them susceptible to failure in poor seasons or if prices drop. Since that time, prices have dropped and our wheat growers are in great difficulty.

The major problem I think is that farmers are being asked to produce food and other produce too cheaply. The prices on the world markets with which we have linked ourselves and the prices that the domestic markets are demanding are not, in the long term, sustainable, either economically or environmentally. I think that the time will come when farmer groups and environmental groups will be working very closely together, because they will find that they have a great commonality in terms of the problems that they face. What is causing the problems and the solutions to the problems will be very much the same.

I also recognised at that time that, in the Riverland, there were difficulties for many small blockers and I suggested that rather than spending the money on a vine pull, which I suggested would be counter-productive—and that is exactly what it turned out to be—we should look at buying some farmers out, essentially forming a land bank, and then selling the land back in larger accumulated allotments. It would have done a number of things. First, it would have removed with some dignity people who could no longer be productive. Further, it would have produced new units that would be competitive. Instead, the State has ended up just spending a lot of money, pouring money into the economy, an economy that is struggling. That vine pull money would substantially have paid for significant restructuring of large sections of the Riverland. It was an opportunity that was missed, wasted.

The final political observation that I made was in relation to education, having been a teacher for nine years before my election. I noted just how difficult it is being a teacher and how much time teachers put in. I made the observation that the great majority of teachers are honest and hardworking but getting knocks that they do not deserve. That is happening even more so now. We have had significant cutbacks in teacher numbers and even greater cutbacks in resources. Teachers are really struggling to keep the whole system together, and they are doing a marvellous job. Yet, we find politicians taking cheap shots about discipline in schools and, generally speaking, undermining the confidence that the public has in our education system, particularly our public education system.

That was just a very brief excursion over the matters that concerned me some six years ago. As I said before, unfortunately I feel now that matters have deteriorated significantly, in those areas that I have commented on, and more generally as well. Perhaps one of the biggest frustrations in the past six years has been the level of political debate. It tends to be personality based. It tends to be very much rhetoric. If you ask the wrong questions you are guaranteed to get the wrong answers and any student of logic will tell you that if you are going to have an argument you must first start off with the correct assumptions or your whole argument will be flawed. I think that if we are going to have sensible political debate in this place we have to stop and ask ourselves what it is that we are actually trying to achieve. I have not seen too many signs of that.

Indeed, we are trying to achieve a healthy economy, and that ours is unhealthy is manifestly obvious, but there are many different ideas as to what a healthy economy might look like. We need to recognise that the economy is a tool. It is a means to an end and not an end in itself. What we have done for the past decade, both nationally and in the State arena—and I believe that the Opposition has been basically putting up the same sorts of argument—is pursue economic growth for its own sake. We have said that the economy needs to grow but what indeed does that mean? I think it is a rather mindless thing. Our focus has been so much about GDP. We want an economy that is both sustainable and equitable. Our current economy is neither of these things, and I would suggest that by simply pursuing growth alone we have no guarantee of getting either sustainability or equity. Any person who pursues growth by way of a deregulated economic environment while claiming to seek sustainability and equity has to be either a fool or a liar.

Deregulated economic environments do not have direction. They may grow, but where are they taking us? How does it guarantee equity or sustainability? It is absolutely imperative that we do have rules and boundaries, that we direct our economy. That does not mean we tie it up with red tape and mindless regulation. Mindless regulation can be just as damaging as mindless deregulation. I am afraid that we have too much of the latter at this stage.

I noted earlier that you cannot really have a sensible argument unless you start off with the right assumptions. What is wrong with our economy? Some people will tell you that we in Australia are being taxed too much. That is absolute rubbish! If we look at the percentage of GDP, personal income tax and employee social security contributions, Australia stands at 13.4 per cent. Among the OECD nations we are towards the bottom third. The percentages go as high as Denmark with 27 per cent. Most of the advanced OECD nations are in front of us. If

we look at total tax revenue as a percentage of GDP, Australia has less tax than any nation other than Turkey. So, people who want to say that taxes are crippling this nation are talking through their hat. You may be able to construct an argument to suggest that taxes may be restructured and redirected, but to simply suggest that we are being overtaxed is nonsense. The people who keep demanding tax cuts, which means a reduction in services, are carrying out a very minus exercise.

This is one thing that has frustrated me enormously with the Opposition, who will one day get up and talk about a country school that is suffering some sort of a cut back or a hospital that is being closed and the next day get up and ask another question about cutting taxes. For goodness sake, it is taxes that pay for services. We can ask for efficiencies in the Public Service but we cannot have it both ways. Australia is a low tax nation, and I wish to God that people would stop that sort of mindless argument, saying there is too much tax.

Another favourite is that in Australia we pay too much for wages and our conditions are too good. Among the favourites are things such as leave loading, public holidays and parenting leave. European nations such as West Germany have more parenting leave, annual leave and public holidays and a higher leave loading, yet the only difficulty they have struck of late with their economy is the absorption with East Germany, which would be enormously difficult for any economy to digest. However, they proved that an economy can function quite well with levels of conditions and wages that are far higher than we have in Australia.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: I agree that output is a problem, but I think that begs a further question. Let us not blame the workers. I saw an interesting cartoon the other day that posed the question: why do we have to pay workers less to give them incentive and pay the bosses more? Those are some of the things that people say are wrong with Australia. There is a list of them. So often I think they are all wrong and demonstrably false when we look at other economies.

Clearly, we have one problem in Australia, and that is that we are overly dependent on commodities. Commodities are being forced down in price, I suggest unrealistically, but that is what the world economy is doing at the moment. As long as we depend on wool, wheat and metallic ores for exports, we will always have great difficulties. There is no doubt that we must move away from being a commodity nation to being a manufacturing nation, but we have to be careful how we go about it.

I find it deeply disturbing that our car industry in terms of building complete cars is being wound back and we are taking great pride in the fact that we are becoming a component manufacturer and winning markets in Germany and the USA, etc. There is a very clear danger here that the components themselves will become commodities. For example, I recall on one occasion opening up a computer. At a school I took 20 computers of the same make, and the same chip in that series of computers came from five different countries. The same sort of thing was repeated in other chips on the mother board. What was happening was that the companies were sourcing chips from all over the place.

Although those chips were a very hi-tech product, they had become a commodity and, as such, nations are played off against each other in exactly the same way as happens with wheat, wool and the other things that we normally recognise as commodities. If we become a major component manufacturer so that Japan, the US and other countries become sources for components, they will treat us ultimately as a commodity supplier and we will find the same downward pressure on price as we have found with farming and minerals, and we will end up with exactly the same economic difficulties.

Where is the problem with our industry itself? I argue that the problem is with management. Australia shares with other English speaking nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom a system of management which I often refer to as the white hat, grey hat mentality. The bosses sit in their offices, and once or twice a week they put on a white hat and go for a stroll around the company and then back to their office to have their business lunch, etc.

It has been very interesting to note the change in the operation of the former Chrysler plant which was taken over by Mitsubishi. Chrysler had strikes all the time. The bosses blamed the unions. Well, the unions are still there now and they do not have strikes. The difference is a change in management ethics and attitudes, and it starts at the top. I am afraid that management in Australia falls down very badly, not just in terms of relations with workers but in terms of investment practice. You simply do not often see companies going into genuine risk propositions. You will find the Bonds and the various other guys will play games buying buildings and companies and gearing them up.

The John Elliots, etc., are champions at that, but what do they do for our economy in terms of investing to produce new goods? They play games with money which is not their own. It belongs either to investors or often to banks. Unfortunately, our State Bank has become caught up in that game as well. They are not willing to invest in genuine new industry. Unless we get such investment Australia will not escape being what is basically a commodity nation. There is something seriously wrong when a country such as Australia, which has the highest publication of scientific papers per head of population in the world and the highest rate of inventions in the world, is incapable of producing goods for export.

Processes such as the dry photocopying process, which must have been worth a mint, originated in Australia. I know of one company that operates in South Australia that leads the world in a lot of print technology. Companies come from Holland and the United States to contract this company to build new printers, quite often with totally new processes. They say, 'We need something that does x, y and z.' The company builds the prototype. The prototype is then taken back to Holland or the US and they make the rest of them. This company is a very successful research company, but you will not find companies in Australia willing to invest in the next stage, and that is where the breakdown occurs. It is due partly to the attitude of business and partly to the attitude of Government because I think Government may have to look more carefully at very carefully directed inducements to get people to go into those businesses. That is exactly the way in which Japan has succeeded for

so long. They chose their target industries a long way in advance. They had a genuine industry policy. They decided where they wanted to go. What are we doing in Australia? We are talking about deregulation—'Let the market do it'. That is a load of bunkum.

The last area I wish to mention relates to how we are going to progress in South Australia and Australia—the development/anti-development debate. It is a debate that is absolutely unnecessary and avoidable. We need to avoid the project by project argument that we have had in South Australia. We have had arguments about Wilpena, Jubilee Point, the MFP and a host of other projects. We need to lay down very clear rules about what is and what is not acceptable. Let us have the great public debates in this State about planning law and those sort of things. Let us get that right. If we get that right we will find that the other debates on individual projects will largely fade away.

We recently had the State Planning Review, which was an excellent idea of the Government, something long overdue. Unfortunately, the report of the Planning Review is big on ideas and platitudes, which most of us would probably agree with, but very short on how we will actually implement the contents of that report.

My greatest concern comes from the one part which does indicate some implementation, and that is the Development Bill. At the moment, it is in a draft form, but we will undoubtedly debate it in this place within about six or seven weeks. I have met with groups such as BOMA, JICOP (Joint Industry Committee on Planning), the Chamber of Commerce and with environment groups—with quite a cross-section of groups who are involved in the two sides of this so-called development and anti-development debate. It is rather startling that they have a large amount of agreement. They all agree that the Development Bill virtually changes nothing of any significance: if anything, they argue it will make things worse.

As I said, the one thing that has been missing in this anti-development debate is clear rules, certainty. If a developer comes in, they should know whether a certain site will not be acceptable and that another will. They know from the beginning where they stand, and that is not what has happened in South Australia—certainly over the past decade. The uncertainty is being produced from two key areas: it is being produced by the level of ministerial discretion that can be used and by an inadequate planning system, including the environmental impact assessment system.

I will first deal with the question of ministerial discretion. It is highly dangerous if a developer says to a Minister, 'Look, I want to go ahead with a certain development,' and the Minister says, 'Look, no worries; we can fix that.' I have spoken with developers who have had those sorts of assurances. They also find that assurance can be broken. There is no doubt that in relation to Jubilee Point, for instance, the developers were getting all sorts of messages from the Government, such as, 'Look, don't worry about this, we will fix it up; you will be able to go ahead.' When a Minister does have the discretion under law at least to make those sorts of promises, they also have the same level of discretion to break them.

When a Minister suddenly realises that what he or she is doing is grossly unpopular and is against what the people want, they reverse their decision. The developer may have spent $500 000 or $1 million during the process, and that is the sort of money that was spent at Jubilee Point, and the whole lot was done cold. As I see it, the fault there was the level of ministerial discretion. If the planning law made clear that we accept marinas and where we accept them, a developer could say, 'Okay, I am interested in that site there, which is deemed to be acceptable.' He could then proceed with a great deal of confidence. However, that is not the sort of system that we have at the moment, but that is what we should be moving towards.

Give them some direction. It is possible that you can then marry the requirements of a community to have their environment largely protected and also to allow development to proceed. They are not incompatible. The incompatibility occurs when a developer tries to go into a place which is environmentally sensitive and the population then express their reservations about it. The developer ends up getting its fingers burnt, and that has happened on not one occasion but on a number of occasions.

The other part of the planning process that needs major revision is the environmental impact assessment process, which I have criticised in this place on a number of occasions. I believe that it can be improved, once again, to help developers as much as to help environmentalists. For example, I understand that a group is currently looking at putting a ferry across Spencer Gulf to Cowell. Currently, with the way in which the process basically works at the moment, they will approach the Government with a proposition, the Government will tell them to go away and prepare an environmental impact statement, and they will very much be taking their chances.

They can spend a great deal of money, and find that the sites on which they are working turn out to be unacceptable, also with temptations that in between the Minister says, 'Don't worry, we will fix it,' and the Minister will do as the Minister has done on other occasions, that is, instruct officers of departments even to rewrite sections of comments they have made about the suitability or otherwise of particular sites. What we need is a process that will facilitate development and protect the environment. The way I see it happening is, first, to make the environmental impact assessment process accessible from Government. We will set up an environmental protection agency. If it was set up as a statutory body, it would be the obvious body to supervise environmental assessment.

A developer could approach the planners and say, 'I am planning to run a ferry across Spencer Gulf, and these are the sites I am looking at as landing points.' The planners would then refer that proposal across to the EPA, which would have a clear set of guidelines telling it whether it should carry out an environmental impact statement, and when perhaps it might carry out a lower level process, a PER. It was suggested by an earlier committee set up by the Government that perhaps no research at all was necessary. This autonomous body could then speak with the developer and say, 'Well, it appears to us that a number of questions will need examination, and some of these are quite serious matters.

We may need a full EIS.' At this point, they could also say, 'However, if you went 5 kilometres up the coast, we think that you will have far fewer difficulties.' In other words, they can give a lot of advice to the developer as to ways in which they can minimise impacts before the developer has spent significant money on research.

So, the developer is getting signals. Perhaps a better site could be chosen. The developer is also getting signals as to whether or not there are problems and how significant they are. At that stage, getting those sorts of clear signals, the developer can decide whether or not to proceed. If the developer chooses to proceed, the process should be under the direct control of the EPA. It should be a full inquisitorial process, involving the public fully and, at the end of the day, the EPA would make recommendations back to the planners, saying, 'These are the problems we have found.' They can say whether they are minor or major and, at this point, the planners make their decisions.

Ultimately, I suppose political discussion will still occur, but the important thing is that much of the earlier politics, the decision of whether or not there is an EIS, the Minister's interference with the process, is removed, and, we also find that the developer is getting clear signals early on about potential problems. To my way of thinking, that is not only a way of protecting the environment but also a way of protecting the developers.

I see the anti-development debate as being unnecessary. The matters I have outlined I have discussed with developer and environmental groups, and they largely concur with the suggestions that I am making. They just want certainty in planning. They are not saying that they want to build anything that they come up with; they just want to know where they stand, and that should be our aim. Let us, outside the individual projects, have debates about what sort of development we want. I support the motion.

The Hon. C.J. SUMNER (Attorney-General): I thank members for their contributions. I was not specifically asked a large number of questions during the course of the Address in Reply, but there were some in particular from the Hon. Mr Griffin to which I will respond, and I will also deal with one issue that was raised by the Hon. Dr Pfitzner which was also mentioned by the Hon. Mr Burdett.

The first question raised by the Hon. Mr Griffin was the effect of the courts package on the distribution of work in the courts. In the District Court the overall workload in the civil jurisdiction will reduce as a result of the restructuring package. The new jurisdictional limits will lead to a major transfer of workload from the District Court to the Magistrates Court. Preliminary estimates indicate that up to 80 per cent of personal injury matters will be heard by magistrates in the future when the courts package has fully worked itself into place.

Personal injury matters form the bulk of the District Court's existing civil workload. The increase in the jurisdictional limit for small claims (now minor civil claims) from $2 000 to $5 000 will naturally increase the number of such matters heard by magistrates and may lead to an increase in appeals (now reviews) to the District Court.

It is estimated that the transfer of workload could result in a reduced requirement for District Court judges and a corresponding increased requirement for magistrates. The situation will be closely monitored to determine the necessary extent of resource transfers, but it is envisaged—projected at this stage, and I emphasise that it is only a projection—that it will be of the order of four fewer judges and four more magistrates.

The restructuring package itself will not necessarily have an impact on the time taken to process civil cases through the District Court. However, the court has had a task force of four judicial officers working on a backlog of pre-1990 cases. That backlog has, to a very large extent, been eliminated, and members of the task force are now being utilised on the current case load of the court. There has also been a 19 per cent decline in the number of civil matters that have been lodged with the court during the past year. These factors should within the current financial year facilitate the achievement of the court's processing standards.

The impact of the restructuring package will be less significant in the criminal jurisdiction. The legislative changes will result in many cases that previously would have been heard in the District Court being heard by magistrates. However, this benefit to the District Court will be offset to a significant extent by the impact of a transfer of case loads from the Supreme Court to the District Court. Again, the restructuring package will not necessarily have an impact on case processing times in particular courts, although there will need to be continual liaison between the various courts to ensure that when cases are transferred from the Supreme Court it is not to ensure that Supreme Court lists are in good shape to the detriment of those in the District Court. There will always need to be a balancing of resources to ensure that there is a reasonable waiting time in each of the courts.

The criminal case load in the District Court is continuing to grow with annual increases of around 20 per cent for each of the past four years. The Government has responded to this situation by providing the necessary resources to increase the number of criminal court sittings from four to eight over the past 2½ years. In the Magistrates Court the overall workload in the civil jurisdiction will increase as a result of the restructuring package, and this will necessitate a reallocation of resources between the District Court and the Magistrates Court.

In the short term there could be an adverse impact on court processing time for some cases as the re-allocation of resources will take some time. However, matters that fall in the $2 000 to $5 000 bracket will be dealt with more expeditiously as minor civil claims. In the criminal jurisdiction there will be an increase in the number of trials conducted in the Magistrates Court but a corresponding decrease in the number of committal hearings. However, the legislative changes should result in shorter committal hearings in most cases referred to the higher courts.

In summary, the major objectives of the restructuring package were to reduce the cost of justice by having cases heard in the appropriate jurisdictions and to provide speedier justice in relation to minor civil matters and less serious criminal matters. The effect that the package will have on trial lists in each of the three courts will be

determined over time. I would hope, in particular in the Magistrates Court, as a result of the reduction in time taken for committals, that there will be some spare capacity there which in turn will be taken up by the increased number of cases and trials that will be heard in that court because of the shift down of cases from the District Court.

The other initiative which is worth mentioning is that the Supreme Court and District Court, following the courts package, will now have a common criminal case listing procedure which should add to efficiencies and mean that a larger pool of judges will be available to hear the same number of cases. Because a larger pool is available, it means that if cases fall through there is a bigger pool of judges to hear cases in the waiting list. So, you can list more cases if you have got a larger number of judges in the pool, and that will be achieved by the combination of criminal lists for the Supreme Court and District Court.

The Hon. Mr Griffin also raised the question of the policy of release from prisons which has been criticised in the Supreme Court judges annual reports on a couple of occasions and also in correspondence to which the Hon. Mr Griffin referred. I have received the following information on this topic. As far as temporary leave is concerned, during 1990, following a decision to transfer prisoners who had been previously held in police custody to correctional services institutions, prisoner numbers increased significantly. Authorisation was given to the Department of Correctional Services to utilise temporary leave provisions to expedite the release of selected prisoners on temporary leave. Approximately 120 prisoners were released on temporary leave during 1990-91. The use of temporary leave to relieve overcrowding ceased in August 1991.

Since that time temporary leave has been used infrequently and only in special cases. The discontinuation of temporary leave for the purpose of relieving overcrowding in August 1991 is consistent with previous Government indications that temporary leave would be suspended with the commissioning of F Division at the Yatala Labour Prison. F Division was operating with prisoners in May 1991.

I turn now to administrative discharge. Administrative discharge enables the Chief Executive Officer of the Correctional Services Department to release prisoners up to 30 days prior to the due date of their release. The Correctional Services Department has used this section of the Correctional Services Act for several years, although recently its use has been reduced. On 30 December 1991 the use of administrative discharge was reduced for fine defaulters, who are currently serving approximately 70 per cent of their full concurrent periods of imprisonment. Legislative changes to the Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act will require periods of imprisonment and fine default to be served cumulatively rather than concurrently, and the department has developed a proposal to provide additional accommodation for fine defaulters at Northfield.

On 14 August 1992 the department changed its policy with respect to the release of prisoners pursuant to section 38 (2) of the Correctional Services Act 1982. From that date, administrative discharge is not automatic and a direction has been given to prison managers that an administrative discharge is to be utilised only to expedite the release of selected prisoners, thus reducing overcrowding at their prison. The department is committed to reducing administrative discharge and has made substantial gains in this direction, but its ultimate removal is dependent upon having sufficient appropriate accommodation available.

New accommodation at the Northfield Prison complex for 60 prisoners is currently being developed and, when completed at the end of the year, it will enable the department to hold for the full term those who default on fines. Additionally, further accommodation will become available at Port Augusta Gaol in November 1993, which will ease pressure on accommodation for sentenced prisoners.

In summary, the criticisms raised by the Chief Justice in the annual reports have been noted by the Government and action has been taken to deal with them. While the situation is not perfect yet, substantial changes have been made to ensure that, where prisoners are sentenced particularly for short-term periods, they serve those periods imposed by the Judiciary and are not the subject of administrative discharge. I think that the criticisms of the court, while still applicable to some extent, to a large extent are no longer valid.

I turn now to the question of home detention. During the 1991-92 financial year, 296 prisoners were transferred to the home detention program. On average, prisoners spent between three to four months on home detention. During that period, 54 prisoners, or 18 per cent of prisoners released, had their home detention revoked, mainly for breach of curfew or substance abuse. Approximately 82 per cent of prisoners completed their period of home detention successfully compared with the 1990-91 success rate of 76 per cent.

Administrative home detention, which has been criticised by the Chief Justice in the Supreme Court judges' report, is not done without legislative authority. The Correctional Services Act provides for home detention and provides that it is not a sentencing option for the Judiciary but is to be used administratively by the Department of Correctional Services. On that point, the Chief Justice has not criticised the administration of the Department of Correctional Services or Government policy. Instead, he has criticised the legislation and the policy that backs that legislation as passed by Parliament.

I believe that the legislation, which sanctions administrative home detention, is appropriate. As far as the Government is concerned, it is not intended that the Judiciary should have home detention available as a sentencing option. Prisoners are selected for participation in the home detention scheme only after a range of factors, including the gravity of the offence, previous criminal record and behaviour whilst in prison, is considered. Home detainees are subject to intense supervision, special conditions and a curfew. It is considered that the best way to assess the likelihood of a person's succeeding on the home detention program is to assess and select after the prisoner has spent some time in prison.

It should be noted that the Judiciary may impose home detention as an alternative to remand in custody, that is, prior to trial. Home detention can be used when a judge is considering bail. Provisions allowing bail authorities to

consider home detention as an alternative to institutionalised custody have been available since 1987 but the provisions have been rarely used. That raises some doubt as to whether the Judiciary would utilise home detention if it were an option in sentencing. The other argument against judicially imposed home detention is that all it would do is net-widen and the Judiciary would continue to impose sentences of imprisonment, as it does now, but others who may at present be fined or released on bond could be the subject of home detention imposed by the Judiciary. One does not know that because in South Australia home detention is not imposed by the Judiciary. The Government is firmly of the view, as Parliament has been to date, that home detention should remain a matter for administrative discretion subject to the guidelines that are laid down in the Act.

There is only one other matter with which I want to deal briefly, and that is reference by the Hon. Dr Pfitzner to the juvenile justice system operating in France. She referred to the Bonnemaison report. The Hon. Mr Burdett also referred to the Bonnemaison schemes. The Hon. Dr Pfitzner was certainly correct in saying that the Bonnemaison approach to crime prevention tries to find the balance between tougher penalties and better strategies towards rehabilitation. However, I believe that she is incorrect in assuming that the current practice in the children's courts in France is due to Mr Bonnemaison. The programs to which young offenders are diverted by the courts are a result of his philosophical approach to dealing with the underlying causes of delinquency, but he was not responsible for the development of those structures within the French courts system.

I believe that only Judge Kingsley Newman has described the current court process in France of magistrates dealing with offenders in chambers and of the same magistrates dealing with the same offenders on each occasion as the Bonnemaison approach. That is a misapprehension on the part of the Hon. Dr Pfitzner and the Hon. Mr Burdett. The so-called Bonnemaison schemes in France are the community crime prevention schemes. I had the opportunity to study those crime prevention programs in early 1989 in France when I also met Mr Bonnemaison. It was information that I obtained as part of that study tour in France and in a number of other countries that led to the development of the Government's crime prevention strategy—Together Against Crime—which was launched in August 1989.

The examples that we were shown on the study tour were about social intervention in the community in order to prevent crime or reduce the risk of crime and/or programs for offenders that were designed to increase both skill and self-esteem.

The other characteristic of the Bonnemaison approach is the collective decision making mechanisms for policy in the justice area, and in France an elaborate crime prevention structure has been established, which has as its head a body that is chaired by the Prime Minister, I think. It has a collective approach to decision making, which informed the South Australian Government's approach to its coalition against crime and the other mechanisms that we have put in place in South Australia since August 1989 to deal with crime prevention. So, Bonnemaison schemes do not actually refer to the court structure. They refer to the schemes for crime prevention developed in France during the 1980s, the community based crime prevention schemes which attempted to get to the causes of crime, attempted to give young people skills and self-esteem, by a variety of activities.

In fact, I am not sure whether the Hon. Dr Pfitzner was aware of this, but the scheme that we have in South Australia, which we launched in August 1989, the crime prevention strategy, Together Against Crime, was based to some extent on what had occurred in France, and also drew on the experience in the Netherlands, for instance, and in the United Kingdom. Essentially, it was adopting Mr Bonnemaison's philosophy, which I think really is a matter of commonsense, namely, that you cannot rely exclusively on the repression measures of the criminal justice system to deal with criminal behaviour and delinquency, that if you do then you will probably fail to respond to the crime problem, and that you have to look beyond the police, courts and corrections to deal with crime to community based solutions. Undoubtedly, police, courts and corrections must remain the centrepiece of enforcement of the law, deterrence and, therefore, the prevention of crime, but if you rely on it exclusively then you will almost certainly fail.

It has been the Bonnemaison philosophy that has informed the South Australian approach to crime prevention. I had the opportunity to meet Mr Bonnemaison on an occasion in January 1989 and also at the United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders in Cuba in August 1990. There is little doubt that the programs that he has been responsible for promoting in France and our program in South Australia are quite similar and certainly have at the base the same philosophy. That is not to mean that the schemes are exactly the same. Obviously, there has had to be adaptation in South Australia to our local circumstances. Mr Bonnemaison in fact was invited to a conference in Adelaide last year, organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology, with the support of the South Australian Government, and was due to come but at the last minute he could not come because of a dispute between students and the police in France at the time and he was asked by the Prime Minister of France, Madame Cresson, to direct his attention to that. However, he did send a speech which I delivered on his behalf at the conference on 4 June 1991, and I have a copy here if the Hon. Dr Pfitzner is interested in perusing it.

He has also indicated his support for what we are doing in South Australia with our crime prevention initiatives, and there is little doubt that what we have done in South Australia has been a model for Australia in many respects. I think it is a policy that gives some hope of seeing in the long term a reduction in crime rates. I thought I would just clarify what I think to be something of a misconception about what so-called Bonnemaison programs are. They are as I have described and, in fact, the policies in South Australia that this Government put in place in August 1989 are very much based on that philosophy and have, as I have said, provided a lead in this area for the rest of Australia.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (COMMERCIAL LICENCES) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 18 August. Page 122.)

The Hon. M.J. ELLIOTT: The Democrats support the second reading of this Bill. I do not intend to run through the full gamut of the Bill but will focus on just one section, the section that the Hon. Mr Burdett referred to which relates to sections 17 and 18 of the Bill, which pertain to the Second-hand Motor Vehicles Act. At this stage I simply want to raise a couple of issues by way of question and I hope that at the conclusion of the second reading debate the Minister will address those matters. If I feel that they are not adequately addressed, then I might have to look at the matters in more detail in Committee—but that might not be necessary.

The Hon. Mr Burdett gave me a copy of a facsimile he had received from the Motor Traders Association, and that raises a couple of issues which I think deserve a little more attention. The first matter raised is:

> Licensees under the Secondhand Motor Vehicles Act receive the privilege of exemption from stamp duty on vehicles that they purchase. This is because motor vehicles are treated as stock in trade, and the Registrar of Motor Vehicles relies upon the statement of the LVD licence number in order to grant exemption. Sadly, the industry has a small percentage of peripheral dealers who currently quote LVD licence numbers that have been suspended or cancelled in order to conduct their borderline operations. It has been imperative that the industry continues to be made aware of licence suspensions in order for the nefarious activities of these people to be curtailed.

It appears to me that there should be a relatively simple way to address this problem. I ask the Minister whether or not she contemplates these possible solutions. It appears that at any stage a licence has been suspended the Registrar of Motor Vehicles should be notified immediately. I imagine that those officers do most of their work via computer, and a simple computer cross-check will pick up the fact that a transaction is happening with a person who does not currently hold a licence or at least whose licence has been suspended. Likewise, I think it is reasonable—and the MTA makes this request—that the MTA receive in written or printed form a list of licence changes within seven days of their taking effect. The MTA has asked for that as a possible amendment or excluding clauses 17 and 18, which affect it.

I do not think that is an unreasonable request. Whether or not it has to be included in the Bill is I suppose arguable, and I will not state a position at this stage—but I would like the Minister to react to the request that it should happen. In any case, it would be easier to do it as a matter of routine, so that once a week both the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the MTA get updated list of changes in licence conditions and suspensions, etc. That would appear to solve the problem raised by the MTA.

I am aware that discussions are continuing about more general changes to the Act, but there was a problem recently of an inability to prosecute because of a flaw in the current Act, which this Bill seeks to tackle. We do not know when the other amending Bill may emerge. On the face of it, it seems reasonable that we handle the Motor Vehicles Act together with all the other Acts at this time as long as those couple of matters I have raised can be addressed.

The Hon. BARBARA WIESE secured the adjournment of the debate.

RACING (DIVIDEND ADJUSTMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.35 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 25 August at 2.15 p.m.