HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 17 October 1984

The SPEAKER (Hon. T.M. McRae) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITIONS: ANTI DISCRIMINATION BILL

Petitions signed by 91 residents of South Australia praying that the House delete the words 'sexuality, marital status and pregnancy' from the Anti Discrimination Bill, 1984, and provide for the recognition of the primacy of marriage and parenthood were presented by the Hon. Jennifer Adamson and Mr Mathwin.

Petitions received.

PETITION: VIDEO FILMS

A petition signed by 128 residents of South Australia praying that the House ban X and R rated video films in South Australia was presented by the Hon. Michael Wilson.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that written answers to questions without notice, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard.*

EYRE PENINSULA SCHOOLS

In reply to **Mr BLACKER** (13 September).

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD: The concern related to minor works and maintenance at the three schools and, in particular, to the perceived deferral of maintenance and minor works at Wudinna Area School pending a redevelopment.

(1) Wudinna Area School

The redevelopment of Wudinna Area School continues to be a high major works priority. However, the availability of total major works funds is such that the project is unable to be included on the State-wide programme up to and including 1987.

With respect to minor works, some $40 000 was allocated to Wudinna Area School from the 1983-84 minor works budget. In the 1984-85 financial year, $4 600 has been programmed. A further $17 000 has been programmed for the external repair and painting of various classrooms during the 1984-85 financial year.

(2) Cowell Area School

An amount of $32 000 has been programmed towards minor works at Cowell during the 1984-85 financial year. A further $47 000 has been programmed for a complete external repair and repaint of the school during the 1984-85 financial year.

(3) Lock Area School

A contract totalling $48 000 for external repair and repaint to various classrooms has been let and work is currently progressing.

In summary, a significant proportion of available funds for maintenance and minor works have been allocated to Wudinna, Cowell and Lock Area Schools during 1983 and 1984.

WHEELCHAIRS

In reply to **Mr PETERSON** (21 August).

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: As the honourable member will be aware, my colleague the Minister of Health has investigated the situation and has written directly to him on the specific circumstances involved in the case. Neither the South Australian Health Commission nor the Minister of Health normally provide funds to enable the purchase of custom-built wheelchairs. It is understood that this also applies to the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The current guidelines for the Programme of Aids for Disabled People (PADP) Scheme state that inpatients of hospitals or nursing homes are only eligible for assistance if the aids (such as wheelchairs) are required in connection with their discharge. This is not so in the case referred to by the honourable member. A temporary measure, such as a short-term loan of a wheelchair, would be unsuitable because I understand that the person in question would require it for daily use. Furthermore, despite extensive inquiries, an available wheelchair of the particular type required has not been located in the local health system.

However, it has been suggested to the honourable member that the particular nursing home, or someone acting on behalf of his constituent's mother, apply to a local service club for sponsorship of a custom-built wheelchair. For example, of the 600 plus wheelchairs at the Julia Farr Centre Inc. most have been funded by similar such sponsorship arrangements. Very few wheelchairs have been funded from recurrent funds. The Independent Living Centre Inc., 40 Cheltenham Street, Highgate 5063, can provide advice on the type and make of wheelchair best suited to the individual's requirements. I understand that my colleague has also provided the honourable member with details of the major retailers of custom-built wheelchairs.

38-HOUR WEEK

In reply to **Mr OSWALD** (23 August).

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I refer the honourable member to the reply given to Question on Notice No. 76 in this Chamber on 18 September 1984.

RAINBOW SWEETS

In reply to the **Hon. PETER DUNCAN** (27 March).

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: My colleague the Minister of Consumer Affairs has advised that, as a result of concern expressed at its form of packaging, the product known as 'Super Fun Stickers with Rainbow Candy' ('Rainbow Sweets') was withdrawn from sale in this State. The local firm marketing the product took action following press reports on the dangers of the product. The Secretary of the Central Board of Health had also written requesting withdrawal of the product in the tablet look-alike form in blister strip packaging. This followed the matter being raised by the Child and Home Safety Centre of the National Safety Council of Australia (S.A. Division).

The Trade Standards Advisory Council considered the matter of 'Rainbow Sweets' at its meeting of 9 March 1984. Concern was expressed that such packaging of sweets in blister packs, in a manner similar to certain types of medication, may encourage children to treat packets containing medication as sweets. To produce a safety standard or a declaration of dangerous goods under the Trade Standards Act, section 23 or section 25 of the Act must be satisfied. It needs to be shown that such action is necessary or desirable in order to prevent exposure to undue risk or injury or

impairment of health arising out of the possession or handling of the goods. Products packaged similarly to other goods, in a manner which teaches children undesirable habits, are not within the scope of the legislation at present. However, the Trade Standards Advisory Council was of the opinion that there exists a tenuous association between two different products in similar packaging and that it is an area which needs to be examined.

There were several other examples of this type of problem which were brought to council's attention. These include cigarette lollies, sweets with a beer taste, de-alcoholised beer sold as soft drink and the matter of stickers which smell like fruit which was raised by the member for Brighton. These all involve the moral question of whether such packaging of products teaches children bad habits; the products themselves are not hazardous.

The Trade Standards Advisory Council has referred this matter to the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs to assess whether such products should be covered by the Trade Standards Act, and whether the Act will need to be amended accordingly. Liaison will also be maintained with the South Australian Health Commission. The delay in answering the honourable member's question was occasioned by developments during the course of the investigation and the desire to provide an up-to-date response.

CREDIT

In reply to **Mr MAX BROWN** (14 August).

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The position in South Australia in relation to guarantors is that a credit provider who takes security over a loan by way of guarantee can pursue either the borrower or the guarantor at his option to recover the debt arising from a credit contract. Reliance on some form of security enables a credit provider to extend his credit facilities to a far wider range of people, even those with no credit record or one which is dubious. Therefore, it would be undesirable to limit or restrict a credit provider's ability to lend money to people by removing or restricting his ability to take security in the form of a guarantee. It would be particularly inequitable to restrain credit unions and co-operatives when many other credit providers use guarantee agreements to secure loans.

The Consumer Transactions Act however offers some protection to guarantors. Section 44 of that Act protects guarantors about to guarantee the performance by others of contractual obligations in those cases where the guarantor intends to undertake more onerous obligations than the principal borrower. If a parent or friend is about to promise to do something more than the borrower is bound to do, the Act requires the intending guarantor to be independently advised of the obligations he is about to undertake. This section does not require independent advice for intending guarantors, where the guarantor merely promises to perform the same obligations as the consumer. Where the guarantor is called upon to perform more than the consumer's own promises and to undertake additional responsibilities, for example, to support his guarantee with security over his separate property, or to be liable in circumstances when the borrower is not, the agreement is void unless the guarantor has received legal advice and the legal practitioner certifies that the guarantor understands the effect of the agreement.

Moreover, the construction of the document may lead to confusion as to whether the parties are acting as guarantors or co-borrowers. In many cases, a supposed guarantor enters into an agreement which makes the guarantor liable as a co-borrower which would obviate the operation of the Consumer Transactions Act, 1972. Whether a guarantor is in fact a guarantor will largely depend on the construction of the document. In the two cases which the honourable member mentioned it may be that the parties were acting as co-borrowers rather than guarantors. If they were acting as guarantors and had signed an agreement imposing more liability than that imposed upon the principal borrower and had not received legal advice, then it may be that the agreement is void and non-enforceable against them. If the honourable member wishes to provide me with further details, I will be pleased to have the particular case investigated.

It should be noted that the guarantee provisions of the Consumer Transactions Act, 1972 apply to all credit providers and not just to those credit providers licensed under the Consumer Credit Act, 1972. Thus the proposed legislation to extend certain provisions of the Consumer Credit Act, 1972 to banks, building societies and credit unions will not affect their current obligations, in relation to guarantees, under the Consumer Transactions Act, 1972.

CRISIS ASSISTANCE

In reply to the **Hon. H. ALLISON** (16 August).

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The replies are as follows:

Youth Accommodation Funding: In 1983-84 the Commonwealth provided $177 000 to South Australia for the Youth Services Scheme which is responsible for funding several youth accommodation programmes. These funds were fully matched by the State and a total of $354 000 was expended on the scheme in 1983-84.

Women's Emergency Services Funding: In 1983-84, the State Government allocated $1 005 000 to the Women's Shelter Programme. In 1983-84 under the Commonwealth Women's Emergency Services Programme, the Commonwealth provided $352 000 to South Australia. These funds were disbursed in May 1984 in the following manner:

Recurrent costs

- Improved pay conditions of existing shelter workers—$48 310
- New positions to four shelters—$25 798
- .5 Halfway-house worker to all (11) shelters—$26 320

Once-Off Grants

- All (11) shelters received additional $19 590 each to offset operating costs deficits and purchase new capital equipment.

Funding for services to assist immigrant women and children in crisis: An additional $36 082 was allocated to enable the employment of workers to assist immigrant women and children in crisis. A further $96 000 has been allocated by the Commonwealth for this purpose from 1984-85 WESP funds. It is proposed to establish an ethnic worker 'pool', with three full-time salary subsidies allocated to service the metropolitan shelters and one full-time equivalent salary subsidy allocated to country shelters. The salary subsidies will be used to employ bi-lingual workers.

Discussions between members of various ethnic communities, women's shelter staff and officers of the Department of Social Security and Community Welfare have recently taken place on the composition of a management committee. Once an agreement between all parties is reached, funds can be released as quickly as possible to assist immigrant women and children in crisis.

LEGAL JARGON

In reply to **Mr FERGUSON** (16 August).

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: The Government shares the concerns expressed by the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs and echoed by the honourable member regarding

gobbledegook in consumer contracts. The Federal Government has circulated draft amendments to the Trade Practices Act and the States have agreed that when this Act is amended it should be made the subject of complementary, mirror legislation in the States. The Trade Practices Act amendments include provisions prohibiting a corporation from entering into a contract that would be 'unconscionable in all the circumstances.' One of the factors to which a court may have regard in determining this question is 'the form and intelligibility' of the contract.

The Government intends to press for these amendments to be included in the Trade Practices Act and also to draw up similar legislation for South Australia to ensure that the provisions apply to individuals as well as corporations. In the meantime, as particular Acts regulating consumer transactions are reviewed, consideration is being given to inserting amendments designed to ensure that consumer contracts are written in language which the average consumer can readily understand.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: ORGANISED CRIME

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT (Deputy Premier): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I refer to the question asked by the member for Murray on 20 September 1984 concerning organised crime. I am now in a position to provide the information requested. The most serious and entrenched aspect of organised crime in South Australia is that associated with the growing, manufacture, importation and trafficking in illegal drugs. This specific category of organised crime is statistically high and is on the increase. The number of drug offences reported or becoming known to police during 1982-83 was 4 941, while during 1983-84 there were 6 829 offences recorded—an increase of 38.21 per cent.

Breaking and entering of pharmacies and surgeries is an offence associated with illegal drug offences. During 1982-83 there were 374 such offences and during 1983-84 there were 512 breaking offences—an increase of 36.9 per cent. The investigation of organised crime in respect to the commission of criminal offences has never been the responsibility of or within the scope of Special Branch. The Commissioner of Police has advised me that the abolition of the Special Branch has had no impact whatsoever on the investigation of organised crime in this State. With regard to the question of fighting organised crime the Government is satisfied that this State's participation in the National Crime Authority will improve the capacity to combat organised crime. A Bill will be introduced into the Parliament soon to provide for the State's participation in the Authority.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT: PRISON SYSTEM

The SPEAKER: This day I have received the following letter from the Leader of the Opposition:

Dear Mr Speaker,

I desire to inform you that this day it is my intention to move:

That this House at its rising adjourn until 1 p.m. tomorrow, for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely:

That, in view of recent incidents in Yatala Labour Prison, the Government must immediately review its deliberate policy of more lenient treatment and less discipline of prisoners.

Will those honourable members who support the motion rise in their place?

Members having risen:

Mr OLSEN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That this House at its rising adjourn until 1 p.m. tomorrow, for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely:

That, in view of recent incidents in Yatala Labour Prison, the Government must immediately review its deliberate policy of more lenient treatment and less discipline of prisoners.

I have brought this matter before the House this afternoon because it is time the public was made more aware of what is happening in our prisons. It is time the public was made aware that this Government has adopted a policy of peace at any price with prisoners. It is time the public was made aware that it is the Prisoners Action Group (not the Minister or departmental officers) that is running Yatala Labour Prison now. It is time the public was made aware that our parole system is not working and that the full facts are being covered up. These are serious charges, and I will support them with facts and examples.

I acknowledge that running our correctional services institutions is an extremely difficult task. Prisoners must be treated fairly, but they must also be treated firmly. To uphold respect for the law, society demands, rightly, that those who do not obey the law must pay a price. Law-abiding citizens must be protected. Such protection is jeopardised if our prisons are run according to the dictates of the prisoners rather than according to the demands of society. The policies of this Government are clearly tipping the scales in favour of the prisoners.

This matter has been brought to a head by the incident in Yatala Labour Prison on Monday in which an inmate suffered a heroin overdose. The Opposition sought information in both Houses yesterday about this serious incident. In this House, in reply to a question from my colleague the member for Murray, the Premier said that he shared the concern of the Opposition, that these things should not be tolerated, and that the Minister of Correctional Services had the matter in hand.

But what has been the response of the Minister? He has said that the Department of Correctional Services and the management of the prisons do whatever they can to minimise the opportunity of drugs entering and being used in prisons, but that is simply untrue. About four years ago, a specially trained Dog Squad was established to detect the existence of drugs in all institutions. However, that squad has not been allowed into prisoners' cells for some time—for at least six months.

Yesterday, when he was questioned by the media about this matter, the Minister said that the Department had informed him that this was not the case. However, on channel 7 television news last night, the Manager of Yatala Prison, Mr Lloyd Ellickson, was quoted as saying that the Dog Squad had not been into cells as frequently as he would have liked. In addition, Mr Vic Smyth, representing the prison officers, confirmed on the same news service that the squad had not been permitted into the accommodation block. There is only one reason for that: the prisoners have threatened trouble if the Dog Squad is used as it should be.

The use of the Dog Squad—or rather the lack of effective use of this specially trained squad—raises other questions about searches of the prison to maintain internal security. Notice has now to be given to prisoners before officers can undertake periodic searches of the prison. In other words, you give advance notice that you are going to undertake a search these days in the prisons. What absolute nonsense that is! During my period as Chief Secretary I insisted that these searches were to be conducted without notice and periodically, to ensure that there was a minimum of drugs and offensive weapons in the cells, smuggled into the institutions; that is, taking away the incentive and putting hurdles in the way of that sort of equipment and drugs being used within the institutions. As a result, there was effective detection of drugs, weapons and the like which had been smuggled into the institutions and prisons.

The question of strip searches after contact visits was raised by the Minister yesterday. He said that a number of prisoners were selected at random after each visit for a full strip search, but we have been informed that, if a prisoner refuses to fully co-operate, the searches are not enforced. So much for random strip searching! I do not criticise the officers for that: they are simply acting under instructions—instructions based on this Government's direction that there must be no trouble in the prisons at any cost. Peace at any cost!

Mr Hamilton: Absolute garbage.

Mr OLSEN: The facts speak for themselves, if the honourable member will listen. Officers are being asked to turn a blind eye to the serious erosion of internal discipline within the institutions and they are becoming increasingly frustrated and intimidated about it, as well the Government and the Minister know.

I invite the House to consider another extraordinary example of lax discipline involving a prisoner in the new minimum security cottages recently opened at Yatala. On at least two evenings, and possibly on a third, he was visited by a woman who remained with him in the unit throughout the night, leaving the next morning. So much for security within our institutions! Evidence exists that on each occasion the woman was able to get into the compound under the perimeter fence. I understand that these minimum security cottages built by this Government are not patrolled between midnight and 6 a.m. This prisoner had convictions for housebreaking, illegal use, rape, and indecent assault. It has also been clearly established in evidence given to us that a number of prisoners have been allowed to leave the minimum security area for outside visits. The area already accords the prisoners a number of privileges in terms of their living conditions to prepare them for release. That is not argued, but I am arguing against the lax security within the institution and the fact that people can almost walk in and out and stay overnight with an inmate in his cell. So much for the security that this Government is applying to its institutions!

Mr Becker: It's a holiday camp.

Mr OLSEN: Yes, these cottages are almost a holiday camp. It does not alter the fact that these people remain prisoners whilst in the area. They are not entitled to the degree of leniency that appears to be the standard being set at present by this Government. Indeed, it seems that the area is being used more as a holiday camp than an area of special detention. We hear a lot about prisoners' demands, but we hear little about the problems that they cause for the correctional services officers—the men who day after day have to deal with the prisoners. As discipline has eroded, their authority has been undermined. They are not receiving the support that they need from the Government to perform their task effectively. They feel isolated and threatened, and management at Yatala is breaking down.

Let me give just one example of that. Recently, a fire alarm sounded. It was, fortunately, a false alarm. However, because the position of Fire Safety Officer at the prison has not been established or maintained, no-one was sure what to do about the nine fire units from three stations that responded to the alarm. As a result, they were kept waiting outside the western gate of the prison for 25 minutes. It is just as well that it was a false alarm. No-one would allow them in to the institution: their time was completely wasted.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: And the cost involved.

Mr OLSEN: And, indeed, the cost involved—not to mention the implications had there been a fire in the institution.

Mr Mathwin: That's what happened last time.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader to resume his seat. I treat this motion as one of urgency. I have judged it to be so and, in return, I ask honourable members to obey the Standing Orders. That applies to the honourable member for Glenelg.

Mr OLSEN: The morale of prison officers is suffering further because of the operation of the Government's new parole laws. Their concern is widely shared. It is interesting to note the member for Elizabeth is coaching the former Chief Secretary on what he should say. Obviously, the member for Elizabeth has a lot of contact with the inmates of institutions.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. Peter Duncan interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OLSEN: It is interesting—there must be a raw nerve there somewhere to get that sort of response.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader to resume his seat. Those remarks are totally irrelevant to the matter under discussion. I ask the Leader, if this matter is as serious as he claims it is, to proceed with it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr OLSEN: The Secretary of the Police Association, Mr Brophy, has said that the Government could not wash its hands of the whole parole issue—that it was unclear to the public what a convicted person's sentence would be because of time off for parole and remission for good conduct. There is increasing evidence that the new parole system is subjecting the community to risk. I understand that since the system was introduced last December 456 prisoners have been given early release. Many of them have been released much earlier than they would have been under the former system. In the May, June and July period of this year alone, there were 141 early releases. Many of the prisoners had been serving sentences for very serious offences and were not due for release until 1990 or later.

One case involved a man imprisoned on rape charges whose full sentence would have expired in December 1990. However, he was released in June this year after serving 18 months of an eight year sentence. Now, he has been arrested again and charged on four counts of rape, two counts of gross indecency and two counts of kidnapping. There are other examples. One prisoner who was recently granted parole faces a murder charge. Another, released recently after serving only two years for manslaughter, is now back in gaol for a breach of parole.

Examples like this raise serious questions about the right of the public to be protected from hardened criminals. There is increasing concern in the Police Force that dangerous and habitual criminals are being released back into the community without serving adequate prison sentences. Police often have to take personal risks to apprehend dangerous criminals.

However, they must be asking themselves—indeed, the Minister of Emergency Services would well know this; he would be getting the vibes from the Police Association and the Police Force if he talked to his senior officers—whether some of the risks that they take are worth it, only to find that the criminals are released after serving only a small part of their sentence.

A police officer was the victim of a serious assault allegedly committed by a man who had been released from prison only two weeks before on parole. There is, in fact, an anomaly in this case, because the person charged initially had begun a 15-month sentence on a receiving charge last November. His non-parole period was eight months. In January this year he was further sentenced to 18 months, with a nine-month non-parole period, on a charge of garage breaking and larceny. The sentences were to be cumulative. On that basis, even with full remissions, the man should have served at least 11 months in prison, and would not

have been due for release until this month at the earliest. However, he was released in June and, within a fortnight of his release, was allegedly involved in an incident in which a police officer suffered a hairline fracture of the skull after being hit on the head with a bottle. It appears that in this case the new non-parole period cancelled out his first one, making the sentences concurrent instead of cumulative. The Government owes the community an explanation in regard to examples such as that to which I have referred.

In his response the Minister hides behind the recidivism argument. I suggest that that is an attempt to hoodwink the public by using selective figures. There is growing concern about the application of our new parole laws, and that concern would be very much greater if the public was made aware of everything that was happening. From my own personal experience I know that the Government and the Minister face a difficult task in managing our correctional institutions. But the answer does not lie in giving in to the demands of prisoners simply to avoid trouble—to practise the principle of peace at any price—and to allow the Prisoners Action Committee to be the dictator of policy that determines the direction of institutions in South Australia.

The Government is spending significant amounts of money on upgrading some of our institutions, and the Opposition has supported that. However, that does not excuse the Government from its responsibility to maintain internal discipline within our institutions and to ensure that prisoners are properly dealt with.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable Minister of Local Government.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Local Government): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The blatant and transparent electioneering of this motion is so obvious that personally I do not believe that the Premier needs to give any sort of status to this motion in this House.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Although the motion contains the words 'in view of recent incidents in Yatala Labour Prison', for at least 15 minutes of his contribution to this debate the Leader referred to one incident in the Yatala Labour Prison, and that concerned the drug overdose of a prisoner that took place last week. The other incidents to which the Leader referred took place in the low security establishment that has recently been built or were connected with the Parole Act. I shall refer to the Parole Act in a moment. I want to say right at the outset that the Parole Act under which we are now operating in South Australia is the same Parole Act that the Liberal Party in Victoria (colleagues of the honourable members opposite) introduced in 1974. The Hamer Government introduced that parole legislation in Victoria; we have introduced similar legislation here in South Australia.

Mr Mathwin: So what?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Any criticism made by members opposite is made of their own colleagues.

Mr Mathwin interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Glenelg to order for the last time.

Mr Hamilton: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I shall refer to the specific charges later. The gravamen of the charge is that the Government has reduced discipline and that it has a deliberate policy of lenient treatment and less discipline of prisoners. I think that is strange, coming from the honourable member whom I followed as Chief Secretary in South Australia. The week before the election in November 1982 there were six serious documented incidents in the Yatala Labour Prison. When I became Minister I was immediately approached by the prison officers in South Australia who indicated a direct lack of confidence in the Administration that preceded me. I was informed that there was absolutely no support at all for the prison officers by—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader will come to order.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: There was no support by the previous Government for the prison officers or the prison system. This Government is the first in 150 years in South Australia to approach the whole subject of prison reform, prison capital expenditure, and training of prison officers, and to provide a discipline system within our prisons. It is the first time since there have been prisons in South Australia that a Government has been prepared to face up to the reality of the difficulties that exist within our correctional services area and has done something about it.

Now we are being criticised in the atmosphere of a Federal election. This is a Greiner-Sinclair type of criticism. It involves one incident in the Yatala Labour Prison—a drug overdose, for goodness sake! When the honourable member was Chief Secretary, drugs were rampant in the system in South Australia. One of the reasons that we built a security fence around the perimeter of Yatala Labour Prison was to stop the drugs getting into the prison—not only to stop prisoners getting out of Yatala. So, one has a secondary defence structure. It also stops the introduction of drugs into the prison.

I believe that the Minister was being totally honest to the community in South Australia when he said, 'We will do our best—both the Government and the prisons system itself—to prevent drugs getting into the prison.' However, he had to be honest and realistic with the people of South Australia and say that he could not always be certain that that would happen. There is not a prison system in the world that is keeping heroin, marihuana or other drugs out of the prison system. What happens in South Australia in terms of drugs is happening elsewhere, but we have reduced the incidence of drugs in our correctional services area far below what existed when I became Chief Secretary in 1982.

We have reduced tension within the prison far below that, not by being lenient with the prisoners in South Australia, because it does not bode well for any prison system to give in to the prisoners, and this Government is well aware of that. We have provided the prison officers with a prison environment that enables them to set the rules and demand and require discipline.

The new remission system provides officers in South Australia with a management tool that hitherto was not available to them. The officers in the South Australian system now have the responsibility and authority to make recommendations to prison management about remission—whether a prisoner is entitled to remission or loses remission. There is not an entitlement to remission: a remission has to be earnt by the prisoners. Whether or not prisoners earn remission is determined by the advice of prison officers.

In South Australia in the past 12 months more millions of dollars have been committed to the prison system than has ever been provided before. There has never been a greater increase in numbers of prison officers and of training systems instituted to make prison officers more effective.

Let us talk about the capacity of the prison officers to manage the prison and to sustain charges against prisoners when I became Minister. They had none: prison officers had no skills to go before the court and charge prisoners with breaches of regulations or with offences within the prison. We are providing them with the training and skills

to do that. That is one way in which prisoners were able to get away with practically anything, because support to prison officers was not being provided by the previous Administration. That is now well and truly being provided. I was the Minister who equipped the Dog Squad in South Australia with the tools to enable it to be more effective.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: The Dog Squad in South Australia is still effective in its capacity to detect drugs, and I want to make a point about what the honourable member said and the sort of unsubstantiated charges that he has made. It is all typical: smear, smear; he has 'heard'; 'it has been reported to us'; and 'it is well known'. There has not been one documented piece of evidence given to this Parliament. If there is any documented evidence and if the honourable member has anything to suggest that illegal activities are going on in the prison, that prisoners are breaching the law or that there is easy access to drugs in the prisons, or if he knows anything at all about the prisons his responsibility is to report it to the police and not to come into this House and try to make political capital out of it so as to alert potential offenders. He does not like this.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Members opposite do not like this. If there are offences against the law, those offences ought to be reported to the police.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to resume his seat, and I would appeal to honourable members on my left to reduce the amount of interruption that is going on. I have pointed out before that I have treated this as an urgent matter. At the moment it has become largely a juvenile slanging match. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I refer to the unsubstantiated charges. The honourable member says that the officers have been requested to do this and the officers have been requested to do that. He has not said who has requested the officers at all. He has not laid a charge. The honourable member is using absolutely blurred images purely for some sort of political advantage that he hopes to get out of this. The fact is that he has a bit of a programme running in the press—misguided, I might say, because of the rather strange interpretation that the honourable member places on a recent piece of legislation (the Parole Act), and in the five minutes I have left I want to direct my attention to that matter.

He quotes a prisoner who was to have been released from prison in 1990. The honourable member knows that that prisoner, under his system, would have been released a free man in 1987, with the potential of being released in about 1984 or 1985 on parole; so, he is immediately misleading the people of South Australia by saying that the head sentence is the sentence that that prisoner would have served when the honourable member was the Minister. That is not the case; it has never been the case and he is deliberately misleading the people of South Australia and trying to frighten them.

I do not mind if the member for Murray says that, because he is obviously overworked and has never understood the system, anyway. However, the previous Minister of Correctional Services understands the system and by misrepresenting it he is obviously being mischievous. I refer to what has happened with this new system, and the member for Mitcham put his finger on it in the last two or three lines of an article quoted in the press, as did former Supreme Court Judge Chamberlain and a number of other people: the sentences imposed on offenders under this new system are longer than they were previously; the non-parole periods are longer than they were previously; and—

Mr Baker: Come on!

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: That is absolutely true, and the member for Mitcham has now put the lie to the arguments of his colleague. The sentences are longer and the non-parole periods are longer, because the courts determine how long a prisoner stays in prison as a result of his crime. Any criticism of the length of prison sentences is a direct criticism of the courts, not a criticism of the legislation or Parliament; so, if members opposite want to argue with our Supreme Court judges and other judges in South Australia, they can do that, but they are criticising the courts for the sentences they have imposed.

Here, we have given the prison system a tool to discipline the prisoners and to require a better performance in the prisons. I make one final point for the benefit of members opposite, because I do not believe that we should just run away and deal with one aspect of prisons. Prisons also have a rehabilitative function. Every prisoner in South Australia will come back into the community, and members opposite need to carefully consider whether they want prisoners to come out worse than they were when they went in; whether they want them to come out as bad as they were when they went in; or whether they want them to come out better than they were when they went in.

What members opposite want to do is ensure that all prisoners come out worse, so that they will inflict greater crimes on the community, creating a worse problem and putting our Police Force under greater stress. That is what members opposite want, because that is what they were doing when I became Minister.

I know that it is a difficult proposition to argue that any prison system in the world rehabilitates the prisoners, or the offender, but in South Australia in the early 1980s we had an 1860s prisons system, not in the way of buildings but in the training of our prison officers and in the implementation of the system itself within the prisons. What has taken place in South Australia, not before time, has brought the prison system in South Australia up to that operating in Western Australia, Victoria, New South Wales (in some respects) and Tasmania. The only other State in Australia that has a prison system as bad as ours was under the control of the previous Minister is Queensland, and I do not think that that is anything of which we should be proud.

An honourable member: A hundred years behind the times.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Yes. This motion is not a genuine motion: even its terms do not bear any relevance to the argument put forward by the honourable member, and I reject it totally.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The honourable gentleman's time has expired. The honourable member for Murray.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Murray): What an incredibly hypocritical performance from a sacked Minister of Correctional Services: the only Minister in this State who has had a motion of no confidence moved against him by prison officers. He stands up in a hypocritical manner; he is laughing about it now, and he laughed about it when he was in Opposition. He was prepared to throw rubbish left, right and centre while he was in Opposition. He was not prepared to put forward anything positive, and this is the situation we now have. It is also an incredible situation that the Premier is not even prepared to support the current Minister of Correctional Services. He is going to sit down and take this lightly. It shows how much importance he places on the problems that are being experienced—

The Hon. J.C. Bannon: I'm going to follow you.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I challenge the Premier to follow me and to indicate as the Leader of this Government what his Government is going to do about its policies. After all, the Premier is the person supposedly responsible for policy, so let us find out what he will do. The previous speaker has not touched on any of the subjects brought forward by the Opposition. He has rambled on about the pathetic parole legislation he brought in and he has given us a history lesson. He has said nothing about the matters of significance raised by the Leader, such as the matter of the woman being found in a prisoner's cell for three or four nights. What is happening about that? Is that just going to be glossed over because we do not worry about that sort of thing? The mere fact that she could get in under the fence and stay there for the night does not seem to worry the Government.

The Leader went into great detail about the need for appropriate strip searches to be carried out, but the Minister said not a word about that. If he wants to leave the Chamber or wander away, that is all right with me. I totally support the motion. Let us see what the Government will do about some of these things. It follows straight on from the outrageous behaviour of the current Minister of Correctional Services and the abuse that he exhibited in the Estimates Committee.

The Minister behaved outrageously. Initially, the Government did not want the Committee to sit. It expected that correctional services matters might be dealt with in half an hour. That is all the importance that the Minister placed on this matter. The Government did not think that there was anything that should be raised. Then, the Minister's private staff made available to Government members of the Committee dozens of Dorothy Dix questions, and the Minister filibustered the whole evening, not being prepared to produce information that was vitally needed by the members of the community so that they might know all about South Australian prisons. Today we have had another such example: the former Chief Secretary stood up, gave us no information, and just waffled. Obviously, the Government is interested only in fudging this portfolio. That is becoming more obvious day by day.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the community was greatly concerned about this Government's policy of peace at any price in our prisons. We have had many examples of that recently, and I shall refer to some of them. Prison officers, especially those at Yatala, are frustrated because their authority has been eroded and there is a lack of discipline. I do not know how many letters are being received by the Minister or by Government back-benchers at present from officers, officers' wives and others who are concerned about those who are working in our prisons, but I have received many. The wife of a senior prison officer wrote to me, as follows:

> It is true that the prisoners control the gaol. All discipline has broken down and they are given more and more privileges. If a prison officer is doing his job correctly (and by this I do not mean with brutality), certain prisoners will complain and the officer will be removed to a different job, out of the way.

That is just one of the many letters being received that indicate the frustrations and concerns being experienced by officers at Yatala. Yesterday, in reply to a question, the Premier indicated that he was concerned about what was happening in respect of drugs at Yatala, but what will he do about it? He has indicated that an investigation will be held, but I suggest that the community will not find out the results of that investigation. Whenever a matter of concern has arisen, Opposition members have asked that the report of an investigation be made public, but how often has that happened? How often must members on this side get up in this place and ask that certain matters be made public?

The former Chief Secretary had the gall to stand up and indicate that his Government equipped the Dog Squad, but I ask with what it equipped that squad—with dog muzzles? That is about all that his Government did in this respect. The previous Liberal Government (the Leader was the Minister at the time) established the Dog Squad, but now the squad is not being used: it is being abused at a time when we hear more and more about drug problems in that institution. There is a real need for the Dog Squad to be used and for appropriate searches to be carried out. No attention should be paid to statements by prisoners that they do not wish to be searched. The Government should take positive action to solve the problems that are being experienced in our prisons, especially at Yatala, as they relate to drugs.

As I understand it, up until 12 months ago it was possible for thorough strip searches to be carried out, but we are now in a situation where, if a prisoner refuses, it does not have to happen. I am referring to thorough searches, and the former Minister would know what I mean by that: he knows how most of these drugs are coming into the gaols. The prisoners who come out of contact visits are not undergoing thorough strip searches. It is one of the major problems that we have in regard to drugs and the way in which they are being brought into the gaols. What is the Government going to do? It is going to pussyfoot about and, provided that prisoners do not want it, the Government will certainly not make too much of a song and dance about that. It is the case with everything. This Government has been prepared to bow totally to the wishes and desires of the Prisoners Representative Committee and of the prisoners in general.

I recently received a copy of a report of the Prisoners Representative Committee. The report went out to all prison inmates at Yatala and, I presume, to other gaols as well. In part, the report states:

> This is a report from your elected representatives. We have deliberately not called a meeting for the past couple of weeks because, whilst our negotiations with the administration are continuing on quite a promising note, no real results have as yet been achieved. When dealing with a bureaucracy it is unfortunately necessary to be patient. But, as we have not encountered any deliberate stalling or any of the piggish negativism which used to be so evident in even the recent past, we propose to continue with our present approach for the time being. One of the features of our recent meetings is that certain subjects are no longer taboo—in other words everything is open to discussion and negotiation. This in itself is a big step forward.

That was stated by the Prisoners Representative Committee. The report further states:

> For the information of those many new arrivals who have come to this prison in the past few months, we feel it necessary to make these points: the comparatively (to Adelaide Gaol) civilised, hassle free existence we live here has not come about by accident, nor was it handed to us by a benign administration. It is the result of fire, sweat, blood and effort on the part of crims in this prison over the past two years.

That would indicate fairly clearly the open go that the prisoners are experiencing when they can place those comments in a report that is made available. No doubt exists that the prisoners are in control or about the pressure that is being experienced in prisons, particularly in Yatala.

The Opposition, on numerous occasions, has made clear that it opposes the parole legislation. We have given numerous examples to explain our concern, and the Leader has referred to some again today. How many more examples must we give and how much concern must be expressed by the community on safety and security within the community? How often do we have to bring up examples of abuse of the system being experienced as a result of the legislation that has been brought down by this Government?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: You are against parole?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: That is the sort of stupid statement that we would expect from the Government. Of

course we are not against parole. We had a parole system that was working very well indeed. The present Government has brought in a system that lends itself to more abuse and creates more concern in the community. I understand that concern. Although no Government member is interested, I assure the public of South Australia that the Liberal Party is concerned and that it intends to continue to remind the Government of its concerns.

The Leader referred to the information that is being provided. We have been told that there is a 7 per cent recidivism rate at the present time. I am sure that that is not right. I am sure that those who have been in gaol, been released and have committed offences (not necessarily the same offence, but any offence) and who return to gaol involve a recidivism rate much greater than 7 per cent. The former Minister would know that.

In the Estimates Committee, the present Minister tried to indicate that the Opposition was blaming the Government because it was not going to go ahead with the Mobilong Gaol. We were saying that there was a need for appropriate segregation. What do we hear about that? Mobilong Gaol has gone out the window. The main reason for that gaol was to improve the segregation at Yatala. I suppose that that, too, has gone out the window, because we could not get any information when the Minister was asked to comment on that situation.

What has happened about the Correctional Services Act? It was passed by this Parliament in 1982 and still has not been proclaimed. What did the Minister say about that? The Government will introduce amendments to the Act as and when it becomes necessary to do so. He went on to say, 'The Act will be proclaimed when practical to do so.' This Act was passed by this Parliament in 1982. The Minister said that there were still significant amounts of work to be done on the regulations. Those regulations were almost complete when the Liberal Party came out of Government at the end of 1983, and still the Government procrastinates.

Is it any wonder that there is confusion with the prison officers within the prison system in South Australia? Is it any wonder that they do not know what is happening? Is it any wonder that they express concern about red phones, for example, that were introduced by this Government, making it easier and easier for prisoners to get their own way?

We learn that the industrial complex is to be opened at last on 5 November, a complex that was completed during the term of the previous Government. I can tell the House that that will cause a lot of problems before it is officially opened. Concerning pornography, the Minister says that he has no overall policy; he is not interested in pornography in gaols. By gosh, the people in the community are certainly interested in it.

What is the Government doing about some of those matters? The public is concerned about the lack of action on the part of this Government with matters related to pornography in gaols, and that is only one matter. So we could go on. All these matters relate to the Yatala Gaol. It is no good the previous Minister just flicking over all these subjects—these are all matters that relate to Yatala Labour Prison.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable gentleman's time has expired. Before calling the next speaker, I would again comment that anyone who had not heard the original motion and who came into the House would assume that a comedy production of some sort was going on. The honourable member for Florey.

Mr GREGORY (Florey): I have listened with some amusement at our friends opposite who are baying like a pack of hounds and behaving like hounds—that is what they are doing. They are behaving like a pack of hounds with the same intelligence and ability as a pack of dogs who cannot find the rabbit. They do not know what they are talking about. The previous speaker said 'when the cottages were being searched', yet the Leader says that no-one ever went near the cottages or supervised them of an evening. There is a contradiction which illustrates that the mob opposite do not know what they are talking about.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: I did not say that at all.

Mr GREGORY: The facts are that at the cottages there are random checks throughout the night. There are three officers on duty: one is in the control room and two do random duty checks. They are the facts. The Leader says that no-one goes around and checks. The honourable member who previously spoke said that a woman was found there, yet my information is that a woman was not found there, despite the rumour. The mob opposite—and they are a mob in this matter—want merely to hang and flog people. They do not want to approach the imprisonment of offenders in our community in a proper and humane way. They know that our prison system does not comply with the United Nations charter for looking after prisoners; they know that the work being done at the moment is bringing it up to that level. When the current Leader was Chief Secretary he did not know, nor could he tell anyone, how many cells there were in the prison system available to take prisoners. He did not know. He has only been able to find that out in the past 12 months. They did not know. Members opposite said that prisoners do not want to be strip searched day and night. I should have thought that the Leader would know from his previous experience as Chief Secretary that if they are not searched or do not agree to a search they are immediately taken to the security and discipline division and are strip searched there. I thought that he would know that. However, he stands here and tries to mislead the House and the public of South Australia.

Comments made by members opposite about what is happening at Yatala were nonsense. Since the present Government regained control of the Treasury benches, a tremendous amount of work has been done on improving conditions at the prison and on securing the premises so that residents in nearby areas can feel secure in the evening, as well as in the daytime, and not have to suffer the traumatic experience that occurs when prisoners escape. In regard to Yatala Labour Prison, when the fence is finished and the security system has been installed, it will provide a greater measure of safety.

From 5 November prisoners will be required to work and, if they do not work, they will not be paid. That will be a fact of life. The previous Liberal Government, for the three years that it was in office, did nothing about the industries complex at Yatala; it was left to lie there to go mouldy and rusty. The previous Government even allowed a situation to exist where prisoners could get their friends outside to open up the place with oxy torches in order to let them out, after which they stayed out for some months. That is the sort of system that the previous Government ran. The previous Government took no action to obtain assistance and details of surveys from people who had experience in running secure prisons and who could provide designs and recommendations for a security system to make the place secure. It just bungled along.

In regard to industrial relations, under which Government did the three-week strike of the staff at Yatala occur? It was during the time of the previous Government. That occurred during that time because of the carry on out there. In regard to the shadow Minister's complaining about the Estimates Committee proceedings, I was amazed at the sort of approach that was taken in the Estimates Committee. When members opposite were in Government one could not shut them up: they asked questions all the time. However, as soon as they

are in Opposition they complain if a Government member asks one question. The member opposite had the opportunity to ask as many questions as he was entitled to do, and he should not complain about that. Regarding the correctional services legislation, the shadow Minister made great play about the previous Government's having enacted the Act and having the regulations finished. However, the facts are that when those regulations were examined by the Crown Law Department they were found to be wanting, and the Act could not be implemented. The Government is placed in a position of having to amend the Act, and it must do that so that it can implement the regulations. That shows the incompetence of members opposite on prison matters. They are not interested in the welfare of prisoners: all they are interested in is a little bit of publicity—they could not care less. They took no action to lift the standard of prison accommodation to the minimum level stipulated by the United Nations. No action whatsoever was taken.

Members interjecting:

Mr GREGORY: I should imagine that one of the questions of security at Yatala could be measured on the basis of the ratio between prison officers and prisoners.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The discussion between the Leaders is totally out of order.

Mr Olsen: The Premier's silence is an admission of guilt.

Mr GREGORY: There is an old saying that an empty barrel makes a lot of noise, and you sound like one at the moment. I am surprised that Opposition members can hear me; they are making so much noise. The ratio of prison officers to prisoners has increased, and this is bringing about a greater measure of security. Great play was made of the use of dogs for drug detection in the cells of Yatala Labour Prison. I want to read to the House a report on what is happening with dogs at Yatala. They are trained to detect marihuana-based drugs; they can all detect home brew, and three of the dogs have been trained to detect heroin.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

Mr GREGORY: The honourable member may well laugh, but the production of home brew was at its height when he was the Minister responsible, and it caused most of the problems out there. I continue to quote:

> Prison dogs are used for cell searching at the request of the head of the institution or his delegate, under the strict guidelines of departmental instruction No. 21.
>
> Prior to April 1984 prison dogs were used for cell searching within B, D and S Divisions at Yatala Labour Prison, with success.
>
> From the time of the mass escape from the compound exercise yards, the management of the institution has been severely restricted on the placement of prisoners during daylight hours. The exercise yard could not be used for some time while added security precautions were erected. The long inclement winter forced management to allow prisoners to remain in the cell block or assembly hall. This placement of prisoners restricted the access to the buildings by the dog handlers and dogs.
>
> In answer to queries raised by yourself on receipt of the monthly Dog Squad Report in June re lack of cell searching by dogs in Yatala Labour Prison, I discussed the matter of cell searching with the Manager, Mr L. Ellickson; he was unaware that cell searching was not carried out since 16 April 1984 and assured me that this matter would be rectified.
>
> A number of arrangements were made with the officer in charge of the Dog Squad to carry out searches within cells; unfortunately all of these arrangements were cancelled owing to other incidents involving prisoners within the institution.
>
> After the opening of the workshop complex the cell block will be cleared of prisoners allowing the Dog Squad to carry out their searching and detecting duties as per departmental instruction No. 21.
>
> Dogs are not used to provoke prisoners or in any way become the catalyst in a prisoner situation.

The Inspector, Establishments, enclosed instruction No. 21. That illustrates what is happening and puts the lie to the accusations made by the Leader and the shadow spokesman on this matter. One of the matters mentioned with great delight was that there is no longer a fire officer at Yatala and that when nine fire engines turned up nobody knew what to do. I was surprised that the former Chief Secretary should bother to raise such a matter, because that shows his own incompetence as a manager. In a management situation, he should know as well as anyone else that one should ensure that people know what other people's jobs are so that if they are not there these jobs can be implemented.

It is folly to have one person solely responsible for fire matters, because that person cannot be there all the time. Even if people were intended to be there all the time, they might be ill and not available. The current training programme at Yatala will ensure that other prison officers know what to do in case of fire, and it will not be a matter simply of relying on one man.

For the first time, a training programme is proceeding for people inducted into the service, thereby providing a career structure for them. That is what is happening there at the moment, and it just illustrates how incompetent members opposite are. A point was also made by the shadow spokesman about the parole legislation and how prisoners are benefiting by it. I do not know what contact he has with prisoners, but my advice is that prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment under the previous parole system are fearful of the new parole system. They will not go to the Supreme Court to get a non-parole period, because they are frightened that they will get too much. They preferred the old system, because they could get out earlier. Members opposite know that and we know it. It amazes me that they can sit over there making such a song and dance about an Act that they criticised from the time it was brought into this Parliament and then, when the figures are shown to them, they say they are not true.

The figures show that the parole system is working. They show that the legislation does treat people with some compassion and that it is working, but because it is working members opposite turn around and say that it is not. One has to believe some figures. If members opposite want to adopt a very harsh and unrealistic attitude towards the treatment of prisoners which is not in keeping with international standards, they should say so: do not go hiding behind the cloak of respectability, at the same time wanting to be harsh in dealing with people and treating them without dignity.

One of the things that really amazed me about the Leader was his opening remarks. He went back to 1972 and pinched the ALP slogan, which worked reasonably well at that time and which has not worked that well since. Once it was used it became stale, and it just shows how members opposite are bereft of ideas when they have to go back to 1972 and pick up the ALP's campaign slogan, 'It's time'. They then tried to make out that our Government has turned a blind eye to what is happening in prisons.

Our Government's actions illustrate that we have not turned a blind eye. There have been the Swink Report into the management of the prison, recommendations on how security ought to be increased, and the decision to re-examine the situation of the prison to be built in the Murray area because of surplus cells at Yatala. The shadow Minister knew that from responses from the Minister when he was asked questions about what would happen to the security hospital and the infirmary, and it was made quite clear to him that those facilities would soon become available for maximum security prisoners and that consequently other areas would be available for minimum security prisoners.

That is what we are going to do, and the honourable member knows, but he just was not smart enough to pick it up when the Minister was responding to the questions he

was asked. He knows that there is plenty of room out there, as there will be, particularly when the security hospital is built at Hillcrest, for the proper treatment of the people concerned.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): What an extraordinary performance by the Government in answer to a serious matter that the Opposition has put to this House. The Premier does not even rise in the defence of his Government or his sacked Minister. We know why: we would have got precisely what we got yesterday—no action: 'The Roxby protesters are bad lads; they are doing a lot of harm up there; they are hurting the residents.' What are we going to do about it? Nothing! He thinks that things in the prisons are all right: he is blind. What will he do? He will do precisely nothing. What have we had today—one sacked Minister and one obscure backbencher who hardly opens his mouth in this place, dealing with a serious matter about the security of the public and the operation of our prison system, and the Premier will not even get to his feet. What was the record of the Government's chief spokesman today when he was Minister? What was his record in Opposition and in Government? In Opposition he led the most disgraceful attack by the then Opposition on the former Minister and Chief Secretary, Allan Rodda.

Mr Olsen: That's why he was sacked.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader not to test my patience.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: He led a most disgraceful attack on a Liberal Government that was doing something positive about the security in the prison system. What did the Liberal Government do?

Ms Lenehan: Nothing.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Let the dear lady who has just come into the place listen: she might learn. There were complaints about the staffing: the former Minister and the Government, at a time when finance was tight, put on 41 extra prison officers. We established the Dog Squad, which the present Government now will not use. We set it up specifically to sniff out drugs. The present Government is too scared to use them because the prisoners might complain.

We set up a comprehensive and expensive electronic surveillance system in our prisons, because there had been some escapes. The former Labor Government got rid of the guards in the towers—that was too onerous—and we put guards back in the towers. What did we get from this sacked Minister? He was so bad he had to be sacked, and that is almost unheard of in a Labor Government. He was so bad that he was fired, and the Government had to put one of the heavies in. What is his record? What has happened at the prison would make Guy Fawkes look like Little Bo Peep. Every time the prisoners were dissatisfied they would burn the place down, and the Minister sat here twiddling his thumbs and would not even let the fire brigade in. What sort of spokesman is this to put up in defence of the appalling record of this Government?

The Government thinks that everything in the garden is rosy—there is no problem. Suddenly last week a prisoner got an overdose of heroin—in the prison, where there is supposed to be secure containment of people who have offended against society. The Government will not even institute effective search. When the Prisoners Action Group was set up, they said, 'Do what we want or we'll burn the place down.' What do we get from the Government? Peace at any price—Neville Chamberlain revisited. The prisoners say that they will burn the place down (they have done it, anyway), so the Government says, 'We can't search them; we'll give them notice.' How stupid can a Government get but, furthermore, how pathetically weak can a Government get? Can any member of the public, any thinking person, imagine a prison where, if it is necessary to search for drugs, weapons or all the things that prisoners might have illegally, notice has to be given? How much notice has to be given? A prisoner cannot even be searched and this Government thinks that there is nothing wrong with that and it is instituting all sorts of reforms.

Mr Hamilton: Oh!

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The honourable member might yawn: that is about the level of his intelligence. It is a wonder the Government did not put him up. Instead of him, they put up the second most obscure member; if they had put him up they would really have been scraping the bottom of the barrel. Does this Government believe there is nothing wrong when in a section of the prison a woman crawls under the fence night after night? Patrols have been cut out after midnight. The poor old member for Florey was so bad at reading the notes or was so ill-informed, that he did not know they had cut out patrols after midnight. Here is a Government that does not even take this seriously enough or is so embarrassed at its Premier that it puts up this pathetic defence of what is a serious problem worrying the public.

If the Government members do not believe that the public is concerned about these matters—about the fact that a prisoner has such access to drugs that he can get an overdose in prison, that in fact drug abuse is rife in prisons, and that people convicted of the most serious crimes of violence in society, including rape, are being put in prison for nominal terms of some considerable length but are getting out after only a few months, they are walking around with their eyes shut. If they are suggesting that the public is happy with the parole system, let them talk to the judges. We have even had a judge going on record and saying that he does not know what it is all about. If judges do not understand what is going on with the parole laws, they are at last realising—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It is on the public record. If the sacked Minister does not understand, he does not read the newspapers. Let the sacked Minister read the newspapers. The fact is that a judge is on the public record as saying, 'What is this Government all about? I don't understand these laws.' They are understanding now: they have to sentence convicted persons to almost a life sentence to get them six months in gaol. That is the way these parole laws are working.

I think it has been an appalling performance today by the Government on a matter which is probably worrying the public as much as any other area—the security of the citizens of this State and what happens within this prison system in relation to their security: that is, the security of the public is at risk if the security within that prison system is not adequate and satisfactory.

The SPEAKER: Order! The time allotted for the motion has expired.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MEMBER'S REMARKS

Mr KLUNDER (Newland): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr KLUNDER: I claim to have been misrepresented by the member for Davenport in a speech last evening in this

House dealing with the extension of Quarry Road, which is partly in my district. He made two sets of claims in that speech. The first was that I was made aware by the Crest View Residents Action Group of their situation in November 1983; that I promised to provide a response in 1984 which supposedly did not eventuate; that the action group did not get a response from the Minister until July 1984; and, further, that I played a delaying tactic of some kind and that they had to chase me continually to get any response.

This claim is totally incorrect in all but one minor detail. A spokesman for the action group did see me in November 1983 and gave me a copy of a technical submission which the group itself was going to take up with the Highways Department. He stressed that he was coming to see me merely to put me in the picture and that he did not want me, for the time being at least, to deal with this issue as they had an engineer on that committee, and they were hopeful that their discussions with the Highways Department might effectively ameliorate the situation.

On 17 February that person returned to my office with a new submission and asked me to write a letter supporting the new submission, not the old one, to the Commissioner of Highways. We discussed the matter, and my notes on the discussion indicate that he would get some information from the Salisbury Town Planner and that I would write a supporting letter once he had come back to me with the information from the Salisbury council. On 28 February I wrote not only to the Commissioner of Highways but also to the Town Clerks of Salisbury and Tea Tree Gully. I quote from my letter to the Commissioner of Highways, as follows:

I have been approached by a group of people living in Crest View who will be affected by the construction of the Quarry Road connector. They have suggested a minor lateral displacement of the road to ameliorate the impact on their environment. I am of course not able to give an assessment of the technical merit of their proposal but it has the earmarks of a well thought out and well documented statement. I understand that they have approached the Department and that discussions have taken place. Enclosed is a statement by the group. I support wholeheartedly the sensible way in which they have gone about trying to improve their situation, and I hope that you will be able to take into consideration their views when defining your attitude to the situation.

Similar letters were sent out to the two councils. I had responses from both councils in March and from the Minister of Transport on 30 March. In his letter, the Minister of Transport stated in part:

The Highways Department is currently assessing all responses received following public display of this first stage of the Quarry Road proposal including the submission received from the Crest View Residents Action Group. Completion of this assessment is anticipated in the near future at which time the proposal will be presented to me for endorsement prior to relevant advice being conveyed to the Corporations of Salisbury and Tea Tree Gully and those groups and individuals who made submissions.

This letter was sent to the action group on 6 April, and in the accompanying letter I also asked whether the action group had a copy of the Tea Tree Gully council submission which the council had given to me and which they had given me permission to pass on. I had an immediate and delighted response to this offer, and a couple of days later that submission was picked up from my office. In July the Minister wrote directly to the action group to indicate that he could not accept their views.

They then asked me to arrange a deputation to see the Minister, and we met with the Minister on 21 August. In the meantime I contacted the Highways Department officers, with the Minister's permission, so that I could get myself briefed on the situation from the point of view of the Highways Department, and I met with those officers on 27 July.

The meeting on 21 August was not satisfactory as far as the Crest View group was concerned, and they requested at the meeting a letter from the Minister stating his final decision. One of the members of that group has since contacted me a couple of times to ask me to hurry up the Minister's response, and I in fact on three occasions contacted the Minister's officers to ask that that response be hurried up, and they now have that response. I did indicate to them prior to the receipt of that letter that I believed it would be very difficult for the Minister to go back to Cabinet and ask for another half a million dollars, and that is part of my normal response to constituents—that I tell them what I believe to be the truth even if it is something they would rather not hear.

The second accusation by the member for Davenport is that I could not 'care a damn', to use his words, because the area would not be in my district at the time of the next election.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable gentleman will need leave to continue his remarks.

Mr KLUNDER: I seek leave, Sir.

Leave granted.

Mr KLUNDER: I thank honourable members. I will not take too much more time. I completely reject that statement. I was elected by the people of Newland, and I work and will continue to work for the people in my district until the next election. I honour my obligations.

Finally, the member for Davenport in his speech last evening guaranteed that I would not be willing to have a four-lane divided highway built within 73 m of my home. He repeated that statement twice, saying that he guaranteed that I would not be willing to put up with such a highway. However, about five years ago, a four-lane highway was built only 50 m from my home, and I have recently moved into a house that has a four-lane divided highway running only 15 m from the front gate. So much for the guarantees given by the honourable member.

The SPEAKER: Order! Call on the business of the day.

HOUSE NUMBERS

Mr BAKER (Mitcham): I move:

That this House urge the Government to encourage local government councils to develop a comprehensive programme aimed at clear display by householders of house numbers for all metropolitan and urban allotments.

I have pleasure in moving this motion, which in many ways is a matter of housekeeping. It is a matter of common sense that all houses and business premises should have their numbers displayed clearly. Often at night, when I visit constituents who have requested my help, I have trouble in finding their homes. In fact, even during the day it is often difficult to locate a house in certain streets.

Mr Becker: It's bad out your way, but not in my district.

Mr BAKER: Perhaps you have a council that pays attention to house numbering. There may be non-continuous numbering, or the use of 'a' and 'b', for houses in the street, but the number has not been put on a house or on its gate, or it may have been put on but has fallen off. People in Adelaide, or in the country for that matter, should not have to put up with the inconvenience that is caused by the failure to place appropriate signs on private or business premises. While I was living at Bellevue Heights, people often knocked on the door of my home asking the whereabouts of No. 4 or No. 6 because they could not find the house numbers.

It is a matter of common courtesy for all house owners and business proprietors to see that their houses or business

premises are numbered satisfactorily. Indeed, numbers should be placed in such a way as to be reasonably distinguishable at night. That may not be practicable in the short term, but it probably is in the long term. Such numbering could help all sorts of people: the postman who delivers the letters; the tradesmen who must visit the premises; and friends and acquaintances of the householder who are trying to find a house at night. It is a matter of common sense, and reforms are long overdue in this area.

We can give practical help in certain ways. I suggest that the Minister of Local Government write to the Local Government Association and perhaps to all councils to ask them to campaign in their areas to bring the responsibility of satisfactory numbering of houses to the attention of ratepayers. Then, if such a campaign does not have the desired effect, I would like to see action taken, such as the withdrawal of rubbish collection and postal delivery, until the householder exercises common decency by placing a number on the fence to show other people what is the correct number of the house. Such action would help the whole community.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER secured the adjournment of the debate.

ALICE SPRINGS TO DARWIN RAILWAY

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Federal Government be severely condemned for its failure to honour the undertaking the Prime Minister made prior to the Federal election to proceed with the Alice Springs to Darwin railway line as promised by the Fraser Government.

The proposed railway line from Alice Springs to Darwin is one of the most important projects that has been prevented by the Hawke Government from being implemented. Members should be clear on the economic significance of this project to South Australia, to Australia as a whole, and especially to the Iron Triangle. The Federal Minister for Transport in a letter stated:

The project's potential to generate economic activity and employment in your area is fully recognised. Such generation would include the production at BHP's Whyalla plant of 156 000 tonnes of rail over six years at 25 000 tonnes a year. This rail production would represent about 2.5 per cent of the annual steel production. The project would also require the manufacture of some 2.25 million sleepers either at the existing plant within the Triangle or at a new plant in the Northern Territory.

In view of the depressed state at present of the Stirling North plant, surely those sleepers would be produced in the Port Augusta area. The history of the proposal to construct a railway from Alice Springs to Darwin is well known, but I will refresh the memory of honourable members. This matter has been discussed for many years, and I believe that it is to the credit of the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory (Mr Everingham), who will be the next Federal member for the Northern Territory, that he obtained the ultimate approval from the Fraser Government for this project to proceed. In early 1980, Mr Everingham wrote the following letter to all members:

North-South Transcontinental Railway

Fellow Australian,

I would like to bring you up to date with progress on the proposal to finally complete the transcontinental railway from Adelaide to Darwin. As you may be aware, construction of this railway began in 1878, but by 1929 the southern link extended only as far as Alice Springs, and the northern link went 450 km from Darwin to Larrimah, leaving a gap of 900 km in the middle of the northern half of our continent. And that is where construction stopped.

The Federal Government closed the Darwin-Larrimah section of the line in 1976, a closure which must be counted as a loss to the Northern Territory and the entire nation. This is despite a clause in the Northern Territory Acceptance Act of 1910 which states that on transfer of the Territory from South Australia to the Commonwealth, the Federal Government would . . . 'construct or cause to be constructed a railway line from Port Darwin southwards to a point on the northern boundary of South Australia proper'. In a statement issued almost 70 years ago, in March 1913, the Department of External Affairs said . . . 'The Government is confident of an immediate commencement with the construction of this important developmental and strategic national work'.

That statement still holds true today. In fact, if that work of national importance had been carried out 70 years ago, South Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory would be a lot better off today.

People and development have historically followed railway lines. In South Australia's case, the extension of the railway from Alice Springs to Darwin would create thousands of jobs and inject tens of millions of dollars into the State's economy. A conservative estimate has put the trading loss to South Australia caused by the lack of adequate transport links to the Northern Territory at $70 million a year. A railway feeding locally manufactured goods all the way to Darwin and returning cargo originating from South East Asia and land across Darwin wharf would turn that figure from a straight loss to a substantially higher trading figure.

Initial surveys for the completion of the transcontinental railway have now been carried out, the project has been costed at approximately $380 million, and its cargo connection with the vast markets of Asia, the land-backed wharf in Darwin Harbour, is under construction. This Federal Government seems to be prepared to honour the promise of 1910. Last year, Mr Keith Smith, the Chairman of Australian National Railways, said the undertaking of the biggest railway development in this country in more than 60 years made sense, but it would need, 'A national act of faith.' I seek your support at this time, when that act of faith can at last turn the century-old dream of Northern development into practical reality.

It was signed by Paul Everingham. I replied to that letter, and on 11 October I received the following response:

Dear Mr Gunn,

You will be aware that the Commonwealth Government has now announced its commitment to proceed with the Darwin to Alice Springs railway, with a target for completion of the line within 10 years. This is perhaps the most important decision for the Territory since self-government. It is certainly a decision which will be enthusiastically received by all Territorians. I believe the railway will be vital in consolidating the Territory's growth and development and in allowing us to build for the future.

There are many people who have contributed to the successful campaign to win the railway. The campaign has been successful because people have generously shared their time and energies. I am grateful for your contribution to that effort and I want to express my appreciation, and the appreciation of my Government, for your support and assistance. The strength of our campaign was its enthusiasm. I am gratified to have been a part of it, and to have had the benefit of such willing and effective support.

Please accept my very sincere thanks for the part you played.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Everingham

We recall the 1982 election campaign, when the now Prime Minister went on talk-back radio in the Iron Triangle and promised to proceed with that proposal at the rate planned by the then Fraser Government. Upon assuming Government he immediately began to back pedal and set up a committee headed by Mr Hill from the New South Wales Transport Commission. It was quite obvious from the time he was appointed that he would be looking for an out for the Commonwealth Government. Unfortunately, it then decided to make an offer to the Northern Territory which it knew would be unacceptable. The offer, as you would well know, Mr Deputy Speaker, was in the following terms:

The Commonwealth is prepared to construct the Alice Springs to Darwin railway on the basis that the Commonwealth met 60 per cent of construction costs and the Northern Territory Government met 40 per cent of construction costs. Part of the Commonwealth's contribution would be met by the transfer of some $60 million from existing roads programmes which would otherwise have been spent on the upgrading of the Stuart Highway between Alice Springs and Darwin. Construction of the railway was to be based on a more realistic completion date of 1992.

Alternatively, should the Northern Territory decide not to contribute to the construction of the railway, the Prime Minister stated that the Commonwealth would ensure the Stuart Highway between Alice Springs and Darwin would be upgraded by 1987 to a higher standard all weather road than had been planned by the previous Government. Furthermore, the existing rail services

to Alice Springs would be upgraded by extending the line to provide cattle loading facilities north of Alice Springs, and providing improved rolling stock and loading facilities for the 'piggy back' services. These road and rail commitments require the Commonwealth to provide additional grants of $50 million in the period to 1987 on top of the $82 million already programmed for the highway.

That was quite unacceptable and the Commonwealth knew, at the time of making that offer, that the Northern Territory would not accept it because it had been promised otherwise. The Commonwealth had a commitment and an obligation on moral and all other grounds to complete the railway line in the interest of every person in the Commonwealth. It is an absolute disgrace that the Prime Minister and his Government would go back on a solemn undertaking. He has let down the people of the Northern Territory and South Australia. There is no common sense, logic or justice in the decision. I could go on at great length—I have reams of paper that I could read and cite comments supporting the motion I have before the House.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: You've even got your Northern Territory tie on.

Mr GUNN: I will deal with the Minister next week. I shall be looking forward to a response from him on this occasion and on a number of other matters on which he has been silent over the past few weeks. I will be issuing challenges next week to allow the Parliament to properly debate these issues. The Liberal Party has a clear policy in relation to this matter. I refer to a press statement issued by the Leader of the Opposition on 2 October 1983. It is headed 'Liberal Party endorses full Commonwealth funding for Alice Springs to Darwin railway', and states:

The Federal Council of the Liberal Party has unanimously supported a motion calling for full Commonwealth funding for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway. The motion was proposed by the South Australian Division of the Liberal Party and moved at this weekend's annual meeting of the Federal Council by the Liberal Leader, Mr John Olsen. Mr Olsen said he had received a commitment from Mr Peacock that a Federal Liberal Government would reverse Mr Hawke's decision requiring the Northern Territory Government to provide 40 per cent of the cost of the project.

The Liberal Party has recognised this railway as a project which will fulfil national needs and provide national benefits, Mr Olsen said ... 'It will also immediately generate 2 000 jobs in South Australia ...'

The current Commonwealth Government has provided millions of dollars in unemployment schemes across this nation. Yet, when it is called upon to provide funds which would create hundreds of jobs during the construction of this massive project and which would provide hundreds of jobs on a permanent basis at Whyalla, Stirling North and in operating and maintaining that line, it has singularly been found wanting. I cannot understand the logic behind the Government's thinking. When one looks at this proposal and is aware of the terrain and distances, one would know that the railways can effectively handle large tonnages carried over long distances. Rail cannot compete on short hauls with road transport. Here we have the perfect opportunity to create in Darwin the container terminal for Australia. I do not think I need to say a great deal more, and seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

DEREGULATION UNIT

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That the Premier immediately re-establish the Deregulation Unit in the Premier's Department and that the Unit immediately examine all Acts of Parliament, regulations, permits and licences with a view to reducing unnecessary Acts, regulations and controls and rationalising legislation.

I moved this motion during the last session and received a considered reply from the Premier. Unfortunately, the reply did not deal with the substance of the motion, and did not give adequate assurance that this most important area of administration would be tackled in an effective manner. It is absolutely clear to all thinking members of this House that an urgent need exists to bring into the Parliament legislation to set up immediately a Parliamentary committee to examine all statutory authorities. An attempt was made to do so by the Tonkin Government but, unfortunately, it was not carried into law. Such legislation should be brought back immediately to the Parliament and passed so that that area of deregulation can be tackled quickly.

The effectiveness of the Public Accounts Committee amply demonstrates the need for the Parliament to address the area of deregulation in a serious and effective manner. All honourable members would be sick and tired of receiving complaints from people who have been fooled around with red tape and humbug. Far too many licences are required, far too many forms have to be filled out, far too many permits are issued, and there are far too many Government authorities that are no longer required, in my view.

The experience of the Tonkin Government's deregulation unit clearly demonstrates to the House and to the people of this State how valuable an organisation of that nature was when it allowed the Minister of Agriculture to get rid of about 80 unnecessary boards or committees and 32 Acts of Parliament. That was the start, or the tip of the iceberg.

I therefore commend this motion to the House. This Government has not acted as quickly or effectively as it should in this area. I could go on at great length and bring to the attention of the House examples of this, but that was done on a previous occasion. However, I look forward to an adequate response from the Government in this matter because we appear to be passing more legislation.

As a member of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, I see piles of regulations being approved every week. Unfortunately, little or nothing is being done to get rid of redundant regulations and Acts of Parliaments that are no longer required. In my judgment, we are over regulated and over controlled with too much paper being circulated in our community. The time is ripe to strike and strike quickly and effectively. I, therefore, commend the motion to the House and I hope that honourable members will give it due attention and that the Government will act accordingly.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTRICITY TARIFFS

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That in the opinion of the House all citizens of South Australia who are connected to the Electricity Trust grid system, electricity undertakings managed by district councils or corporations and those undertakings operated by the Outback Areas Development Trust be charged on the same basis and that the 10 per cent surcharge which applies in certain areas be abolished and those undertakings operated by the Outback Areas Development Trust which charge at a greater rate than any other country area be placed on the same charging schedule as metropolitan Adelaide.

Unfortunately, this motion appears to be a hardy annual. I have attempted for a considerable time to see justice prevail for those people who live in certain isolated parts of the State and on the Upper Eyre Peninsula. Unfortunately, I have received only marginal support. Recently, I led a deputation from the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association to meet the Minister of Mines and Energy. The submission, headed 'The electricity surcharge—a burden of

isolation', related to the abolition of the surcharge applied to consumers of electricity reticulated by local government.

The Hon. R.G. Payne: A well informed delegation.

Mr GUNN: Yes, as the Minister says, it was a well informed delegation. It put forward, in my judgment, a most convincing case to the Minister and his assistant. The Minister was courteous, and I hope that in due course he will respond in some detail to this debate. On the last occasion, we ran out of time. I have therefore endeavoured to get it on the Notice Paper so that there will be plenty of time to consider this matter.

The Hon. R.G. Payne: They were pretty dedicated and determined, too.

Mr GUNN: The deputation was determined. Those people cannot understand why the current anomaly is allowed to continue. The deputation pointed out to the Minister that there are cases where adjoining neighbours pay differing rates because one person is connected by the Electricity Trust and one is connected or serviced by the local council which purchases electricity from the Electricity Trust. Power lines run through the area. People at Whyalla and at Port Lincoln do not pay a 10 per cent surcharge but those whose areas the high voltage mains pass through do pay it. The submission states:

Because of their distance from earlier settled parts of the State, areas of Eyre Peninsula were not immediately benefited by State Authority electricity distribution schemes.

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

Having personally lived under those conditions I do understand the situation. Under the heading 'Anomalies', the submission states:

1. Other areas within the State, nearer earlier settlement, but of similar population density, are served by the Electricity Trust of South Australia, and are benefited by Trust pricing arrangements.

2. It is probable that had local government not been forced to take the initiative to provide for their communities, many would now be, or would soon be, connected to an extended Trust scheme, and enjoy Trust pricing.

Because those areas were not connected by the Trust, people set about to provide electricity and have their own generating capacity. The submission continues:

3. Many people, divided from their neighbour by a council boundary, pay 10 per cent more than their neighbour.

4. At Cleve, from where the power lines travel a further 140 kilometres to serve Port Lincoln, the cost of electricity is 10 per cent more than at that city, despite the additional capital and maintenance costs associated with the additional distance of line.

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

It is understood that an additional income of $390 000 to ETSA would be sufficient to eliminate the 10 per cent surcharge applied to affected consumers. It is suggested that the surcharge be abolished and the amount be recouped through an adjusting increase in electricity charges to all Trust consumers in the State.

Based on Trust figures for the financial year ending 30 June 1983, with electricity sales of $417 million to 575 300 consumers, it would cost each consumer only 68c per annum to bring about equalisation. The increase proposed is insignificant when compared with the increases applied to all State consumers by the Trust during the 18-month period, from 1 May 1982 to 1 November 1983, when rises totalled 39.42 per cent.

Under the heading 'Summary', the submission continues:

The pricing structure adopted by other public utilities acknowledge and accept the humane policy 'that the burden of isolation must be borne by all'. Telecom Australia, Australia Post and others, acknowledge in this policy that the contribution to the nation and State by the isolated warrants compensation by all users of their services.

It is respectfully submitted that a substantial contribution is made to both the national and State Treasuries by the communities disadvantaged by this electricity surcharge and, therefore, if for no other reason, they deserve application of a similar policy in respect to the provision of electricity.

Basically that was the submission that was put forward.

I wish to give one or two other examples concerning the other part of my motion dealing with the problems experienced in other isolated parts of the State. I draw to the attention of the House some correspondence which I have received on that matter. The Minister did make a slight adjustment. However, I quote from a copy of a letter written to the Minister on 25 March 1983 by the Executive Officer of the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association, a copy of which I received. It states:

Dear Minister,

The Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association Inc. is very concerned at the present tariff levels for electricity charges in Coober Pedy.

The Association believes that the quarterly cost to domestic consumers has risen to such an extent that many people in the town will experience financial difficulties in meeting their electricity bills.

I enclose a copy of a power bill of Mr . . . For a 91 day period his total bill was $493.88. Mr . . . also maintains that he and his family were away from Coober Pedy for 25 days during this period. Many other consumers have power bills of this order.

The Association believes that the tariff subsidy should be extended for a greater number of kilowatt hours. I have listed below the present prices and suggested ones for 4 100 KWHS.

At present, only 2 000 receive significant subsidy at about 7.5c a KWHR. The Association contends that for a normal household approximately 4 000 KWHS is not an unusually high consumption rate per quarter. This on our suggested tariff would cost approximately $300. What must be remembered is that a large number of dwellings at Coober Pedy are above ground and that during the summer high temperature extremes necessitate non-stop running of air-conditioners. The Association requests the Minister to view this subsidy as a matter of urgency.

A copy of the letter was forwarded to me and copies were also sent to the Hon. P. Duncan and the Outback Areas Community Development Trust. The present rates of charging and the suggested rates of charging are listed. As this information is of a statistical nature, I seek leave to have the table inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

TARIFFS

Present			Suggested Prices		
KWHS/ Step	Rate	Amount	KWHS/ Step	Rate	Amount
		$			$
80	15.04	12.03	80	15.04	12.03
220	9.27	20.39	4 000	7.00	280.00
1 000	7.16	71.69			
1 000	7.84	78.40	then	13.00	
1 000	11.10	111.00			
Then	13.00	104.00			
4 100		$397.51	4 080		$292.03

Mr GUNN: I have a number of other documents that I could incorporate in *Hansard*. I think that the Minister is fully aware of the concerns that I have expressed over a long period of time, and I do not think that my argument will be assisted by providing any more details. I think I have made the matter abundantly clear. The Minister was kind enough to give this matter his consideration. He has moved some of the way—I recognise that. He told me last night that he would extend the electricity supply to a very isolated part of my electorate, and I appreciate that. I also appreciate the decision of the previous Ministers to approve the supply of electricity to Penong. I know that that will involve a yearly loss of about $80 000. However, it must be remembered that people in such areas are South Australian citizens and that they are entitled to the provision of reasonable facilities.

It must also be remembered that many of those people who are being charged the extra amounts have had to make hefty capital contributions towards getting the electricity connected. After the lines are purchased, they become the

property of the authority: they do not belong to the individual. Over a period of time one must pay many thousands of dollars by way of a standing charge. Most people would not disagree with that, because they would recognise that being hooked into a properly organised grid system is the most effective and efficient way of receiving electricity. There is no argument about that. However, I make the point that many people pay thousands of dollars to have electricity connected to their homes. Therefore, I believe that they are entitled to be charged at the same rate as those living in metropolitan Adelaide and the majority of people in South Australia. It is difficult to understand why people living in certain areas continue to be discriminated against. On a previous occasion I have referred to what has taken place at Marree and in other parts of the State. I received a reply from the Minister today about ETSA country subsidies, and I have been advised as follows:

Final accounts for electricity undertakings on the West Coast are not yet available for 1983-84. However, based on 1982-83 figures the cost to the Treasury of increasing the subsidy a further 10 per cent would be $390 000 per annum.

We accept that the proposition put forward by the deputation clearly gives the Government the answer on how to overcome that problem. But, again, I must remind the House that in talking about subsidies we must also bear in mind the massive subsidy that all taxpayers of this State pay towards the metropolitan transport system—some $70 million or $80 million at least. I think on some calculations the figure has been estimated at nearly $100 million. The sum of $100 million-odd can be found shortly to provide funds for the building of the O-Bahn bus service (although that will certainly benefit people in the north-eastern suburbs). The money can be found for that, as can $5.8 million to subsidise the Festival Centre. Also, within a few days the Premier could find over $3 million to fix up the problem that had occurred in relation to the Festival Centre Plaza. Moreover, subsidies are provided to the Jam Factory and to the State Opera. I could go on at great length citing these examples.

I want to again emphasise that the people in country areas are involved in industries that are providing export income for this nation, and they are entitled to some reasonable contribution from the State Government. I commend the motion to the House. I hope that next week the Minister will reply in some detail to it. I look forward to his response, and I sincerely hope that in the relatively near future people in the areas involved can be provided with a fair and reasonable charging system for electricity.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE secured the adjournment of the debate.

SIGNPOSTING

Mr BAKER (Mitcham): I move:

That, as part of the preparation for the sesquicentenary celebrations, a State campaign be organised in conjunction with all local government councils to implement a programme of clear and appropriate signposting of all highways, streets and roads by 1986.

On my return to Adelaide from overseas, I became aware of the inadequacy of signposting in South Australia. Before I was elected to this House I had been overseas twice. On the first occasion I went to Europe, including England, a number of Western European countries, as well as some of the Communist bloc countries. Some two years later I went to America. On both occasions I had the opportunity to travel in a car and to find my way around the English countryside and the American cities, and I did so with a great deal of ease and with very little difficulty. One of the reasons for that was that the signposting in many of the countries was adequate. In fact, it added to the flavour of the cities that I visited. I can well remember the signs in San Francisco, with their particular lettering, and I can remember the signposting in England and in London in particular. A great deal of artistry was involved with those signs, and they provided clear directions. When travelling on a freeway or a major motorway, one is adequately warned some one or two kilometres beforehand of an approaching major turn-off and of destinations that can be reached.

On returning to Adelaide, I was aware of the stark contrast in the way in which we assist our residents and visitors to find their way around. This is not the case only in Adelaide: this is also reflected in most of our country centres and in many of the places that we class as tourist attractions here in South Australia. I am quite ashamed at the lack of adequate signposting of roads, highways, and tourist attractions in South Australia. This goes further than the simple matter of what should be provided to help visitors to South Australia.

When travelling on roads, how many times do we see people in vehicles sitting in the middle of the road trying to find a turn-off? They know that they must find a certain road in order to visit a friend or to do some shopping, or whatever, and they know that the road is there somewhere, but they cannot readily find it. This may occur because a sign may be hidden behind an overhanging tree branch or because it is too small, too far back from the road, or whatever. I have found it difficult to find streets in the northern suburbs during the day, and at night it is far more difficult. It is time that some positive action was taken in this regard. The difficulty is that no-one really wants to take responsibility for this.

Some money will have to be spent. Most of our signs are small and inconspicuous. We do not really try to assist people to find our major tourist attractions. I know that many of my friends and I have difficulty in negotiating the lesser known streets of Adelaide, particularly at night and even with a street directory, because we just cannot find them. There is no sign posting once one gets off the major highways, and even the sign posting on the major highways is diabolical.

People approaching Adelaide have an enormous problem, whether they come from the country or interstate down Mount Barker Road. The only thing many know when they reach the Tollgate is the general direction of Adelaide. Many people come in through our major highway who do not really want to go to Adelaide: they may want to go to Glenelg or the northern or eastern suburbs, but our signposting is of no assistance. People coming from the west of the State through Gepps Cross find that such assistance is minimal. Recently, I went to the Clare district and I wanted to look at Martindale Hall.

Mr Hamilton: Why?

Mr BAKER: Because I had seen *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and I wanted to see the residence where the story line was centred. Travelling at something under 110 km/h, I missed the signpost, because it was no bigger than a normal street sign. If we want people to appreciate our tourist attractions, we have to show them the way. We can learn much from some overseas countries in this regard: some of their principles should be followed in Adelaide. We want people to appreciate South Australia, but how can they when there is no indication that there is an attraction they can see or a particular route they can follow that will give them a greater understanding of the wide range of attractions that South Australia possesses? I have a number of solutions to the problem, and I believe that they should be implemented now, because in 1986 we have the sesquicentenary, for which it is appropriate that Adelaide be properly prepared.

On each major road into Adelaide there should be a large sign which immediately indicates the general movement options. On Montefiore Hill or some other prominent position there should be a large map showing the road network, suburbs and major tourist attractions, including Adelaide's principal lookouts at Windy Point and Mount Lofty, which give visitors an appreciation of the view.

Each major road should have direction signs prior to each intersection with another arterial road, so that people can make a determination before they get there rather than having to switch lanes and impede traffic as they inevitably do. Every street in Adelaide should have an appropriate signpost which can be read at a distance of 200 m. In fact, 90 per cent of signs are indistinguishable at night, as most members would appreciate, because they have no street lighting above them.

We could overcome this problem through the use of special paints, for example, and that matter should be looked into. If we get our collective act together and if the Ministers of Local Government and Transport sit down with the respective bodies, we will make Adelaide a place that is worth visiting, because people will feel comfortable travelling on our roads. They will know prior to reaching an intersection that they have to deviate or go straight ahead, rather than holding up traffic while they make up their minds because they cannot read the signs.

A number of my relatives who live in the country stay on the major roads of Adelaide because once they get off them they get quite lost, as there is no assistance whatsoever. We can improve the appreciation of our country cousins. Likewise, when we wish to go to country areas, travelling along the main routes, we should have an adequate opportunity, by proper signposting, to see where spots of interest are. We could be quite artistic about it. I contend that if we put forward a positive programme in this regard not only will we reap the rewards of greater tourist appreciation and numbers but we will also reduce the number of road traffic accidents in this State.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER secured the adjournment of the debate.

NORTHERN ELECTRICITY

MR GUNN (Eyre): I move:

That in the opinion of this House the Government should proceed to build a 240-volt power line to Wilpena then on to Blinman.

This motion relates to a matter that I have brought to the House's attention on a number of occasions. There is no logical reason why the people in the Wilpena to Blinman area should be denied the right to have their properties connected to the grid system. The members for Coles and Davenport attended a meeting with me a few months ago at Quorn at which we were reliably told that the capital cost of constructing that line would be recouped within five years. Because of the very expensive nature of the generating capacity at Wilpena, the cost of maintenance, fuel and other considerations would be recouped in under five years. Further, such a scheme would greatly assist the tourist industry.

Unfortunately, at this stage the caravan park at Wilpena has no powered sites. As it is a most popular and beautiful part of South Australia, comprising the Wilpena Chalet and caravan park, we should provide facilities so that people can have the very best caravan park available. The provision of powered sites is generally accepted as one of the basic requirements which would provide, for instance, hot water in the ablution blocks.

Blinman is an attractive and historic part of South Australia, and it would greatly assist the tourist industry there and be of great benefit to local residents if the SWER lines were completed to Blinman. I understand that from Hawker to Wilpena a three-phase line is required, and then it is hoped that the three legs would go out as far as Blinman and across to Parachilna. I know that the Minister will ask who will pay for it, but the people of this State can provide the funds for facilities in various other areas in South Australia, and earlier this afternoon I detailed, chapter and verse, some of those areas.

I commend this motion to the House. It is self-explanatory, and I sincerely hope that the Minister will respond positively and quickly to allow the people of this part of the State an opportunity to have their properties connected to an adequate electricity supply, so that they are not disadvantaged and so that they are placed on the same level as many others in the rest of the State.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE secured the adjournment of the debate.

LAND ACQUISITION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Mr GUNN (Eyre) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Land Acquisition Act, 1969. Read a first time.

Mr GUNN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to allow persons whose land is compulsorily acquired by the State the opportunity to have adequate appeal provisions. This is similar to a measure I introduced in Parliament on 16 November 1983, and I gave a detailed explanation of the reasons on that occasion. Prior to introducing that Bill, I approached the Attorney-General in relation to those proposals. Unfortunately, the Minister in this place who represents the Attorney-General was not able, or did not feel inclined, to respond to that proposal at the time. I sincerely hope that on this occasion the Minister will respond positively and agree to this provision, because on the last occasion I did give reasons why it was urgent to have in place an effective set of appeal provisions.

The existing Act, in my judgment, is quite inadequate and is a bad piece of legislation, as it does not allow any form of independent appeal. The only appeal that a person has is back to the department that made the original acquisition, and that is tantamount to an appeal from Caesar unto Caesar.

Mr Evans: The only other appeal is on price.

Mr GUNN: The appeal on price is unsatisfactory, too, but for persons to be denied the right even to object to the acquisition is quite unfair, and this provision is long overdue. To show the House and the people of South Australia that I am sincere, I point out that when I had the original Bill drafted I wrote to the Attorney-General and received the following reply:

I refer to your letter dated 22 November 1983 enclosing a copy of the Bill which you have introduced to amend the Land Acquisition Act. I have considered the proposal which you have put in the Bill and suggest that it may be preferable if you await the legislation which I am contemplating to amend the Land Acquisition Act. The review of that legislation which is currently being undertaken in my office will take into account the recommendations of the Australian Law Reform Commission and, in particular, that which proposed a review should be conducted on a proposal to acquire.

I am aware that the Commonwealth has the report of the Australian Law Reform Commission before it and note your comments in relation to Commonwealth action in the area. I should be pleased to receive any comments which you have on proposals to amend the Land Acquisition Act generally in order

that they might be taken into account in the review being undertaken in my office.

My views are outlined in the speech that I made on 16 November 1983 and are reflected in the Bill that I introduced in Parliament. I seek leave to have the explanation of the clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends section 10 of the principal Act. Paragraph *(a)* replaces subsection (3) with an extended provision that requires the authority that is proposing to acquire the land to give notice to the owners of their right to apply to the Land and Valuation Court for an order directing the authority not to proceed with the acquisition. Paragraph *(b)* inserts a new subsection (5) which requires the notice of intention to acquire land, if it is to be served by post, to be posted by certified mail. Clause 4 replaces section 12 of the principal Act. At the moment this section allows an owner of land to make a number of requests of the authority, including a request that the land not be acquired. The authority must consider the request but need not agree to it. The new provision will allow an owner to apply to the Land and Valuation Court, and empowers the court to direct the authority not to proceed with the acquisition. The grounds on which the court can make an order are the same as those that appear in the existing provision, except that a ground relating to hardship has been added. Clause 5 makes a consequential amendment to section 14 of the principal Act. Clause 6 makes consequential amendments to section 16 of the principal Act.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD secured the adjournment of the debate.

COUNTRY FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 19 September. Page 985.)

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): For reasons that will become apparent later this evening, I move:

That this Bill be read and discharged.

Bill read and discharged.

KINGSTON MINING

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr Lewis:

That this House opposes the mining of the Kingston lignite deposit until and unless—

(a) the inadequacies and inaccuracies of the environmental impact statement are rectified; and

(b) an indenture Bill (which defines adequate provisions for compensation to the Kingston community, the Lacepede District Council and private landholders who may be affected by the development) is passed by this Parliament.

(Continued from 29 August. Page 626.)

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Minister for Environment and Planning): South Australia is the driest State in the Commonwealth. The only areas of the State that enjoy a significant rainfall are, of course, those areas in the centre of the State where the intrusion of the Mount Lofty and Flinders Ranges and the gulfs bring rainfall that is higher than would otherwise be the case if there were an unrelieved and monotonous coast with no ranges. Of course, the other area is the South-East, which in some ways is geographically an extension of Victoria. For this reason the surface and ground water supplies of the South-East are most important in our agricultural, pastoral and urban development.

I think that this is recognised broadly and could be seen as one of those bipartisan political positions. It therefore follows that it would be an act of extreme irresponsibility for any member of this place to advocate doing anything that would put at risk either the purity or the quantity of those waters in the South-East. In fact, we are aware that engineering works over more than 100 years have reduced to a degree the quantity of these water resources, and the fertilising, particularly in relation to pastoral activity, that is necessary for improved pasture, and so on, has had some impact on the quality of these water resources.

The first of the matters to which I refer is the South-Eastern drainage scheme, which of course was necessary to bring what was otherwise an annually flooded area into production. This has been the subject of much study over the years. The effect of the scheme has been for channels to be dug across the line of the drainage and for what was previously a sluggish drainage from south to north to be turned into a fairly swift drainage from east to west with the waters being discharged into the ocean. What is not always as widely appreciated is that some of the other activities in the South-East have also had their impact on ground water supplies.

Forestry is a good example because the transpiration of water vapour from the pines in the South-East has clearly had an impact on the water table. What we see there is a combination of various factors: first, as I have already mentioned, the discharge of the surface water through the South-Eastern drainage channels, which limits the amount of recharge to the aquifers; secondly, increased transpiration from the large areas which are under pines; and then, of course, thirdly, there is simply the extent to which man has exploited these resources for his own uses, particularly for urban or industrial uses.

All these things have had an impact on the quantity and, to a degree, on the quality of water available. Industrial use has affected water quality in some circumstances, and we are all aware of some years of battle that was waged over Lake Bonney and the quality of water discharged into what was once regarded as a fresh water body. The people of South Australia (and I would hope their elected representatives) now well understand the potential for additional problems which arise in the South-East and the Upper South-East by the various activities that we undertake. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that much concern has been expressed over Western Mining's proposition for a lignite mine at Kingston, and controversy on this matter has extended over some period.

The member for Mallee, who moved this motion, was of course reflecting the wishes and fears of many of his electors in bringing it forward. I suggest to the House today that, in the light of events which have occurred and on which the honourable member touched in his remarks in the opening of this debate, the motion in its present form is not really necessary.

The honourable member, for example, talked about the shortcomings of the environmental impact study. It is unusual for an environmental impact study to get everything right in every detail, particularly in relation to large projects. Were this so, I guess it would hardly be necessary for an assessment of the EIS to take place. There is nothing at all unusual in the officers of my Department, in the assessment that they undertake, assisted by other Government departments (the Department of Mines and Energy, for example, if it is a mining project or the E&WS if it has to do with a drainage project, and so on) and by advice from these

people, saying that they believe that if this should proceed it should happen in a certain way or that some of the input does not accurately reflect the information that they have available to them and that therefore it should be adjusted. It is important that, when the assessment proceeds and under the terms of the legislation I then recognise the EIS, that does not of itself represent approval for the project: it merely grants recognition to the EIS and says that it is what it purports to be. Of course, we take the opportunity at that time to make recommendations as to the way in which the project should proceed, if it is to proceed under other approvals, or that further study should take place.

I do not want to delay the House unduly, but I would like to share with honourable members a letter which I wrote to the Clerk of the District Council of Lacepede on 21 August and which puts some of the recent remarks that I have been making in this speech into some sort of context. I said:

I wish to advise the District Council of Lacepede that the Kingston lignite project EIS has been officially recognised, as provided for in section 49 (3) of the Planning Act, 1982. A copy of the assessment report has already been sent to the district council.

The officially recognised EIS is to consist of the draft EIS and its background papers, as amended by the EIS supplement and the Department of Environment and Planning's assessment report which accompany it. A full set of these documents is now lodged with the Department's Community Information Service acting as agents for the South Australian Planning Commission.

I understand that Western Mining Corporation intends to present an amended method of mining, and that such a change will require an amendment to the officially recognised EIS. Until such an amendment has been made to the officially recognised EIS, the present set of documents will stand with reference to any statutory provisions, although I do not expect the company to take any formal steps until the new method has been assessed by the Department of Environment and Planning.

As you will be aware, the Planning Act, 1982, requires that a planning authority have regard to the officially recognised EIS when considering any development application related to the project to which the EIS applies. Section 59 (4) also provides for a consideration of the officially recognised EIS when I submit advice to the appropriate authority considering an application for a mining production tenement. As I have indicated in the preceding paragraph, this situation is not expected to apply until after the officially recognised EIS has been amended. It should be quite clear from what I have said so far that official recognition of the Kingston project EIS is neither an approval nor refusal of the project. Rather, it is intended to provide a set of reference documents to which the appropriate authorities shall have regard when considering any applications for approval. A similar letter has been sent to Western Mining Corporation and a public notice is to be placed in the appropriate newspapers.

That is the position as we have it at present. The honourable member referred in his speech in introducing this topic to the desire of Western Mining Corporation to now investigate an alternative method of mining, which would involve dredging and which therefore would not involve dewatering of the area. Clearly, in exploring this technology, Western Mining Corporation has in mind the concern of the honourable member's constituents which he was setting out before us in his remarks when this matter was introduced.

It is difficult for me to comment or to speculate on the future of the project until such time as Western Mining should return with the environmental proposals which would accompany a dredging option. The dredging option is not without potential for environmental impact. Indeed, any development involves some environmental impact, and it is always a matter of judgment whether a formal statement should be required of the proponent. However, what Western Mining is saying, and what I guess most people would assume is correct, is that a dredging option, if it is a realistic option (and I am aware of the concerns that the honourable member has expressed), would therefore have a lower level of environmental impact than would a conventional strip mining operation.

It seems to me in those circumstances that it is not necessary at this stage for the House to address itself to this matter. Nor does it seem to me that it is appropriate at this stage that the House should be giving instructions to Western Mining, the Governor or anyone else about an indenture. It may well be that, if this project comes to fruition, an indenture is the appropriate means of ensuring that all the necessary matters that my officers have addressed are being carried out, that the State Treasury's concerns are taken into account, that ETSA's concerns are taken into account, and so on.

I remind the House that an indenture overrides all other legislation, with resulting advantages and disadvantages. It may have the advantage of picking up areas which should be subject to control and which are not covered specifically by Statute anywhere else. However, a frequent criticism of indentures is that they often address the very matters that are already covered by Statute, but often at a lower level of regulation and control. A plethora of controls is available to the Government through the Statute Book of this State in relation to financing and taxation; the planning mechanism that must be gone through if it is to be approved; the environmental controls that would have to apply; the rates and taxes that should be charged by local government; and so on. It is necessary that the Minister responsible (the Minister of Mines and Energy) consider closely the existing legislation before the Government takes on board an assumption that automatically all that should be overruled by a special Act that may provide for more stringent or more liberal conditions for the project rather than a motion to be carried in this place at this time.

Mr Lewis: That's up to the Government of the day.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Precisely. My colleague, in addressing himself to this matter, later may wish to expand on this aspect. However, we cannot divorce Western Mining's concerns in this matter from the concerns of the Electricity Trust. I am not aware of any market for the potential products of this mine other than ETSA for power generation. ETSA is already undertaking its own studies, as my colleague reminded the House when this matter was previously before members, and there is no guarantee at this stage that it will decide that the locus for the next power station should be in the South-East, given the other four or five options that are available to it.

Therefore, on behalf of the Government, I assure the honourable member and the House that we would not be party to any development in the South-East that would significantly diminish the water resources of the South-East or significantly increase the pollution of both surface and ground waters which are already subject to some degree of pollution. When Western Mining returns with a revised option involving this dredging technology about which it has talked, we will consider that option closely. Indeed, it will be subjected to the same close scrutiny as that to which the present option has been subjected. The honourable member got himself into a bit of a state in respect of this matter when it was before us previously, because the timetable for that assessment blew out, and I think that he even accused me of being a knave.

Mr Lewis: I don't think so.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I do not know whether the honourable member was being generous or not: he set aside the 'fool' aspect. He did not accuse me of folly: he thought that 'knave' might be an appropriate description. True, the time table for the consideration of the assessment of the environmental impact study blew out for the responsible reason that my officers found that they had a large task and it was important that they discharge that responsibility to the best of their ability. I believe that the honourable member would be the last to want us to hasten an assessment of

such a project if it meant that those important environmental factors received less than the proper attention that they deserved.

Without wanting to detract from my estimate of the sincerity of the honourable member in bringing this matter to the attention of the House, and without in any way wanting to disagree with him on the importance of the ground and surface waters in the South-East and the Upper South-East, I simply say that, in view of what has happened and in view of the assessment of the environmental impact statement and of the necessity of Western Mining to return with further information as to its revised option, the motion before us is unnecessary and should be rejected.

Mr LEWIS (Mallee): It seems that no Government member other than the Minister for Environment and Planning is willing to chance his arm on this matter. I have a considerable respect for the intellectual capacity of the Minister who has spoken, but that does not say much for the Government, because his points were neither relevant nor cogent. Indeed, many of his points were not even relevant to the motion. I am surprised that neither the Minister of Community Welfare, who led for the Government on the last occasion, nor the Minister of Mines and Energy has chosen to express a view on the substance of the motion.

The Minister for Environment and Planning gave members the benefit of his knowledge on water quality and quantity and the factors affecting them in the South-East. His statements on that subject were accurate and valid but quite irrelevant to the thrust of this motion because, whilst all those things are understood, they do not relate to the Kingston lignite deposit or any proposal to mine it: they simply relate to what has gone on in the South-East.

The Minister may have wished to ameliorate the guilt that his Government feels in refusing to support the proposition. Clearly, the Government intends that the people in the South-East should be left hanging, uncertain as to the future of their underground water and of their obligations, where they are ratepayers in the Lacepede council area, in so far as they may be required to provide the cost of the infrastructure, in part, of any development that may be necessary for that infrastructure in local government, in tandem with the development of a prospective mine on that lignite deposit.

I understand their concern. It is simply and reasonably valid. Why the Government cannot alleviate that concern I do not know. The Minister acknowledged that there were inadequacies and inaccuracies in the environmental impact statement as originally presented, and the additional attempts that Western Mining has made to tidy it up are totally irrelevant now that it has decided to change the proposed mining technology. That does not alter the fact that there are still inadequacies and inaccuracies in the environmental impact statement which have been identified by various Government agencies, especially the Minister's own Department.

They are significant errors and ought never to have been allowed to go publicly unchallenged. They are still not rectified. Therefore, no reasonable calculations can be made as to the likely consequences of mining the deposit, if such mining were to proceed. Just because there is no apparent customer for the lignite that could be mined there at present, in the form of ETSA, is no reason to assume that Western Mining may not decide to mine the coal and convert it to alcohol or, more likely, to gas (alcohol is methanol), especially now that we are about to remove lead from petrol. This idea has been kicked around by staff members of the company and other people who are associated with them in assessing their options.

If we are to be fair dinkum about alleviating the concern felt by the people in the South-East, we ought to simply say that under no circumstances would we allow a mine to go ahead there unless the EIS was accurate in its appraisal mechanisms—in other words, there were no inaccuracies, inadequacies, errors or omissions. What is more, because of the unique nature of such a development, it will have severe impact on the isolated community of Kingston, which is 60 miles from the nearest community of more than a few people (and I mean fewer than 10 people), namely, Naracoorte or Keith, and down the coast, Robe and Beachport, which is a little closer.

In other directions there is no substantial community within 60 miles. Clearly, the ratepayers of Lacepede would have to find the cost of infrastructure as it relates to what has to be provided by local government if the approval for the mine to go ahead were given without an indenture. There is no provision anywhere in any Statute which would enable the Lacepede District Council and its ratepayers to ameliorate that cost. Moreover, in the event that Western Mining were to proceed with the development of the mine using any technology—wet dredging or dry open-cut pit mining—there could be, as the Minister has acknowledged quite freely, an impact on the water supply which extends beyond the mine site.

The Act as it applies through the Wardens Court does not enable landowners away from the mine site who lose their water supply to get compensation for that water loss. It is just not there. Without an indenture Bill they go begging. The Government has indicated that it is quite happy to allow people to go begging. The Minister for Environment and Planning has simply said, 'You can go to hell, we do not care, we do not reckon it is necessary to give you any reassurance that an indenture Bill would be enacted to cover this or other eventualities.' That is literally the thrust of the statements the Minister has just made to the House. He tried to argue that an indenture Bill might be a bad thing in that the levels of control available under indenture Bills could be, in certain instances, actually less than are available under existing Statute anyway. This motion does not presuppose that the Government of the day, whenever such a development were to proceed or to be contemplated, ought to reduce the levels of control—it simply says that an indenture Bill is necessary.

I have explained to the House the reasons why it is necessary—not for any spurious reason. An indenture Bill is essential for the reasons I have outlined where they relate to the liability and responsibility of the ratepayers and to the capacity of landholders and the township of Kingston to obtain compensation in the event that they lose water as a consequence of mining—water that is potable and/or suitable for irrigation such as they now have. Why on earth cannot that reassurance be given by the Government? I plead with the Government to give it. By refusing to support that request, as this motion gives it voice, the Government is literally turning its back on the people of the South-East and ignoring their genuine concern and uncertainty about their future.

A large number of people in the South-East, whose properties are located within several kilometres of the mine site, have found their property values adversely affected by the uncertainty surrounding this prospect. Even the District Council of Lacepede is concerned, as it has had an adverse impact on its rate base as a result of the Government's refusal to state the principles upon which it would allow the mine to proceed. I can see no reason at all why the Minister and the Government should take such a dog-in-the-manger attitude towards this matter. It is clearly the responsibility of the Government of the day to introduce an indenture Bill, the terms of which ought to augment

what is already available in Statute to ensure that minimal or no damage is done to the people who live in Kingston and the landholders in the vicinity.

The final point the Minister made was to castigate me quietly—somewhat churlishly—for my remarks as they related to the date upon which the assessment of the EIS was to be released by his Department. Initially, as I said in my earlier remarks, it was to have been last year, but in February, not I but the Minister, said that it would be within a week or so. As deadlines came and went he made further statements about when the assessment would be released. He and he alone knew where his officers were up to in their appraisal of the EIS. He had no reason to publicly state when the EIS assessment was likely to be made available to the public.

There was no reason—he could have said that they were two or four months away rather than next week, mid March, late February or June. We simply wanted to know when. He gave the deadlines and he broke the deadlines. That is not my responsibility. It only heightened the anxiety of the people in the locality who were to be affected. That is why I said that he was either foolish in so doing or behaving as a knave to keep the issue on the boil. I explained then that it was more likely the latter, in that by keeping it on the boil he could see—and his agencies (his Ministerial and press secretaries and other associates of the Labor Party) were putting the story around the South-East that the Liberals did not know what they thought about this matter. In just a few minutes we will know what the Liberals think—and have always thought.

This was encouraging speculation that the National Party and the Democrats were going to be the saviours of the people of the South-East. The Labor Party knew that. It was common bar talk around Millicent, and Mr Roberts in Millicent has something to answer for. He is number four in the Labor Party's Legislative Council ticket at the next election—a man who has not got the guts to state his attitude on this vexed question. Yet, he is prepared to stir up speculation as to the views held by other members of this place including myself, Mr Allan Rodda, member for Victoria, and other members of the Party to which I belong. That is why I suggested to the House that the Minister was behaving as a knave, as he knew that was going on. He knew that it was damaging, through that spurious deceitful speculation fired by the irresponsibility of the Government, damaging the public's perception of my own position and that of my colleagues.

I therefore dismiss what the Minister has said in a poor attempt at sophistry—an otherwise plausible attempt, but poor in that it does not contain any argument of substance that would preclude this House from simply saying, 'It is not right to mine that deposit of coal while errors and omissions occur in the EIS, nor is it right to mine that deposit of coal without there being an indenture Bill which addresses those specific, unique problems associated with the development of that deposit.'

So, Mr Acting Speaker, I urge you and other members of this House to support the motion, and to show the people of the South-East that we share the concern they have about the future of their water supplies and other matters affecting the environment and the concern they have about their liability to have to find the money for infrastructure themselves as ratepayers of the District Council of Lacepede. It does not require anything more or less than that to say that we will give them a fair go.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (20)—Mrs Adamson, Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, Ashenden, Baker, Becker, D.C. Brown, Chapman, Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Ingerson, Lewis (teller), Mathwin, Olsen, Oswald, Rodda, Wilson, and Wotton.

Noes (22)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, Bannon, M.J. Brown, Crafter, Duncan, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood, Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne (teller), Plunkett, Slater, Whitten, and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Blacker and Meier. Noes—Messrs Peterson and Trainer.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. B.C. Eastick:

That the regulations under the Local Government Act, 1934, relating to proceedings of councils, made on 2 August 1984 and laid on the table of this House on 7 August 1984, be disallowed.

(Continued from 19 September. Page 986.)

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Local Government): I thank the member for Light (the shadow Minister of Local Government) for drawing this matter to the attention of the House. I can recall at the time when the major revision of the Local Government Act was passed by this House that the honourable member did, at that time, offer to the House the co-operation of the Opposition in respect of any legislative or regulatory change that may be needed as a result of that massive piece of legislation. He has highlighted to the House the problems that have existed. I would argue that a problem existed in the understanding of the regulations by local government but, as the honourable member has pointed out, there is a good deal of confusion as to how the regulations that he has brought to the attention of the House operate in so far as meetings are concerned, including the rights of people to speak more than once in a committee stage, for instance.

As a result of the honourable member's drawing this matter to the attention of the House, I have taken to Cabinet a proposal that regulations should be changed, redrafted and brought back to the House. Those regulations are now with the Crown Solicitor for redrafting, and it is hoped that they will be before the House within a few weeks. I understand that the honourable member may wish to see those regulations before the Parliament before any further action is taken.

I have written to the Clerk of the Unley council (Mr Usher), who is the Executive Officer, Metropolitan Central Region, in response to the region's drawing to my attention a similar query. I have forwarded a copy of that letter to the honourable member (I understand that it is at his electorate office rather than here with him in Parliament). I hope that the actions that have been taken and the new regulations that will come before this House meet the concerns of those local government bodies and the honourable member who feel that the regulations as previously drafted caused some concern and confusion. Having given that undertaking, I will wait upon the honourable member's comments when the regulations come before this House. I am certain that they will be considered as being favourable. The necessary action in regard to this motion can then be followed through.

Mr EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ROAD FUNDS

Adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. D.C. Brown:

That this House is concerned at the inadequate funds available for road construction and maintenance, calls on the Federal Gov-

ernment to increase road grants allocated to State Governments and to give South Australia a fair and equitable portion of those funds and calls on the South Australian Government to reverse its decision to direct fuel tax revenue away from the Highways Fund.

(Continued from 12 September. Page 797.)

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT (Minister of Transport): It is not often that I find myself agreeing with the member for Davenport, but I support the first part of his motion, which relates to the Federal Government's allocation of road funds to South Australia. I cannot agree with the latter part of the motion, and I intend to move an amendment in relation to that part of the motion later. The general area of road funding should be of concern to this House. As the honourable member has said, since the late 1960s a progressive decline in the road funding allocation to South Australia has occurred. That decline has continued through successive Federal Administrations, although for most of the time they have been Liberal Government Administrations. The honourable member has demanded that action be taken to reverse this trend. However, I point out that he had three years in Government in this State with his generous friends, with former Prime Minister Fraser in power in Canberra. What happened then? Absolutely nothing happened. The honourable member certainly was not demanding action then. A rather meek and mild effort was made when it really mattered.

In contrast, the present Government is prepared to do something constructive about this funding decline and the Government will put a very strong case to the Federal authorities over the next few months when the Roads Grants Act is due for review. I have pointed out previously that the next ATAC conference was to be held on 16 November in Melbourne. A special ATAC meeting was set down purely to determine the question of road funding, as the Roads Grants Act expires in June next year. However, unfortunately, due to the calling of the Federal election that meeting has now been postponed. I understand that all the States have indicated that they want a special ATAC conference held as soon as possible after the forthcoming Federal election. South Australia's case will be put to that conference when it is held.

With the Hawke and Bannon Governments assured for some years to come, I am confident that we have a good chance of success in improving South Australia's allocation. As the debate on road funding takes place over the next few months, two recent reports will play a very large part, and I refer to the roads study of the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities and to the Assessment of the Australian Road System produced by the Australian Bureau of Transport Economics. The honourable member has already quoted some of the findings of the NAASRA report, and I intend to provide some material from the report of the Bureau of Transport Economics for purposes of contrast. However, I warn the member for Davenport and other members of this House who are interested in these reports to read them with caution; they should be taken in their proper context.

It is interesting to note that the reports came to basically different conclusions, even though they used substantially the same data. This reflects to some extent the bias inherent in their organisations. The BTE report to the Federal authorities is a more conservative and dry economic assessment, while the NAASRA study report to a peer group of road construction authorities takes a more entrepreneurial view on wider criteria for determining needs and justifying expenditure. However, with this in mind the reports can provide valuable information on which to base our arguments for future funding.

In relation to the BTE study, although the BTE terms of reference specified a period 1985-86 to 1989-90 for an economic assessment of alternative levels and patterns of expenditure on road construction and maintenance for each State and Territory, the BTE undertook the assessment basically for one funding level. It chose a projected funding pattern based on existing levels and established trends. It assumed that Federal funds would decline in real terms from 1983-84 onwards, that States would maintain their road funding at about the 1983-84 level and that in real terms local government road funding would decline slowly. The BTE concluded that over the period 1981-91 the road funding at the above projected levels and with existing distribution patterns would be expected to improve the level of services provided by national highways.

For South Australia the improvement would be much more marked. The whole system would be sealed and the level of service significantly improved. For rural arterial roads, expenditure at the projected rate would be just about sufficient to maintain the existing overall level of service against rising traffic volumes, and this is also true for South Australia. For urban arterial roads some deterioriation of the level of service would result. This is because strong traffic growth is expected which will outweigh the substantial physical improvements. For urban local roads some improvement in the road system would result, including a significant reduction in the length of unsealed urban local road, and similarly, for rural local roads the overall length of unsealed road would be reduced.

In regard to the conclusions made in those reports, the NAASRA report findings indicate that overall the road funding would need to be increased by 25 per cent just to meet reasonable expectations. Those expectations include preventing a deterioration in driving conditions on rural arterial roads and some slowing down of projected increases in urban arterial road traffic congestion. The BTE finding did not demonstrate to the same degree the need for increased road funding. The BTE found that the continuation of current levels of road funding would result in some deterioration in the level of service for only the arterial roads category. Overall, the BTE findings seem to indicate that current levels of road funding are reasonably adequate.

Road funding is provided by all three levels of Government: Federal, State and local. What is the appropriate amount that should be provided by each level of Government cannot be determined by objective analysis alone. Furthermore, with regard to warranted road expenditures and the appropriate level of Federal Government road funding, broader economic and budgetary issues need to be taken into account. These include the competing needs for funds of other budgetary areas, such as health, social welfare and defence and macro-economic considerations, such as the containment of the Federal Budget deficit.

Nevertheless, arguments for an increase in Federal road funding have centred on the Federal Government's greater capacity to raise motorist related taxes (in particular, motor fuel taxes) and on the complaint that the Federal Government returns only a small proportion of its motorist tax revenue for expenditure on roads. The 1984-85 Federal Budget provided the following excise duty estimates: petroleum products, $2 151 million; crude oil levy, $3 623 million; and LPG duties $72 million—totalling $5 846 million. Excise on petroleum products applies to aviation gasoline, motor spirit, diesel and aviation turbine. Greater than 90 per cent of total collections are derived from motor vehicle usage.

Crude oil excise is a charge on domestic crude oil production. About two-thirds of the total collections is derived from motor vehicle usage. Total Federal road fund allocations for 1984-85 amount to only $1 244.7 million. On that basis, Federal road funding in 1984-85 as a percentage of

motorist excise contributions equals approximately 30 per cent.

However, it should be remembered when using these arguments that there are many other areas besides roads where the Government subsidises facilities and costs for motorists. A proportion of health service costs, for instance, is directly related to road accidents. It is also important to realise that historically motoring has been seen as a basic area of tax gathering, like tobacco and alcohol. It provides an easily identified source of tax revenue that spreads the tax burden with reasonable equity.

The tax imposts on motorists have never been defined as a form of 'user pays' and are not tied in any way to the costs or needs of motorists. However, whatever the overall level of Federal funds (the size of the cake), we should be arguing for a bigger slice. Under the Roads Grants Act, South Australia receives 8.22 per cent of total grants, and under the Australian Bicentennial Road Development funding 7.15 per cent. In total, South Australia receives 7.84 per cent. In 1968-69 South Australia received over 11 per cent of total Federal road funding to the States. The Commonwealth Bureau of Roads and the Bureau of Transport Economics have, over the past 15 years, prepared a number of reports on road funding needs to assist the Federal Government in its determination of Federal road funding for the States. The results of all these reports indicated that South Australia's share of Federal Road funding should be reduced. It appears that the results of these reports have been the main reason for South Australia's progressively reduced share of Federal road funding since 1968-69.

Determination of the appropriate distribution of Federal road grants involves consideration of relative expenditure needs between States and also considerations of equity. The NAASRA roads study did not address the question of distribution of Federal road funds. However, some of the findings of the 1984 BTE study are relevant, particularly those which indicate the relative road funding needs between States. These no doubt will influence the distribution of road grants between States under the next roads grants legislation. The following is an assessment of South Australia's position on a category by category basis.

As to national highways, under the Roads Grants Act South Australia receives 9 per cent of national road grants. When the Stuart Highway is completed in 1986-87, the total national highway network in South Australia will be sealed, and the relative need for national highways funds will fall away rapidly. This was foreshadowed in the indicative ABRD national highway allocation of 6.5 per cent to South Australia. The BTE findings reinforce the conclusion that South Australia's national highway share will be reduced from the present 9 per cent and that in the longer term it could fall to 6.5 per cent or even lower.

Turning now to rural arterial roads, under the Roads Grants Act and ABRD legislation, South Australia's share of rural arterial road finding is 7.6 per cent. The BTE assessment of South Australia's economically warranted expenditure share is 5 per cent. The BTE concluded that:

> If additional funding becomes available for this category of road, maximum economic rturn would be obtained by concentrating the addtional resources in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, and, within those States, in areas of greatest traffic volume and growth. Similarly, if funding is reduced, then applying the reductions primarily to the other States and areas of low demand would minimise the economic loss.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: Do you accept the BTE finding?

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I recognise its findings. They are under consideration, but I warned earlier that they need to be read carefully and not taken out of context. Non-economic factors could counter to a degree the reduction in South Australia's share. For example, the total length of unsealed rural arterial roads in Australia for 1981 was 21 941 km, of which 1 937 km (or 8.8 per cent) was in South Australia.

The figure for urban arterial roads is 7.6 per cent. The economic assessment for this category in the BTE report was very approximate and not really comparable across capital cities. This was because the analysis in each case was undertaken by the relevant State road authority using its own particular transport package and, in many cases, its own specific parameter values. Even so, Adelaide exhibited the lowest benefit-cost ratio of all mainland capital cities for urban arterial roads. The BTE concluded that an increase in funding for urban arterial roads in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane would be expected to generate high benefit-cost ratios. Other indicators examined by the BTE indicated that Adelaide appeared to be better endowed with urban arterial road space than are the other capitals. I guess that one has to agree with parts of the BTE report and disagree with others.

South Australia's current share of local road grants is 7.7 per cent. For local road assessments the information available to the BTE was less complete and the findings in relation to distribution not specific. The BTE found that economic efficiency considerations would be best served by a smaller proportion of available funds being applied to local roads. However, the BTE considered that non-economic reasons, such as the provision of a basic road system to the community, could explain the difference between actual expenditures on local roads and economically warranted. Non-economic reasons would also favour a greater share for South Australia, which has 13 per cent of total unsealed urban local roads in Australia and 15 per cent of total unsealed rural local roads.

In conclusion it appears, therefore, that on the basis of the BTE study findings the Federal Government has grounds for reducing further South Australia's share of Federal road funding, and that is what we must fight against. We must put a very strong argument for South Australia when the ATAC conference is considering future road funding to the various States. Arguments should be developed based mainly on equity to counter that trend. Funds are continually directed to favour larger States such as New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland on the basis that the maximum economic returns can be gained from expenditure in those States. They have more projects with high cost benefit ratios than we have. However, this trend will further reinforce the position with South Australia becoming even less able to compete in the future.

The provision of a basic road network of acceptable standard to the whole community is a matter of equity. Funds to provide this accepted basic network should be distributed on an equitable basis, say, on a population percentage rather than on an economic benefit basis.

Consideration could also be given in general by the Federal Government to broader road funding distribution indicators. For example, vehicle kilometres of travel (8.8 per cent), vehicle numbers (9 per cent), area of the State (12.8 per cent), road length (12.8 per cent) and population (8.8 per cent) indicate that South Australia's share of road funding should be approximately 9 per cent. In fact, similar indicators are used in a formula to distribute Federal local road grants to the various councils around the State.

Furthermore, some consideration could be given to not allowing the distribution of Federal Government road funding to get too far out of line with the percentage distribution of Federal Government motor fuel excise collections. On user pay and equity grounds, it could be considered unfair for South Australian motorists to provide revenue for roadworks in other States. Motor vehicle numbers and usage indicate that South Australian motorists contribute at least 8.8 per cent of Federal Government motor fuel excise rev-

enue, yet South Australia's current share of Federal Government road funding is only 7.8 per cent.

Nobody denies that we have got a real fight on our hands. It is obvious that pressure to further reduce South Australia's share of Federal funding is continuing and in some ways increasing. This Government will be arguing realistically, and I think that members opposite would accept that calls for increases in the vicinity of 25 per cent of total road funding are not realistic and certainly cannot be supported. However, an increase in South Australia's share that brings it to between 8 per cent and 10 per cent of the total is justified and are a realisable target at which to aim.

Coming to the last part of the honourable member's motion, he calls on this Government to reverse a decision that we made to direct some collections from fuel tax into general revenue. The reason for that decision was simple and has been stated often in this House by the Premier. The previous Government left this State's coffers virtually empty at the end of the Tonkin Administration. South Australia's financial position was chaotic and we faced what can only be described as a form of bankruptcy.

To get us out of the mire we had to take some drastic action, and one of those steps was to increase fuel tax and to retain part of the receipts in general revenue. At the time the Premier said that the present levels of fuel tax in-flow to the Highways Fund would be maintained. So, there was no deterioration in the funds available for road construction from State sources. The matter of the level of State funds allocated to road building must be considered in the light of the general revenue circumstances.

This Government will be constantly sensitive to the road needs of this State and will ensure that they get a realistic priority against competing demands for Government funds. Each Government must determine what its priorities for expenditure are at any particular time. However, the state of the Highways Fund and the revenue that flows into it will be continually under review and, as Minister of Transport, I will be fighting to ensure that the highest possible level of funds are available in this State for the improvement of our road system. On that basis, I would like to move an amendment to the motion before us. I move:

Leave out all words after 'funds', second occurring and insert in lieu thereof 'and congratulates the South Australian Government on its increased expenditure on roads in South Australia'.

Mr EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

SALINITY

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. P.B. Arnold:

That this House condemns the Government for failing to initiate any meaningful discussions with the Federal Government and the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria to expedite the necessary salinity mitigation works for the Murray Darling system, and calls on the Premier to convene a Heads of Government conference as a matter of urgency.

(Continued from 29 August. Page 630.)

The Hon. J.W. SLATER (Minister of Water Resources): The member for Chaffey is continually criticising the fact (he believes it is a fact) that the present Government's role in relation to the salinity of the Murray River is one of low priority. That is certainly not the truth. I would not mind so much, but the criticism is a somewhat carping and complaining type of criticism and, as I say, it is certainly incorrect. The motion falls into two parts. First, the honourable member condemns the Government for failing to initiate discussions to expedite salinity mitigation works; and, secondly, based on that assertion, he calls on the Premier to convene a Heads of Government conference as a matter of urgency.

The first assertion that the Government has failed to initiate discussions is incorrect. Indeed the inference that salinity mitigation works are not being implemented as early as possible is also incorrect. The honourable member would know that mitigation works are being constructed and commissioned, and indeed forward planning and detailed investigations for further projects are proceeding satisfactorily, I might mention, with the support of all participating Governments. I want to go back somewhat and contrast the atmosphere that prevails presently regarding discussions and negotiations between the participating Governments—the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia—to that which existed during the term of the previous Government.

In brief, I think that I can summarise the situation presently as one of consultation as opposed to the previous period of what I might describe as confrontation. The confrontation during the term of the previous Government was characterised by what I would describe as an impetuous approach and perhaps a lack of effective preparation, exemplified by the legal action opposing irrigation development in the New South Wales tributaries of the Murray Darling system. That challenge took place in October 1979 through the local Land Board hearings and shortly after the Liberal Government came to office.

A Ministerial meeting was held on 22 October 1979 to express concern and seek a moratorium against further development until the effects of such a development could be properly assessed. This failed, and continued objection at local Land Board hearings took place in New South Wales in August 1981. By this time the New South Wales Government had sought to close the avenue of objection by passing legislation to deprive South Australia of appearing before the court. South Australia was aware of this move and pursued alternative action in the New South Wales Land and Environment Court alleging a breach of the Environment Planning and Assessment Act in New South Wales. This position was not immediately resolved. I understand there were discussions with the then Minister, the member for Chaffey, and the New South Wales Minister of Water Resources at the time, Mr Landa, during which it was finally agreed by all parties that they would work in a spirit of goodwill in regard to the River Murray Waters Agreement. All legal action was withdrawn.

One of the unfortunate side effects of that confrontation was that the atmosphere of trust and co-operation between officers of relevant Government departments was replaced by some unease and, indeed, tension. There were discussions, although promoted not by the Government of South Australia but by the Australian Democrats at the time, that possible High Court action would be taken. The atmosphere of confrontation led Professor Sandford Clark, who is highly regarded in his field, to believe that through all the discussions and yapping there was a perilous possibility that the baby might go out with the saline bathwater. If either New South Wales or Victoria thought better of proceeding with proposed amendments to the River Murray Waters Agreement, the process of negotiation would have to start all over again. I contrast that with the approach, which I supported and which was indeed led by the present Government, to provide an atmosphere of consultation with the other Governments. That has actively been promoted.

I use some examples. I refer, first, to the secondment of South Australian officers to the River Murray Commission in Canberra to assist with the completion of some studies, along with the commitment of resources to the co-operative development of the River Murray Water Quality Management Plan, which is currently being released and is open for public comment. There has also been active participation by South Australia in the activities of the Victorian Parlia-

mentary Select Committee on Salinity. We hosted the visit of the committee to South Australia and assisted it very considerably, not only by way of submissions but also by assisting it in the inspection of the Riverland region of South Australia. Indeed, the second part of that participation was the appointment of South Australian representatives to a consultative group to study salinity control in northern Victoria. We also successfully urged the committee to examine further alternatives to the Shepparton phase 2 drainage disposal scheme. From those aspects we are developing and encouraging the consultation process with respective Governments involved in relation to the River Murray/Darling Basin.

I wish also to take up the progress of salinity mitigation works. As the member for Chaffey and other members will be aware, the Noora drainage disposal scheme is now fully operational. The Rufus River salt interception scheme was commissioned this year. The Barr Creek management study was completed by consultants in November 1983 and has been submitted to the Victorian Parliamentary Select Committee on Salinity. I have already mentioned the River Murray Water Quality Management Study, which was undertaken by Maunsell and Partners and completed in April 1984. That study is now available for public comment.

It is important to understand that many of those programmes are in preliminary stages. There is a fair lead-up time before any mitigation works can be undertaken. One that has been mentioned both in this House and indeed in the Estimates Committee was the Woolpunda groundwater interception scheme. That is a lengthy investigation, possibly taking three years, and a conceptual design phase is under way. I also point out that the Victorian Parliamentary Select Committee on Salinity is continuing to examine salinity control options with a view to producing a report to the Victorian Parliament on the control of salinity. Previously, South Australia has been directly involved.

Some other programmes under investigation by the River Murray Commission, as far as salinity mitigation measures are concerned, include the enhancement of the Buronga, Mildura and Merbein groundwater interception works; groundwater interception near Karadoc Swamp; draining interception at Nangiloc-Colignan; drainage interception at Sunraysia; groundwater interception at Lindsay River; groundwater interception near Chowilla; groundwater interception at Loxton and Waikerie; and the provision of dilution flows.

I had the opportunity in March this year, as Minister of Water Resources, to undertake an investigation tour of the major storage and irrigation areas of New South Wales and Victoria. At that time I had discussions with the New South Wales Minister of Water Resources and senior Victorian officers of the Department in Victoria. Unfortunately, the Minister for Resources and Energy in Victoria (Hon. David White), was not able to join us on that trip. However, arising from the investigation and the trip, we followed up with correspondence with the Victorian Minister. All parties share an equal concern for the well-being of the River Murray system and agree that problems must be dealt with urgently in a spirit of co-operation.

It is my intention, as I have already indicated on previous occasions, to call a Ministerial meeting to discuss these matters further. Background material is currently being prepared that will seek to reinforce the atmosphere of co-operation. Certainly, it is important that all the States co-operate in what is regarded by the South Australian Government and by myself as Minister as a very high priority for South Australia. I do not think that we ought to convene a Heads of Government meeting based on the information I have just provided, as suggested in the motion moved by the member for Chaffey. I do not think that it requires a resolution at that level and, indeed, from the points that I have made this afternoon, it would not serve any useful purpose at present.

So, I do not support the motion moved by the member for Chaffey; indeed, I believe he is incorrect in his assertions that this Government is not moving in the right direction regarding salinity control of the Murray River. Not only during the course of his remarks on this matter but also on a number of other occasions the honourable member has referred to a study plan that was produced by the former Government when he was the Minister 'A Permanent Solution to the River Murray Salinity Problem'.

That document was produced, of course, by the Government of South Australia and, to my knowledge, has never been accepted by the other Governments. It was produced in isolation, if I might use that term, rather than in conjunction with the other States. I am not arguing that some of the points made in this document are incorrect: basically they are part of the solution to the problem concerning the Murray River but they are not the whole solution unless, of course, all Government (Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and the Commonwealth) are in agreement on this matter. I therefore oppose the motion moved by the member for Chaffey, and I ask the House also to oppose it.

Mr LEWIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

URANIUM POLICY

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy:

That this House urges the Government to reopen the Beverley and Honeymoon mines in South Australia thus providing employment and investment in the State, and condemns the Government for its hypocritical and contradictory uranium policy which allows some uranium mines to proceed and not others.

(Continued from 12 September. Page 806.)

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE (Minister of Mines and Energy): At the outset let me indicate to members that I do not support the motion as originally moved by the Deputy Leader. Quite clearly, I could not support the resolution, and during the course of my remarks I will urge the House to join me in opposing it. We do not have to examine the Deputy Leader's remarks too closely to find examples of the somewhat intemperate language he often uses, particularly in matters concerning uranium. Within the first few lines of the *Hansard* record of his speech on 12 September (page 803) proposing this resolution, we see the following statement:

The Opposition deplores the fact that the Labor Government in South Australia has closed down two of the important mines in this State.

What is the real situation in relation to those two uranium prospects, which is a far better and a more accurate description than the one employed by the Deputy Leader when he called them 'important mines'? First, taking the Honeymoon uranium prospect, I believe it is true to say that it had reached the pilot stage in early 1983 when as Minister, I, on behalf of the Government, indicated that a lease would not be granted for production and that the rights held in that locality by the proponents (mainly CSR) would be protected by virtue of the fact that a retention lease could be applied for and would be granted in accordance with the requirements set down by the Government.

What we actually had at that time was a pilot plant which had been completed and which had had provisional runs. The operation itself was functioning at a low level of pres-

surisation into the ground of the lixiviate being used, that is, a weak acid solution of the strength—for ordinary everyday purposes—of lemon juice. The level of pressure being used at that time, as expressed in litres per second of flow, was such as to produce a very minimal output. From memory, the application before me as Minister at that time was to increase the flow rate, to go into a production phase, rather moderately. I will not attempt to give the actual figure because I am speaking from memory but it was not, as it were, to proceed to full-scale production or operation of that uranium deposit.

So, it might well be argued that, in response to the Deputy Leader's remark that it is an 'important mine', it clearly had not reached that stage, since the process concerned was capable, according to the proponents, of being operated at a considerably higher level than that which was proposed and put before me as Minister at the time. The Deputy Leader continued to make statements which warrant further examination. Further into his remarks he said:

One must be either for or against uranium mining. One cannot be in support of some mines and against others unless there is a good reason for it.

He then went on to say that the Labor Party had adduced no reason and that, therefore, there was something strange and contradictory in our attitude on this matter.

For example, he stated that the South Australian Labor Party was in support of the Roxby Downs project but that it was not supporting the Honeymoon and Beverley mines although the end product from the mines was the same, that is, uranium oxide, or yellowcake as it is more commonly known. It seems to me that the honourable member failed to perceive the differences involved, not necessarily as related to the end product. The Deputy Leader conveniently overlooks that the Labor Party had stated in its pre-election policy only a few months before that it supported Roxby Downs as a uranium project, and no other.

The Labor Party was elected to govern the State for the next three years and, clearly, there did not seem to be any concern in the minds of the people of South Australia as to the policy adopted by the Labor Party regarding uranium prospects in South Australia. It may well be fair to say that a dispassionate observer looking at these aspects of Labor Party policy could argue that certain different points in that policy do not seem to be logical. However, due to human nature people do not function in a purely logical way. There is nothing wrong with politicians, electors, or groups of people and organisations in society having certain beliefs or putting forward certain policies which some people might consider to be anachronistic but which are given endorsement determining whether or not a Party is elected. Never have I heard the Deputy Leader approach this matter from that angle, and I think it is about time he recognised this aspect. I began by saying that at the very least it was a distortion by the Deputy Premier to say that Beverley and Honeymoon were two important mines at the time when they were not granted approval to proceed.

I have already dealt with the Honeymoon prospect. The Beverley prospect was a vastly different one. Although I understand it will be completed soon, to date the EIS for Beverley has not been completed. I understand that the proponents, having elected to accept the Government's offer of a retention lease, elected of their own free will to continue with the preparation of the EIS. The prospect is only 1½ years down the track and has only reached the stage of final preparation of the EIS. I stress that it would seem to be a gross exaggeration to describe that as being an important mine.

In the arguments put forward by the Deputy Leader he stated that the reason given by me as Minister on behalf of the State Government for the non-approval of the Honeymoon and Beverley prospects had no validity. He said that three excuses were given for closing down those mines, the first being that there was a division of opinion in the community and that the Australian Democrats did not agree with the operation of those mines. The Deputy Leader said that that was quite a nonsensical argument to advance. But why is it nonsensical? In fact, it is totally true and accurate, and the situation has not changed. That was the position which applied at that time and which still applies now. In regard to the second reason given by the Government, namely, that there was the possibility of a difficult market situation, the Deputy Leader said that that had no validity. However, one need only refer here to a recent article in the *Advertiser* concerning comments made by no less a person than Sir Arvi Parbo in which direct reference was made to the uranium market scene that will apply world-wide for perhaps the next decade or 15 years. I want to make available to the House some interesting facts and forecasts in regard to world-wide market requirements and the available resources in the world to meet those requirements in terms of the provision of nuclear energy. As I do not have those figures available to me at present, and because I believe that those details will be of some help in the discussion, I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

COORONG CARAVAN PARK

Adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. Jennifer Adamson:

That this House condemns the payment of $194 000 to the Storemen and Packers Union for the redevelopment of the Coorong Caravan Park on the recommendation of the Federal and State Governments, overriding the priorities for approval of grants for the development of regional tourism resorts as laid down by the Department of Tourism and breaching the undertaking of the Minister of Tourism given in the 1983-84 Estimates Committee that Commonwealth job creation funds would be used to augment the inadequate Department of Tourism funds allocated for the purpose of assisting approved projects.

(Continued from 19 September. Page 993.)

Mr LEWIS (Mallee): I rise on this occasion to rebut the contribution made by the member for Florey and, furthermore, I indicate my support for the motion moved by the member for Coles. I have known the member for Florey for as long as he has been in this place, and I have enjoyed a good many discussions with him. I often find that he is coherent and logical and that the facts in the information that he provides in the course of those discussions are relevant to the subject. However, there was an exception on this occasion. He attempted to argue, using sophistry as the mechanism—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Mallee that the motion before the House contains nothing about a character reference involving the member for Florey.

Mr LEWIS: On this occasion I was explaining to the House that I find it impossible to agree with the member for Florey—quite an exception to the case that I find generally.

Mr Mathwin: Do you ever agree with the member for Florey?

Mr LEWIS: I can agree with the member for Florey on a good many things, but on this occasion he has tried to con us, and that is regrettable. The Storemen and Packers Union certainly was given a handout to which it was not entitled. It is the kind of thing that would have been deplored had it been given by some other Government of an opposite political persuasion to an organisation such as, say, the

Employers Federation. I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.*]

COUNTRY FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 16 October. Page .)

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): The Bill under debate tonight proposes major surgery by way of amendment to the Country Fire Services Act, 1976. In blunt terms, the effect of the amendment, if accepted, is to sack the current Board of 10 members, reappoint an alternative and interim Board of five members, advertise nationally the position of Country Fire Services Director in this State and create a new position for occupation by an officer to be titled under the Bill as Chief Fire Officer.

When tabling the statement accompanying the Bill in this House yesterday, the Minister said by way of explanation that it was his intention to provide for a restructured Board and that that Board was intended to be an interim measure pending the establishment next year of the statutory Bushfires Authority. He said that the Authority will be fully representative of the various groups concerned with the threat of bushfires and will play a prominent role in fire prevention strategies for South Australia. He went on to say, however, that that new Authority will have only an advisory role in respect of the management of the CFS. He said:

> Following the establishment of the Bushfires Authority, the interim CFS Board established by this Bill will be abolished and the Director of the CFS will be responsible to the Minister for the day-to-day administration of the Services and solely responsible, with the volunteer brigades, for the fighting of fires.

The Minister went on to say that the Government believes that this Bill represents a significant restructuring of the Country Fire Services and that it is necessary to ensure that the volunteer brigades receive the headquarters support which is an essential part of the protection they provide to the community.

At this stage I want to refer to a section of the Act which it is quite deliberately intended to preserve as the basic objectives and guidelines to future boards and/or authorities acting in the interests of the community at large, that is, with respect to Country Fire Services. The basic responsibilities are that the Board or the structure servicing the community is required to:

1. Prevent and suppress bushfires and other fires.
2. Co-ordinate regional and district firefighting organisations in emergencies.
3. Conduct research, fire protection projects and training courses.
4. Review and report to the Minister on the most modern and effective methods of firefighting.
5. Make payments of grants to local authorities for purchase of equipment and maintenance of firefighting facilities.
6. Test and appraise firefighting equipment and other equipment for firefighting and publish the results for the benefit of the Country Fire Services organisations.

In order to carry out those principal functions the rank and file of the Country Fire Services is of course to be preserved, and I think it is worthy to note in this debate, by way of recognition of those services, the field structure numerically of the organisation. There are seven CFS regions in South Australia's rural communities; that is, the communities outside of metropolitan Adelaide and those 19 country municipalities which are serviced by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. There are 468 brigades within that broad acre area of the State, and there are more than 15 000 registered volunteers as at the last registration date. Added to this enormous contingent of volunteer fire fighters as attached to their respective local organisations, there are 38 personnel employed by the CFS as salaried staff to administer the Services and, of course, as required by the existing and the potential Act, to uphold the objectives as I have outlined them.

The question now arises as to whether this quite significant move by the Government is justified and, if so, whether it is conditionally or wholly supported by the Parliament. At the outset, may I indicate to the Minister that the Opposition supports the principal objectives laid down in the measure that he introduced yesterday, and recognises that the Minister of the day really had no alternative but to take those steps as outlined both basically in the Bill and more extensively in his second reading explanation accompanying the introduction of that Bill as well as, of course, the contents of the Ministerial statement which pre-empted the tabling of those other papers.

I think it is appropriate to indicate also that, within the ambit of the justification for this new measure, it is true to say that a host of reports dating back to at least August 1982, on file and on public record, indicates clearly the need for the action to be taken. Without seeking or indeed exploiting this opportunity to canvass the rather sad history of events that have occurred and continued to occur during the interim, I feel it is important to at least identify on the record the listing of those reports which, in the main, are consistent in their recommendations and accordingly have led to the action taken by the Government.

On 23 August 1982, following a period of consultation with representatives of the Board and senior officers of the CFS staff, I attended a meeting of the State's fire fighting association delegates and put clearly on the record without apology an emphasis on our appreciation for the voluntary component of the CFS organisation.

I explained to the gathering on that day that those volunteers were, and indeed still are, the backbone of the CFS, comprising the men and women in the front ranks who are the real body of the CFS; that all other activities and expenditure should and must be focused on maximising their effort in the field; and that we (the Government of the day), local government, the Board and headquarters administration staff—in that order—were there to guide, co-ordinate and serve those volunteers, not to dictate to them.

I told the meeting that if that was not so then those areas which were not directed to that end were surplus and must be terminated. As I said before, I do not want to canvass at great length the history of events that led to the current situation. However, it is important to signal that even back as far as 23 August 1982, officially on the public record that statement was made to the CFS hierarchy in the presence of the State's fire fighting association delegates.

It was also on that occasion that the message was delivered: that, in the light of recent escalations, and indeed in the light of recent evidence of mismanagement, I called on the Board to insist on tighter financial management and to ensure a fairer and more appropriate apportionment of funds to local government to assist in the primary role of fire protection and suppression.

To support and assist that view and the situation as it existed at the time, I appointed an accountant to examine the Board's financial management and priority setting procedures. A month or so later in 1982 a report on investigations into the financial management procedures and related policies of the Country Fire Services Board was tabled. As a result of an investigation into the management procedures of the CFS, that very first report set the ball in train and identified the sort of short-fall that led us to the situation in which we are now.

As pointed out by the Minister yesterday when tabling his Bill, subsequent to the report to which I referred there have been several more. Indeed, over the past two years reports following investigations into the financial administration of the Country Fire Services include special reports to the Treasurer by the Auditor-General, the Public Service Board, the corporate review of external consultants and, of course, the recent substantial report of the Public Accounts Committee of this very House. In addition, there has been the Lewis-Scriven Report and the report of the Coroner following the Ash Wednesday bushfires. The Minister said that these reports have also had an impact on the administration of the CFS. Collectively, they bear a message that is positive and consistent. As a result of the recommendations in those respective reports, the Government some weeks later, after the tabling of the Public Accounts Committee report (the most recent of all), took the action which led us to the situation in which we are now.

Having briefly canvassed that history of events purely to signal our support for the Bill and recapitulate the justification for the action taken, it is not my intention, nor is it the intention of other members on this side, to reflect on the personalities or even give them a mention in relation to this rather sad subject of the past, but more particularly to—

The SPEAKER: Order! Yes, I am very glad that the honourable member has said that. I thank him for that remark and hope that all other members of the House will bear it in mind. The honourable member for Alexandra.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: Mr Speaker, I appreciate your attention to the address this evening and to that aspect of it in particular, because we believe that fire fighting and protection of the community's assets and its people in the field are as important as is the protection of assets in the metropolitan area that are protected by another organisation. Accordingly, it is our objective in this exercise to facilitate the passage of the Minister's Bill and, in so doing, to identify just a few of those areas that do present some risk and that we would like him to address in the rolling process of appointments that he has outlined.

I first draw the Minister's attention in this regard to a matter which has concerned me for a long time. In South Australia, within the Country Fire Services organisation in particular, there has been a genuine effort to provide manpower, material and equipment to protect the community in the event of a fire. One could go on for ever, as others have reported, about how effectively that part of the CFS function has been achieved.

However, I want to talk about the need for more effort by that very organisation in preventing the outbreak or wide spread of bushfires in South Australia. I am particularly pleased to find that on pages 251 and 252 of his report of 20 July 1984, the Coroner, refering to that very subject, states:

> It is my own view that such an organisation, the CFS, should be available when required. The activities of such a group of people would include those of fire reduction in areas where this is a real problem. The evidence given at all inquests, including the South-Eastern inquests, indicates fuel overloading is a real problem throughout the State in a number of council areas. In this particular regard most councils no doubt experience great difficulty in obtaining the necessary staff in the area of hazard reduction. Indeed the financing of such an undertaking would no doubt impose extreme financial hardship on councils generally.
>
> Another important aspect and function of the CFS authority relates to the overall review and supervision of hazard reduction. This topic will be dealt with shortly under another heading. However, it is apparent from the evidence that the CFS Board as such has never exercised its powers under section 51 of the Country Fire Services Act. As I understand this section, the Board has power to enforce the removal of hazardous fuel loading in areas where it is considered to be dangerous. I emphasize that in my view the Board should only exercise these powers when it becomes imperative to do so, namely, when owners or occupiers of land or councils in particular areas have failed in this endeavour.
>
> The removal or indeed reduction of such hazards will not prevent the outbreak of fire. It is obvious, however, that such reduction would substantially alleviate the situation once a fire has occurred. This argument is highlighted by the events which transpired after the outbreak of the Chapman Crescent fire. I refer, of course, to the reasonably high fuel loading on the slopes of Mount Osmond.
>
> I appreciate, of course, that the suggestions made necessarily involve the outlay of a good deal of money. Nonetheless, it is essential that money be found to implement the undertakings as suggested or indeed any other suggestions which may recommend themselves to the authorities.

The Coroner also went on to say the following about the councils and other statutory authorities:

> There is serious onus on local councils and other authorities such as National Parks and Wildlife, Woods and Forests Department, etc. to reduce fire hazards in areas under their control.
>
> In relation to residential areas, the initial onus rests with the owner, particularly of vacant land, to render it safe as regards removing fire hazards. However, the duty in my view does not stop there. In cases where the land is improved, it is a matter of common sense that the occupier should take all reasonable steps to remove dangerous vegetation. The evidence clearly showed that this was not done, certainly in places in Mount Osmond, and indeed in Greenhill. I have no doubt that there are other localities where this situation applies, i.e., Blackwood and adjoining areas.

I believe the fact that the Coroner has paid such considerable attention to this subject reinforces the argument and the need for the CFS in South Australia to spread its application of duty. Indeed, on so many occasions when it sets out to train its personnel in the field, the CFS, rather than do that training of a cowboys and indians style on local ovals or vacant allotments for convenience, should apply itself positively to a burning programme within its respective communities in a useful way, and undertake projects of deliberate and strategic burning off in those regions where the debris has so far accrued as to create a potential danger.

Accordingly, by this method the risk is lessened. The basis for fires to occur and spread is minimised and at the end of the line, of course, in the event of a fire, whether it be from natural causes or otherwise, the chances of its spreading are minimised as well. Indeed, we have seen enough in this State of what can happen and has happened as a result of failure to apply land management in the sense that debris clean-ups of a positive kind are undertaken. This strategic burning has been for generations in this country a part of basic and essential land management, and there is no reason in these modern times why that practice cannot or should not be pursued.

Never will there be sufficient funds to combat wild fires in the future unless we reduce the cause. Fire can be used as a tool of development. We have used fire as a tool of property management and as a tool of protection of our life and assets. Certainly in more recent times and under closer settlement of our broad acre areas of the State, there has progressively been a need to be more careful and to give more consideration to neighbours in the practice of burning off. But, indeed, the need still remains for continued strategic burning of accumulated debris at both household and broad acre levels as an annual maintenance practice for everyone.

I repeat that, unless the CFS, councils and their respective brigades in those locations around the State co-operate with the community at large and demonstrate their attention to this management practice, we will fail to get the message across to the individuals of the community at large, and further devastating fires will occur. The elimination of the devastation of major hot fires in the periods of the year when it is difficult with the best of equipment to manage such outbreaks is only aggravated as a result of lack of maintenance in the interim. In the community's overall environmental asset and life protection consideration, there

is a conflict between the so called conservation and management good sense.

That is true, and it is reasonable to respect the views of the environmentalists of our community and to ensure that our native vegetation, particularly the tender plants in our native vegetation range, is preserved. However, unless a certain amount of burning is done by way of management as a part of property practice, the whole lot will be burnt and destroyed; we have seen evidence of this too often. In fact, it is a matter of burn or be burnt, and I know which of those two alternatives I would choose. I know which of those I personally have practised, as, indeed, have my predecessors in the broad acre areas of the State. I know what a positive protective measure that is, and that, although being insured may be of comfort in the meantime, it is no answer to the devastation that a fire can cause, because, even though the money might be paid out by way of compensation after a fire has occurred, so many of our accrued assets are irreplaceable.

Quite clearly, it comes back to the point initially made: there is a need for a greater degree of positive attention to reducing the cause of fires, the build-up of debris and, therefore, the basis for such devastation that we have seen occur, and admittedly, at the same time, to continue to apply due attention to the machinery and the requirements in the event of an outbreak.

I want to raise a couple of other matters in relation to this subject without seeking unduly to delay the proceedings of the House. One relates to this direction of restructuring that is proposed. In the Bill it is intended that the office of Director be preserved, albeit subject to national advertising, application, and ultimate reappointment or appointment of a person to fill the position. From then on, the Minister has signalled that it is his intention that the Director be immediately responsible to him as Minister and not, as previously, to the Board. Likewise it is the Minister's stated intention to have the ultimate authority of having some 20 persons also responsible to the Minister, albeit in an advisory capacity. This collective restructuring really puts the CFS organisation into a departmental category rather than into the independent or autonomous statutory authority category as presently prevails.

As an Opposition we have no real argument about that, but I would like to signal the risk of its becoming somewhat bureaucratically oriented and, if we are not very careful, losing the significance of the voluntary element. I repeat that the voluntary element of the CFS is indeed its backbone. It is the real organisation—the one for which I know all members of this House have a great deal of respect. It is terribly important in my view that that volunteer system which we have in South Australia and which we have enjoyed over the years, is not eroded, sabotaged, disadvantaged or disenchanted by the moves that are currently being debated. It is of extreme importance that we do not allow this organisation, known as the Country Fire Services of South Australia, to become just another departmental system that is taken for granted.

In conclusion, I signal that the risk of that occurring is real unless we retain close and sensitive attention to the voluntary component that I have mentioned several times. It is likewise important that, during the process of consultation with this advisory authority that is to be set up, or has indeed in the meantime under the canopy of the shortened board structure, the Government has access to the regional supervisors, and indeed invites them to meet and feed into the system their views about the position as it applies in their respective areas, that consultation of this kind takes place more often than it has over the past years and that, in lieu of regional conferences once a year (which is the situation now and has been the practice) the Government or the Minister is urged to bring these people together more often than that.

I know that the Minister has been made aware of views along these lines as expressed by Mr John Downing, of Kangaroo Island, a recently announced life member of the CFS. I know that he is aware of the need for consultation in this area, for close communication between the field and the administration office. I know that the Minister recognises that in the meantime many of the problems associated with the administration, funding and distribution of that funding as it applies to the CFS has occurred as a result of a breakdown in communication. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of setting up that line of discussion, if not as I have outlined then in any other way in which it is reasonably practical to organise.

I recognise that the 20 person advisory authority is intended to draw personnel and representatives from a whole range of country regions—from local government, brigade levels, other professional levels, and so on. A genuine attempt has been made by the Government in this instance to ensure that the views of all parties interested in this subject are collected together to form an advisory panel for the Government. On a subject as important as this, I do not believe that one can go too far in exploring and encouraging the possibility of the lines of communication being maximised rather than confined or contained as allegedly they appear to have been for too long.

The other point that I make to the Minister in this process of restructuring the organisation is that he should be careful to address the subject of subsidy to the country regional councils and brigades, and that he seeks, with all the assistance and support that he can muster, the retention of the principle which incorporates the 50 per cent subsidy system that we have preserved in this State for a number of years. That system seeks to help those who clearly help themselves, and the Minister should be careful not to allow the 50 per cent subsidy system to apply on the open cheque book basis to the community at large or enable the richer councils to qualify, and thereby become richer, while the poorer councils and brigades that cannot meet large amounts to represent their 50 per cent become poorer and are denied essential equipment.

Linked with that basic principle of preserving the 50/50 formula is an assessment that is done each year prior to the fire season of the needs of each brigade within the State by submission of their requirement. Indeed, those determinations for subsidy qualification should be done on a needs basis and not just on a wants basis or on the basis of a person or organisation being financially well heeled. The amount that is to be identified for subsidies for councils and brigades for equipment, and so on, each year should be determined by the Government and not by a board, director or officer of the organisation and, having had that figure identified each year, the board and/or the administrative officers of the organisation can set about this prioritising of the multiple requests that come in from the community at large. Certainly there has been an attempt in recent times, as I understand it, at an administrative level at CFS, to contain the open-ended cheque book approach to this subject. I hope that that effort is appreciated, expanded and, in fact, insisted upon by the Government so that at no time in the future are we faced with a run-away of the Budget as has unfortunately occurred previously.

I believe that, with better lines of communication and clear guidelines on the qualifying criteria for subsidy, that a greater amount of co-operation will follow from the community at large. I further believe that there needs to be urgent discussions with suppliers of standard basic material in this State so that there is a pool from which the community can draw rather than independently ordering their own

requirements on an *ad hoc* basis around the State. Naturally, items of equipment will be required in some districts that are not appropriate to apply in others, but generally across the State there can be a basic cab chassis design and a basic pumping and hosing equipment design to suit most instances.

To that basic unit design specialty facilities may be added. Until we have a pool of units from which the organisations can draw, we will have this continual competitive cross-ordering and wild buying situation in the field on a one-off basis. We all know what happens in relation to the price when that sort of situation persists. It is a business and ought to be treated as such and as an ingredient of the State's rural area management. If so treated it should be planned and strategically approached in that fashion from the ordering of the material to the maintenance of the properties, whether they be publicly or privately owned.

Having mentioned the matter of publicly owned land, I believe we can lift our game in that respect also. I think that the management of publicly owned lands in South Australia could be described generally as deplorable. We have many council reserves, large holdings of the Woods and Forests Department, and many thousands, if not millions, of hectares of national park and reserves of one kind or another and wildlife areas which are all screaming for management, albeit at varying degrees.

I know that most of our district councils try very hard to maintain their stone, water and gravel reserves in a tidy condition. I know, too, that some, if not most, of our councils make some attempt to keep their roadside vegetation under control as well. However, there are many miles of roadside vegetation and reserve areas around the State which have a build up of debris, and this really creates a tinder box and an enormous burden to firefighters on those occasions when fires start by whatever method. I think most of us are aware that these vast areas of parks and reserves within South Australia, through lack of funds, lack of understanding of the need to annually maintain those areas, and lack of a responsible approach to the subject generally, are at a point of neglect and contain accumulated debris which also creates a dangerous tinder box situation, as we have witnessed in the near Adelaide region, in particular.

I mention the Woods and Forest Department, and in so doing I respect the effort it has applied to the general maintenance of its properties, including plantations of particularly exotic or commercial plant varieties. However, even that Department, despite its efforts to provide fire protection, fire access tracks, fire breaks and fire protection equipment, has holdings which do not get the attention that they require. There are areas of Woods and Forest land within the near metropolitan region of Adelaide, just at the back of the Hills and adjacent to densely settled residential areas, other land being adjacent to primary producing properties, and collectively those various areas, in my view, constitute an additional hazard in these vulnerable regions near metropolitan Adelaide. Rather than continue to plant and replant those regions held by the Woods and Forests Department, it would be my view that it should phase down its operation in those vulnerable districts and, indeed, move further out in to the South-East or somewhere else in a suitable soil-type region.

It seems to me to be short sighted to create yet bigger, wider and more vulnerable fire hazard areas adjacent to metropolitan Adelaide, in the Adelaide Hills in particular, where there is the combination of residential zones, rural properties, parks and wildlife reserves and Woods and Forests Department activities, as I have outlined. Particularly in the very steep areas of the Hills, it would be good management to phase out rather than extend that activity. I say that not with any prejudice towards the Department which I previously—and I would hope later—represented but in the interests of the community at large.

Unless we reduce the fire hazard and the cause of such devastation, then no Government, no local government body and no community totally will be able to afford the manpower and equipment required to combat wildfire outbreaks. It does happen. We know that under the best of management and with the utmost care fires can escape from households, barbecues, picnic sites and all sorts of other situations, quite by accident.

We know, too, that we have in the community a few people—fortunately only a very few people—who seem bent on causing discomfort and destruction by deliberately lighting fires from time to time. In addition, there is the odd occasion when lightning strikes cause bushfire and fieldfire outbreaks. In order to be ready, I cannot emphasise enough the importance of reducing the accumulated material and debris and recognising that it is a role of the CFS to insist upon the reduction of the hazard as being just as important as being ready to deal with a fire as and when it occurs.

May I conclude my remarks by way of summary. First, as an Opposition, we support the legislation introduced by the Minister of Emergency Services to restructure the CFS organisation. Secondly, we urge the Minister to consider the methods of management that have been outlined to him tonight by the Opposition so far, in order to better protect the community's assets and in turn reduce the burden on public revenue for the purposes of protecting us in the event of outbreaks. Thirdly, we emphasise our recognition of the voluntary personnel who are associated with the CFS organisation in South Australia; and, finally, we urge the Minister, in all his deliberations and considerations for funding for equipment and administration of this portfolio to acknowledge their place and not allow them to be hampered in their public spirited activities by the bureaucracy that can and invariably does grow as a result of direct Government relationships, as is proposed, rather than under an independent board or autonomous authority of the kind that has previously prevailed. I wish the Minister and the Government well in their exercise, having regard to those factors I have outlined.

Mr GUNN (Eyre): I support the Bill and I am pleased that the Government has firmly grasped the nettle and dealt with this difficult situation in a constructive manner. As someone who has had a close association with the CFS for a long time, and who is very much aware of the great work the volunteers do throughout the length and breadth of South Australia, I want to see the CFS maintained as an effective, efficient and responsible group of people.

I want to see the Country Fire Service maintained as an effective and efficient group of people. The volunteers should be given all the assistance and encouragement possible to enable them to carry out effectively the role that they have to play in our society. They must be supported by an effective and efficient headquarters and have available to them the best equipment to help them in their overall planning and administration of fire prevention in country areas.

I have been concerned about the administration for some time. I am not overly critical of the immediate past Board. I believe that a great number of the people involved have been hardworking and dedicated people whose sole objective was to protect country people and the community against the ravages of bushfires. Probably a few of the people who have been in charge of the administration have been a little too keen and engaged in self-publicity and glitter when a more practical and realistic approach would have helped. However, there is no point in my reflecting any further or

looking backwards, because that will not solve anything in the future.

When the new authority is set up, I hope that at least some of the people who have been members of the Country Fire Services Board previously are given the opportunity to participate in the new forum. Many of them have a great deal of knowledge and expertise which would certainly assist the CFS. I believe that it is appropriate for the Minister of the day to have the authority (in those rare cases when required) to direct the Director of the CFS. However, I think the manner in which the current legislation has been drafted in that respect makes this provision quite inappropriate. On reflection, I think the Premier would agree that the statements he made when he was trying to upstage the Tonkin Government were rather unpalatable. Those of us who follow these matters closely would remember him standing in this place (I would say prompted by someone fairly senior in the CFS to make various critical statements) and accusing the previous Government of starving the CFS of funds. I think he would realise that the course of action that the former Premier and Minister were setting in train was absolutely correct. It is unfortunate that he did not take such a responsible attitude as that we are now taking and give the Minister at the time all the support that he deserved.

I am disappointed that the Government has not grasped the nettle and amended section 52 (6) of the Act in an appropriate manner. I had intended to move for the suspension of Standing Orders to move a new clause but, as I do not wish to delay the proceedings unduly, I will not do that. However, I will float my amendments which reflect what I believe should take place. I support the clarification provided by the Government, but it does not go anywhere near far enough. Most members would be aware of the unfortunate fire that occurred this year in the Mount Remarkable National Park when National Parks and Wildlife officers behaved in a manner which was not appropriate to the situation. They should have allowed the local CFS officers to move in and take the necessary action. However, volunteers stood around for three days while these people played games and were engaged in activities which in many cases were quite unnecessary. I believe the Act should be amended to give the CFS personnel engaged in containing a fire the authority to move into any national park and take whatever action is necessary to extinguish a fire as soon as possible. Accordingly, my proposed amendments are as follows:

Clause 8, page 3—
After line 6 insert the following paragraph:
(aa) by striking out from subsection (6) the passage 'a government reserve' and substituting the passage 'a forest reserve or a native forest reserve';.
Line 11—Leave out 'and' and insert the following paragraph:
(ab) by striking out from subsection (9) the passage 'a government reserve' and substituting the passage 'a forest reserve or a native forest reserve';.
After line 13 insert the following word and paragraph:
and
(c) by inserting after subsection (9) the following subsection:
(10) In this section—
'forest reserve' and 'native forest reserve' means land declared to be a forest reserve or a native forest reserve respectively under the Foresty Act, 1950.

This refers to an authority that the Woods and Forests Department has exercised quite properly for a long time. It is not intended to interfere with that, as those concerned have been quite responsible. I have referred to these at this stage because it was my intention to move to have a new clause inserted, but I will not delay the proceedings. I could refer at great length to the unfortunate happening at the Mount Remarkable National Park where for three days hundreds of volunteers were sitting around and not engaged productively while the National Parks and Wildlife Service could not make up its mind about whether it would bring in bulldozers. They are held in the greatest contempt by a large number of people who were involved with that fire.

Senior people in the CFS were amazed: they could have had the fire extinguished on the first night. It was fortunate that the wind did not swing to the north as predicted, in which case the fire could have broken out of the park and ended up anywhere. They were very lucky that they did not have a real disaster on their hands. I was absolutely astounded when I went to a debriefing session and heard some of the comments made by the National Parks officers, who I understand were in charge of that fire. I intend to introduce a private member's Bill in the near future in an endeavour to rectify this unfortunate situation.

I sincerely hope that, whatever direction is taken under these new arrangements, the close association which local government has had with the CFS is maintained. I believe that local government should be involved, as it is able to play an important role of organising and assisting, and its role should in no way be diminished or altered. I have been concerned about recent trends involving the programme design which would eventually eliminate any overseeing role that local government has.

I wish the new Board well. I understand that a most distinguished and responsible former Director-General of Lands, Mr Taeuber, will be appointed as the new Chairman. I think he will do a fine job, as he is an excellent officer who is most experienced. In my dealings with him, I have found him to be a person with excellent judgment, and I am sure that correct decisions will be made and that the CFS will be put on a sound footing. I have every confidence in Mr Taeuber's ability to carry out the difficult role that he has been given on a temporary basis. I am sure that on the new Board there will be adequate representation of volunteers as well as local government.

I support the Bill, and I believe that the report of the Public Accounts Committee clearly demonstrates the need for Parliamentary committees to examine various statutory authorities. I commend the members of the committee for the manner in which they delivered their report. Obviously, they would have been aware that the report would attract considerable attention and that heads would roll, but that is the duty of a committee of that nature, and I commend it for having the courage to see the matter through. I was placed in a similar situation some years ago, and when one is involved in proceedings involving an error of this nature it certainly causes one concern. However, I believe that, if one is absolutely confident that the information one has is correct, then a committee investigating such a matter must report.

I commend all the members of the committee for the job that they did. I hope that it is not too long before a separate Parliamentary committee is established to examine all statutory authorities in this State. I believe that that is long overdue. Reports such as the PAC report on the CFS and the report on the Hospitals Department, as well as reports on other departments, strengthen one's resolve to see that in future more Parliamentary and Select Committees are appointed. I look forward to the Committee stage. I hope that the CFS continues to be supported by the community. Such organisations are the only way to protect the community from the ravages of bushfires, and we must have strong and efficient voluntary organisations. I want to again emphasise what the member for Alexandra had to say.

There have to be within the country areas of this State, particularly in Government reserves, organised programmes of controlled burning off and if the National Parks and other organisations cannot understand that, then I certainly hope that the Government will send appropriate people to the United States, to Colorado or California, such places as

that, to see at first hand the burning off operations that take place there. In my recent visit to Colorado I could not help but be impressed by the manner in which those people set out to control burn large areas of native bushland. People such as the member for Alexandra have had experience in developing with burning off operations. I am amazed that the National Parks and Wildlife Service has not assisted the control of bushfires by having organised programmes of grazing off in certain areas and in others controlled burn-offs. Most farmers do it.

I had a few days on my farm last week and dropped a lot of matches there. The National Parks should do the same thing. It is far better to take the step now than try to burn off when you have a temperature of 110 degrees and a wind blowing from the north. I think anyone with experience would know this. I also think they are very derelict in their administration by not immediately instituting controlled burning off of large areas of the State. It would not hurt the native vegetation. It would provide adequate feed for the animals, because when the growth regenerates that is the sort of food that the animals require. I do not think it is necessary to make any further comments. I support the Bill and commend the Government for having the courage to see through what has been a rather difficult period.

Mr LEWIS (Mallee): The Liberal Party has already had its position stated through the spokesman on these matters, the member for Alexandra, a man who has had considerable personal experience in the field. I think honourable members ought to look closely at what he had to say, in that it underlined the reasons why the Government felt compelled to take some action. A number of options were available to the Government, but it has chosen this particular strategy. I do not believe that security against bushfires in South Australia, rural or elsewhere, is going to be achieved by bringing the Board under the direct Ministerial control as suggested. Quite clearly, that decision to bring the Country Fire Services under direct Ministerial control, such as envisaged by the Bill, has struck a great deal of fear into the minds of a large number of volunteers in the service.

In the last 26 hours, since the news was released about the sacking of the Board and the modification of the restructured Board and its relationship to executive Government, a great deal of concern has been expressed to me, more than I have received on any other issue in such a short time. The people in my electorate who belong to the CFS and who have their names down as volunteers are also the same people who have recent memories of the way in which Governments of a socialist ilk (this one) treated the St John Ambulance. They know the direction that has taken. They fear the same thing is likely to happen in the CFS. They now know that the provision of the ambulance service they receive is outside and beyond their control and likely to be further modified to remove volunteer participation from that service and thereby increase its cost. That is tragic and it is also unnecessary. In this instance it has a parallel, in that the same kinds of moves are being made against the CFS as we have known it. It is a pity that it ever became necessary to do what it has been decided must be done without consultation with the volunteers. That is tragic.

Mr Klunder: It is also not true. We had a hearing in Mount Gambier to ask the volunteers what they thought.

Mr LEWIS: It is true. What about the volunteers on the Eyre Peninsula, the Mid North, the Lower North, the North Mallee, the Murray Lands, the Mallee, the Upper South-East?

Mr Klunder: We invited them to make written submissions to the Committee if they so wished and some of them did.

Mr LEWIS: That is hardly consultation.

Mr Klunder: We also invited them to talk to us.

Mr LEWIS: What is more, the Public Accounts Committee, I would remind the member for Newland, is not the Government. The Government itself has decided to make these changes without consultation. The information and opinion collected by the Public Accounts Committee have certainly been a substantial base upon which the Government decided to act. However, it did not seek the opinions from people as a Government. It did not seek the opinions of those volunteers. Many of the most senior men in the CFS who are volunteers have expressed their dismay at being ignored, because they felt there was going to be an opportunity for them to present a case for restructuring somewhat differently.

In the last 26 hours they have put a variety of propositions to me which are somewhat different to the option which the Government has now chosen. I would call upon the Minister, in the course of his reply to the second reading debate, to give an unqualified assurance that there is no intention, either now or at any time in the future, by virtue of this rearrangement of the relationship and administrative structure of the CFS, to diminish the role and responsibility of the volunteer work force within the CFS in providing the communities from which they come with the sort of fire protection which they desperately need and must have. Without that they will suffer a substantial and devastating loss of morale, because they will be uncertain about the benefits their efforts will confer on their respective communities. Any attempt to regionalise brigades and take over their control by permanent full-time paid staff will result in a diminution of support from within those communities. That would be tragic.

There are other reasons why I think a removal of the present measure of involvement, autonomy and authority of volunteers in the localities from which they come (in determining fire control policy at the instant at which the need arises and in determining the strategy preseason) will also be detrimental. It will not only increase the costs by having to pay people salaries to do the jobs which to date have been done by very competent volunteers, but it will also remove that huge pool of knowledge (as to the topography, vegetation and the risks involved) which those people have in relation to their localities where they would be either meeting the menace head on where there is a conflagration of fire to be fought or, in the context of determining how best to avert one, at the time that burning off needs to be undertaken in late spring every year.

That brings me to comment on the point referred to by our spokesman on such matters, the member for Alexandra, in his remarks about section 51. It is still there: it is left intact and was referred to, as he said, by the Coroner in his report earlier this year (I think it was July).

It is a pity that the CFS Board had never exercised its power, indeed therefore its responsibility, in referring to and using this power. Had it done so, an important aspect of its work would have been more effectively performed. I fear that it probably did not do so because of its concern that it would be—as an organisation and a Board—attacked by ignorant elements within the conservation movement. They are ignorant in that they do not really understand that the only way to ensure that native plants and animals can be just as secure from the ravages of high heat burns at the height of summer (when fires will be more devastating and travel faster) is to burn through those heavily fuel laden areas with predetermined regularity to remove the fuel layer.

European man did not, by his impact on the Australian environment, make such practices imperative; no. In fact, that was the most recent occupiers of this continent, the most recent race of people we call Aborigines (a misnomer in this context, because they were not the original settlers of this continent as far as *homo sapiens* is concerned); the

current occupiers have only been here 10 000 to 12 000 years depending on which part of the continent one is referring to. Other people were here before that and the way in which they obtained their livelihood by hunting and gathering is still being unearthed, literally, by anthropologists. They began the practice of strip burning on a regular basis through the bushland on this continent.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: That was in order to survive.

Mr LEWIS: Indeed, it was. There was more than one good reason for that practice. Of course, the first was probably that they observed that wherever fires had burned the regenerating vegetation provided far greater quantities of forage the native fauna depended upon for their food source. It also made it possible for them to more easily harvest the fruits of the shorter younger vegetation which produced flowers and fruit more prolifically closer to the ground.

It also killed off more of the older larger trees each successive burn. They, in turn, fell and, in the process of degradation to the detritis which they became, provided a further source of food for one of the native's sources of food, the witchetty grub, which lived in dead timber (whether it was the butts of dead melaleucas that had fallen over, casuarinas, sheoaks and other so-called oaks, or eucalypts); these stumps and trunks provided the natives with food.

That is why they burnt the bush on a regular basis. It also ensured that in the event that there was a lightning strike that started a fire at the height of summer, such fires did not literally wipe out their entire tribal food source by devastating it in one hit. They had a refuge area, recently burnt, to which they could take themselves and their chattels in the event that such a conflagration got going where they could expect to be reasonably safe. The area most recently burnt had little if any fuel in it.

That practice, conducted over many thousands of years, resulted in the development of an eco-system based on the vegetation which it selected against other forms of vegetation which had been here on the continent prior to their arrival and introduction of this practice to provide us with what we found on arrival here.

Since arrival, European man has cleared large areas of Australian bush, sure, but the areas of natural bush which have remained have not been burned systematically since the tribal Aborigines who had occupied them left them and moved into semi-domesticated permanent dwelling situations. We will have not even discuss the nature of that sort of tribal disestablishment of ranging across lands and, sedentary occupation of a single camp site.

The important thing is that then for the last 60 to 100 years at least much of the bushland has not been burnt in the way it had been burnt previously, other than on occasions when a fire escaped from nearby farmland, which was being burnt off, or when a lightning strike coincidentally burnt it. That is important, because no such burn had occurred, for instance, in much of the bushland that had been left in its natural state through the Adelaide Hills prior to the occasion last year of Ash Wednesday.

I refer to the kinds of consequences which that had in that the conflagration, which got going in the dense fuel layers left in places like the Hills face, exacerbated an already awful situation and made it even more awful and more impossible to control. It was completely beyond any volunteer or professional fire fighter's capacity to control it in that the intense heat generated by the rapid burning of that dense fuel layer created an enormous draught in itself, and generated its own wind and movement on an exponential rate. In doing so, it spread the fire far more rapidly.

Furthermore, that intense heat also resulted in the release of a large number of volatile inflammable gases from the fuel layer that was left there. Fires tended to suddenly explode in what are described as fireballs, which roll along at the same rate as the wind. People were aghast and amazed when they witnessed such happenings. It could have been averted if the kinds of practices specifically referred to in section 51 of the present Act (page 658) and also referred to by the Coroner, had been undertaken as seen in and advocated by that section. I will read that into the record again. The section provides:

> If the Board is of the opinion that the clearing of bush or grass from any land is necessary in order to prevent or inhibit the outbreak or spread of fire, it may, by instrument in writing—
>
> *(a)* ....
>
> *(b)* in any other case require the owner to take such steps to clear the land as may be specified in the instrument.

Among other things, that is what the section states. Maybe the penalty for a person failing to comply with that, set at $200, is insufficient, in my judgment, when one weighs that up against the kinds of consequences that result for the community at large when we have weather conditions such as those prevailing on Ash Wednesday last year. The Coroner naturally referred to those conditions in his report on the Adelaide Hills bushfires of that fateful 16 February day 1983. He said:

> Another important aspect and function of the CFS authority relates to the overall review and supervision of hazard reduction ... It is apparent from the evidence that the CFS Board as such has never exercised its powers under Section 51 of the Country Fire Services Act. As I understand this section, the Board has power to enforce the removal of hazardous fuel loading in areas where it is considered to be dangerous.

We must do something about that from now on and ensure that the new authority that is to be set up exercises that responsibility.

I want to refer to a few other matters and, in the process of doing so, to emphasise some remarks I made earlier. I refer to the invaluable asset that we have in South Australia in the volunteer force of the CFS. It is a large force of many thousands and comprises people who are competent in the use of the equipment that they have provided themselves, albeit at times with subsidies from the public purse. With good cause, those subsidies are provided as an incentive for those volunteers to buy the equipment that they need.

They risk their lives and their livelihood whenever they go out to fight a fire, whether it is a small grass fire or a major conflagration of the kind that we saw on 16 February 1983. One cannot underrate the value of that. It needs to be supported; it needs to be reinforced. These people need the reassurance that I called on the Minister to give, that under no circumstances would they be replaced; nor would their role and responsibility in local administration be diminished. I emphasise the reasons for that, because they are quite simple. These people know the countryside in the localities in which they live. Many of them have grown up there and certainly all of them, at some time or other, as members of their respective crews and brigades, have been out to take a look at where fires might get going, where they will present insurmountable hazards to anyone who wishes to fight them, and where they will otherwise present good opportunities to take control of the situation.

Those people cannot be effectively, efficiently and realistically replaced, either in terms of the responsibility that they would exercise in the hierarchy of the local brigades or in their sheer guts and capacity to do the job. They are familiar with their equipment, as I have said, and they are familiar with the topography. One cannot get the same measure of insight, understanding and familiarity by trying to replace those volunteers, who know their countryside like the back of their hands, with a professionally paid work force. In no circumstances will I ever support any proposal to amalgamate the CFS with any other fire authority such as the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, and one can underline that. It would be a disaster, not only for the organisation,

if the CFS were to be so treated. That is not the most important reason, yet it is important enough—God knows. The most important implication is that one would dispense with those volunteers.

In doing so, one dispenses with their local knowledge and their capacity to minimise risk to themselves as firefighters and maximise the cost benefit to the public in the way in which they go about it. I support the kinds of remarks that have also been made by the member for Eyre about the necessity to burn, in a structured way, a large part of the natural vegetation that is presently under the care, control and management of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in a regular fashion, such as has been done for thousands of years. Unless we do that we are condemned to repeat the kind of disasters that have resulted from our failing to do so in the past. That would be quite a tragedy, not only because it will mean the kind of devastation that occurred in the Mount Boothby National Park in the South-East at the time that it was completely devastated a few years ago but also because it will result in greater risk to the property of people neighbouring those parks.

I want to refer particularly to the Ngarkat National Park, which was created by proclamation a few days before the 1979 election. It was an enormous area of unallotted Crown land in county Chandos, on the corners of which were located a few smaller national parks. It comprises 270 000 to 280 000 hectares, which is substantially larger than several times the area of metropolitan Adelaide. If one takes a slice of the metropolitan area 40 km long and 20 km wide, one has 80 000 hectares. One has to fit three and a half times that into one lump before one has an area equal in size to Ngarkat. It is a huge area of park. There have been big fires in that park which would have burnt Adelaide many times over had they occurred in all or part of the metropolitan area, and they have gone unnoticed, but the effect on the eco system there has been devastating—tragic to say the least.

Unless we can come to terms and develop a management plan that ensures the enduring survival of those species in Ngarkat, by our attitude of simply locking it up and not touching it we are being just as irresponsible as if we put a majestic plough through it. It will within 50 to 100 years in no way resemble what it is today or what it was 50 years ago. We will lose its real benefit such as we saw that benefit in its aesthetic retention as a large slab of natural bushland and wilderness. Anyone who wishes to go there now is able to do so, subject to permission being granted, and ought to do so because there is some fascinating country between the Pinnaroo line, the Upper South-East, Tintinara and Keith.

That is where that park is located: west of the Victorian border, coming westward very close to the townships of Coonalpyn and Tintinara, north of the road that runs east from Keith to the border and through to the Pinnaroo line, where it comes very close to places like Geranium and Lameroo. It is a pity that we have done nothing about that in the past or about any of the other several parks in Mallee District. The electorate that I represent comprises a larger area of national parks than does the rest of the State put together in the settled areas. There are not only parks like the Coorong National Park but also parks like Ngarkat, which I have mentioned and which are huge areas rather than long thin areas, some that are readily accessible and others are not.

Controlled grazing is one way of looking after native vegetation, although not necessarily in parks. Certainly, section 51 necessitates our requiring the new authority that we are setting up to take a responsible view of preventive burning in the future, and I urge the Government to ensure that that board meets the responsibilities that it will get under this amended Act.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I wish to say a few words about this Bill, as it is one of the more important measures that has come before the House this session. Not a lot of work has yet been presented to the Parliament, but this is an important measure, particularly for country members who are closely associated with the CFS and, more particularly, with the volunteers in the CFS. I will keep on mentioning to the House on each occasion that I speak on the subject a matter which concerns me greatly and about which we seem to be having continuing efforts to get much done. I refer to the enormous threat that the hills face zone poses to the people who live directly above it. We may only get a serious fire once in a generation, perhaps one this year or one next year. However, when it happens it can be quite devastating.

Indeed, I predict that it will be devastating if a fire starts in a certain part of the hills face zone and the wind continues to blow from a north-westerly direction for a period of time. An even more major tragedy was narrowly averted on Ash Wednesday by a change in weather conditions; it could have been far more horrific than it was. The hills face zone is retained in the main for the visual enjoyment of residents of metropolitan Adelaide. There has been an increase in the number of parks over the years so that almost the whole of that zone stretching from the south of Adelaide through to the north-eastern suburbs is now under Government control one way or another. That is to preserve our natural heritage for the enjoyment in the main of people on the plains. I do not know how many people visit Morialta, Black Hill or other parks—I would suspect that it involves a relatively small percentage. The pleasure derived from those parts is in the main for the visual enjoyment of metropolitan dwellers. Few people realise the enormous fire hazard that that poses, and this aspect has increased over the years.

The number of parks have tended to proliferate and the suburbs of Adelaide are spread out to the foothills. I speak from personal experience, having lived in the north-eastern hills for 30 years and having seen the population of Adelaide spread right through the areas of Paradise, Modbury, Highbury, and so on. It was all open rural land 30 years ago. Tea Tree Gully was a one horse town where one knew every resident. Those areas are now densely populated flourishing suburbs of Adelaide, and that has increased the fire risk.

Probably the most recent Government acquisition is the land from Anstey Hill to Tea Tree Gully hill. First, the water filtration plant was built with the buffer zone around it, and the rest of the land stretching back to Tea Tree Gully hill is now a reserve. That land was attractive rural land and did not visually upset the residents of metropolitan Adelaide. That land was grazed, and that largely took care of the problem of undergrowth. Since the land has been under Government control, it has not been grazed. So, in effect, what was grazing land—and even the open land—has turned into a wilderness.

What happens with scrubland that is untended and where no slow fire is put through to control the undergrowth? There is a great build-up of debris over the years, and this means that the fire hazard in that park of the Hills increases enormously. On Ash Wednesday a fire was deliberately lit at the Tea Tree Gully end of the park and at the bottom of the hill. I suggest that that is as a result of the population spread to the base of the hills, over which we have no control; nor wish to have any control over it. By the time the fire got out of the park, it was uncontrollable and was

not stopped until it got to the outskirts of Lobethal, many miles away. The fire caused $15 million worth of damage, some of which was irreplacable, and it also cost lives and caused serious injuries. My electorate is the closest to metropolitan Adelaide and encompasses much of the hills face zone, although not that part to which I have referred and which comes into the electorates of the members for Todd and Newland.

The member for Todd on this side of the House has continually asked questions in this place about what is being done in terms of fire protection for that part of the hills face zone. The rest of the hills face zone in the main I have represented in this place for a number of years. I was appalled, having gone into some of those parks. I recall going into Morialta after Ash Wednesday, and thinking that if the fire had occurred in that park how much more serious it could have been. There is a great build up of underbrush and rubbish 18 inches high carpeting the ground with overbush above it.

I am not satisfied with the efforts in relation to fire prevention. I have the highest regard for the volunteer fire service in the field. Those people who have lived in that country—many of them all their lives—understand the country and what has to happen when a fire breaks out. I am far from satisfied with the efforts that have been made to prevent fire and to have the ability to get to the seat of a fire quickly because it is the only way to stop a major conflagration in those areas: the access tracks must be safe and wide so that one can get to the seat of the fire quickly.

In the case of the fire which I experienced, that was impossible. It would have been suicide—in fact murder—if a fire chief had ordered people down the so-called fire track in the Anstey Hill Reserve, because the tracks were about 8ft wide with brush overhanging and wild oats and rubbish up to 4ft because it had not been grazed. To send a fire crew down that track would have been to send them to their death. They had to wait at the top of the reserve a mile away from the seat of the fire and wait for it to come. At the top, the fire would have made any flame thrower seen in warfare look like a child's toy. An enormous flash of flame came at 100 miles an hour from the top of the hill, and a fire unit was burnt in the middle of the bitumen road. A fire is absolutely uncontrollable in that sort of situation. It has to be remedied: access tracks must be cleared so that crews will be safe.

I have referred to access to parks. I took a walk through Morialta Park in my electorate and felt that the hazards were greater than those which existed at Anstey Hill at this time. Nothing would survive under those circumstances. So, there must be access, which is not provided at the moment. There must be areas to which a fire crew can retreat, and that means a very large cleared area. In the case of Anstey Hill, we suggested a good wide track longitudinally across the face of the hills, and were told that it was not on because people in metropolitan Adelaide might see it. We find that belief very hard to live with.

Mr Evans: It might make them aware of the dangers.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: If they happened to be in a situation where the fire came at them over the top, these people would not worry too much about a track. The major point I make is that there must be much greater effort in relation to fire protection so that we minimise the possibility of an enormous conflagration. It will come. The members for Fisher and Murray, along with anyone who has lived in the Hills, knows the situation as well as does anyone.

There must be far greater efforts in relation to fire protection, and one must balance off the so-called claims of those who say that we must leave an area in its pristine, absolutely untouched native state. Nature will put a fire through there sooner or later. There is great resistance to a slow burn, which does not affect the trees but removes a lot of the dead rubbish that forms a carpet over the years. If man does not do it, nature will sooner or later—there is nothing surer. It has happened over the years when lightning strikes from time to time. The Aborigines did this sort of thing in the past. Fire in these circumstances will not destroy the area but will get rid of a lot of the rubbish and the enormous fuel load that builds up over the years. Unless Governments are prepared to do this, we will have another tragedy, and it could be of far greater proportions than anything we have seen thus far. The member for Fisher, I am sure, will make the same point. I think it was the honourable member who told the former Chairman of the Board that his house would burn one day. Am I correct?

Mr Evans: I indicated that to him.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: That was because of the growth, and unless people have lived in those circumstances and been through a fire they do not understand. So, I am far from satisfied. To give one example close to home, because that is what I know intimately—the member for Todd has been raising this matter time and time again in the House, and he raised it again about three weeks ago—it was suggested that Anstey Hill Park be fenced as it was previously and that stock graze it. There is some open paddock around the water filtration plant which is just rubbish; it is not visually attractive. Who is interested in wild oats and weeds three or four feet high?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, something should be done about it. Fencing material was provided but there is no money to put the fence up, we are told. Here we are into another fire season, with the fence half up, and the area not stocked (stock will not graze it soon, anyway)—two years after Ash Wednesday—and there has been no real progress (or only half progress has been made) in protecting that area. There is great consternation among the CFS units in those areas above the hills face zone whose job it is to try to quell these fires as they occur. I would say that every year without fail fires start in this region. The conditions, however, are not explosive, and with a degree of safety crews can be sent in and the fires can be put out. However, that one day may occur, once in a lifetime—it may be this year or next year but as sure as the sun rises every day it will occur—when, unless the absolute maximum fire prevention is provided, there will be a holocaust.

Mr Evans: We haven't had the worst fire.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: My word we have not. It has happened only once in a lifetime in Hobart, but it happened. It has happened only once on an occasion in another part of Tasmania but it happened. The conditions will be there one day and it will happen. So, we support the Bill. The Minister has acted on a series of reports which have been commissioned over the months. If we do not act now while it is fresh in people's memories, we never will; they soon forget about it. After a series of reports the Minister has acted, and the Opposition supports the moves that have been made.

It will be critical, of course, in terms of the personnel who from here on in are put in charge of the CFS and in terms of where we go from here. The Government has to be prepared to put resources into fire prevention if we are to get our priorities right. It has to be prepared to view more seriously the task of looking after Government land, because I have no hesitation in saying that in the District Council of Gumeracha, where I reside, by far the biggest fire hazard is Government owned land. If a fire starts in that area chances are that it will not be put out, and that was the case on Ash Wednesday, when it burnt to Govern-

ment land and forests and the fire was put out on cleared land at the outskirts of Lobethal. The Government, whatever its complexion, has an enormous responsibility in this regard.

Let me conclude by saying—and this is ancillary to the Bill—that the Government wants to have a good hard look at replanting pine forests in the Chain of Ponds, Cudlee Creek and Gumeracha area. Statistically, the chances of growing mature pine trees commercially in that area to harvest in 30 or 40 years would be about 10 per cent, if that. There were some beautiful young forests in high rainfall and highly productive areas through that country, where properties were taken over in Kersbrook. It is not part of the area comprising the buffer zone for the the reservoir: it was taken over by the Woods and Forests Department for growing pine trees, which were coming along, but they are now a complete write-off.

The Government ought to look hard at using taxpayers' funds, as it will cost a lot of money to clear the area, replant and maintain it. I have seen it happen over the past 30 years, and the trees are wiped out. I know that all pines are a fire risk; the South-East is a risk, but at least that area is more accessible and the risk is less. However, the chances of growing mature pines in the Gumeracha District Council area, bringing them to maturity, harvesting them and showing a return, will be less than 10 per cent, and the Government ought to look hard at that fact. From the minimal inquiries I have made, it looks as though the Woods and Forests Department is embarking on that course of clearing and replanting, but the Government should examine that situation closely, because it will increase the fire hazard, and commercially it will be a very chancy operation. Statistically, the chances would be about 10 per cent of growing trees there unscathed by fire to 30 or 40 year old pines, because two major fires have razed that country in the past 30 years since I have been there.

I do not intend to speak any longer, but I do commend the Minister regarding this measure. At least he has done something which is more than could be said for most of his fellow Ministers. The criticism that I would level at the Premier of this State is that he does nothing—he sits down and waits for the problem to disappear. At least his Deputy has done something, and we support what he has done. We believe that it will be essential to get the right people, with the right outlook, who understand the position, in charge of the CFS to lead what is an outstanding team of volunteers in South Australia who are instrumental in saving the community hundreds of millions of dollars over time at relatively little cost to the community. With those remarks, I support the Bill.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Murray): I wish to speak only briefly in this debate. Before I mention some matters relating to the Bill I want to support what the Deputy Leader has had to say about the Government's responsibility in the management of the land under its control. As a previous Minister for Environment and Planning, I recognise the responsibility that is there. It is not an easy task but it is a task that has to be tackled and, with more pressure being brought to bear with more people moving into the areas that surround the parks, there is a need for the Government to look closely at what it should be doing to overcome a number of the problems relating to management and to take some positive action. So, I totally support the Deputy Leader in that regard.

I have been personally involved in the CFS for most of my life, as I live in the Adelaide Hills, one of the most fire-prone areas of the State. As a youngster I can remember very clearly waiting for my father to come home from fighting fires in nearby districts. That was before the establishment of the Emergency Fire Service as it was then. That was established, and then when I was old enough I became involved in actually fighting fires that occurred year after year. I recall going out on days that can be remembered by people—Black Sunday, Ash Wednesday I and then of course in recent times Ash Wednesday II. Now I am pleased to be involved in assisting in many ways the large number of brigades in the district I represent. I have seen those brigades grow from small units to large brigades in terms of membership and equipment. I have seen the beginning of new brigades, in many cases having moved from tin sheds into magnificent and very functional fire stations.

Last Sunday I was privileged to be involved in the opening of the new fire station at Littlehampton, a structure worth some $90 000, we were told, but it cost only a little more than a quarter of that because of the magnificent contributions made by residents in the area, the land on which the fire station is built having been given by local people, and also because of the magnificent involvement of local tradesmen and the Rotary Club which raised an incredible amount of money in an effort to ensure that the facility was built. Indeed, people from many walks of life became involved in the construction of that fire station. It has been dedicated to the memory of Ron Childs, a person who served in the district all his life and who died while fighting the Ash Wednesday II fires.

In recent times in the district we have seen the Brukunga brigade expand with a new fire station. I had the honour to be invited to open that station. Further, next Sunday two new stations will be opened. The Deputy Premier will be opening the new fire station at Mylor while at the same time, unfortunately clashing, the new fire station at Hahndorf will be opened as well.

The Hon. J.D. Wright: Which one are you coming to?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am coming to Mylor, and then I will leave early to go to the Hahndorf station, so you will have to excuse me if I leave midstream. Extensive work has been carried out on the Mount Barker brigade. On the other hand brigades at Macclesfield and Echunga are desperately in need of financial assistance at the moment, and I hope that in the near future we will be able to assist those two brigades in a number of ways. I have always been very proud to be associated with the CFS. I do not want to delve into the past history of the administration of the CFS tonight. However, I am very much aware of the hours and hours of time and effort that has been contributed over a period by the previous Board members. I have known the former Chairman for some time. I was very closely associated with the late Ray Orr, who was Mayor of Mount Barker and who served on the CFS Board, representing local government for many years. He died very suddenly a short time ago. To Ray, local government and the CFS were his entire life. I am very much aware of the contribution Ray made, and such contribution cannot pass without recognition.

Many people have served the organisation very well indeed. I have been gravely concerned about the effect of the recent activities on the CFS. As the member for Kavel pointed out, we are only a matter of weeks away from the beginning of the bushfire season. In fact, the opening of the prevention of bushfires week promotion is only two days away. It is essential for the Government to act quickly in determining the future of the CFS, which of course is what it has done. People in my electorate have expressed their concern about the lack of consultation between the Government and the senior officers in the field regarding the future direction of the CFS. I know it is a problem, but I reiterate that it is important to act quickly. Those to whom I have spoken have recognised the need for action to be taken quickly and generally have been supportive of the action taken. We have a large and impressive body of independent, free thinking volunteer fighters—of course,

they are the CFS. Firm decisive action is required because, as I say, we are only a few weeks away from the bushfire season.

Whatever the arguments for and against change are, we must hope, as the *Advertiser* editorial stated this morning, that this time the Government has got the mixture right and that this CFS will be able to deliver a very much needed service in South Australia. Personally I cannot speak highly enough in support of the volunteers and the magnificent work that they do. Again, personally I owe a tremendous amount to the CFS. The member for Kavel and I still have our homes as a result of the magnificent work of the CFS in fighting the Ash Wednesday II fires. Many of my friends and the people in my electorate share in that appreciation of the work done by the CFS on Ash Wednesday II. There is tremendous support for the CFS in the Hills districts, and we depend on it heavily.

I hope that, with the new direction being taken with the establishment of a new Board and the other new moves being made, that the Government will also recognise its responsibility in providing adequate financial assistance. This applies to any Government. It is essential that adequate funding be provided. An editorial in the local newspaper, the *Courier*, stated, in part:

> Local councils and Hills residents continue to support their CFS brigades to the greatest extent possible, despite the fact that many of them are still recovering from the effects of one or more disastrous fires.
>
> Fire protection is a very expensive but necessary item in council budgets, and one which varies to meet the need, but is not subject to political pressure nor expediency.
>
> However, as far as Governments are concerned, money for fire protection seems to be very low on the list of priorities. And when money is granted, it seems to evaporate somewhat before it reaches the level where it is most needed—where the fires are fought.
>
> All requests for more Government funds seem to be stymied by the smokescreen, with brigades and councils being told it is the Board's fault, or an administration responsibility, or that they themselves should raise more funds.
>
> Rarely does the Government admit to any obligation or provide more money!

I think that spells out fairly clearly how many people in the community that I represent feel about this matter. The other matter to which I want to refer is the need for the Government to, where possible, give consideration to the placement of power lines underground, particularly in built-up fire-prone areas of the Hills. It is essential that a programme be determined in high risk areas. I know that a report recently released by the Government has made that point verly clearly.

It is up to the Government to support the recommendations. I certainly do not share the view of a member in another place, Hon. Mr Gilfillan, who has suggested that we should go underground with powerlines in the Adelaide Hills, but that the people in the Hills should pay for it. I know that it is an expensive operation, but so are many other operations in the metropolitan area with the provision of power in new developments, etc., and I believe it is essential that a programme be developed to ensure that in certain areas at least the powerlines are placed underground.

The other matter to which I would refer, and I know the Deputy Premier would be disappointed if I did not, is the need for some decision to be made in regard to the communications tower on the top of Mount Barker. I know that we have had various debates and discussions across the floor on this subject. I hope and believe that the Deputy Premier does appreciate the very real need for this facility. During discussions we have looked at various alternatives, but it is a matter that is felt very keenly indeed in the Hills area, and I repeat what I have said in this place on a number of occasions: various reports, and particularly the Coroner's report into fires in the Adelaide Hills, have been very critical of the lack of communications in the Hills area. I am very much aware, as I am sure is the Deputy Premier, of the concern expressed by the police in regard to dead spots in the Hills area when they are on patrol. I am certainly aware of the concern shared by emergency services, and particularly the CFS, which on a number of occasions has been caught in very difficult situations because of an inadequate communications system.

I have indicated that I do not support the claims being made by a very, very few people that the area selected as most suitable for the construction of a tower on the top of Mount Barker should not be touched because it is a sacred Aboriginal site. I do not support the claims made in that regard.

Mr Evans: It is hogwash.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: It is more than hogwash. There is no substance in it whatsoever. The Minister for Environment and Planning, who is the Minister responsible for Aboriginal heritage, has made known in this House that, from research and surveys carried out, there is no indication whatsoever that that area should be preserved as an Aboriginal sacred site. It is only the bloodymindedness of a few people who are determined, for one reason or another (and I know what some of the reasons are), that they will not allow this most essential facility to proceed. I do not know what we need to do or say in order to convince the present Government of its responsibilities and what its priorities should be. I suggest that its priorities should not be to support a few people who are putting forward claims that are not factual and which cannot be supported in regard to Aboriginal heritage. I hope that the Government will recognise the responsibility it has to provide communications.

If the unions have made clear to the Government that they do not intend to go ahead with the construction, that they will not allow or they will not themselves build the tower, I would hope that the Deputy Premier, as Minister responsible, would have been strong enough to stand up to those people and point out what their responsibility was, the damage they are causing and problems that will arise as a result of that facility not being built. If he is not game to do that, if he has not got the fortitude to stand up against those people, I hope he would recognise the need to select an alternative site. I hope that the Minister, as a matter of urgency, would provide the additional money that is needed to construct the tower.

We recognise that, whilst it may please very few people as far as the preservation of that area as an Aboriginal site is concerned, building the tower on an alternative site that is currently being considered would mean the tower would have to be a lot taller, would cost twice as much and would be a much more substantial structure. It would cause concern to a lot more people overall, as far as the aesthetics are concerned, in that part of the Adelaide Hills.

As I have said in this House, it is recognised as a feature. To the majority of people who live in the Hills, Mount Barker itself is a very important environmental site. It is a place where people always take visitors, where I visit with my family, and where picnics are held. It is a very important area, but it is also recognised as being of the utmost importance to have substantial up-to-date and satisfactory communications. Once again, I would urge the Deputy Premier, the Minister responsible for emergency services, to determine exactly what is going to happen in order to make sure that that tower is built as a matter of urgency. As I have indicated, it will be on his head and that of the Government if no action is taken and if, as a result of that lack of action, fire or any other emergency in that area results in death. I hope the Minister recognises the responsibility he has.

Finally, I would like to wish the new Board well and I know that it does have a job in front of it. I am sure it will receive the support that is absolutely necessary from the large group of volunteers within the CFS and that it will receive the support of the community generally. I support this legislation.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mr RODDA (Victoria): One cannot let this Bill pass without having a few words to say on it. In representing the district I do, which is green for nine months of the year and a tinder box for the other three, I must say that we do have our quota of fires. Harking back to the holocaust of Ash Wednesday, we had that unprecedented fire that occasioned the loss of 14 lives and many hundreds of thousands of livestock, homes, miles of fencing and sheds and razed three-quarters of the State's forests. With an environment such as that, one comes to appreciate the Country Fire Services.

Change comes about in strange ways. Along with the present Minister, the Hon. Des Cocoran, Opposition Whip Stan Evans, and the former member for Henley Beach, Mr Randall, I think I saw all of the brigades in southern Australia. It transpired from that in metropolitan fire protection and has been a copper plate for this country to follow. We are seeing quite extensive changes to the Country Fire Services. If one appreciates that there are seven regions, with 468 brigades and 15 000 volunteers, that points up the uniqueness of this great Service, which has a great history.

With the passing of the Board, for whatever reason, one cannot help but pay a tribute to all those people who have played their part in its administration. Mr Fred Kerr's name was a household word, as far as the Country Fire Services was concerned. He laid the foundations of a very wonderful Service in which there are something like 40 paid or professional people who head it up.

The Minister's Bill has come in quickly, but it sets down a charter, as mentioned tonight by my colleagues. We are only a few weeks away from what could be another very dangerous fire season. As I look around my own district I see great fields of grassland and undergrowth in scrubland that has regenerated itself. We recognise the problem. However, out of that Ash Wednesday fire, with all its trials and tribulations, has come an awareness that just a small amount of protection can be a starting point if a fire breaks out.

We are seeing great advances because of landholders' wishes to protect homesteads by perhaps intensive grazing of livestock (particularly sheep) around the homestead. We see advances in the use of quite expensive spray equipment, and also advances in the knapsack and metre wide apparatus that a man with a utility and a couple of drums of water can effectively spray at this time of the year while pastures are still green; he can prepare fire breaks that will save fences. I cannot help harking back to a homestead I saw right in the middle of the Ash Wednesday fire in the South-East. It had a fence around it, but it had a cleared fire break only a metre wide which enabled the people at the homestead to keep the fire away from the house, although many houses surrounding it were burnt.

Mr Arch McCarthur, a member of the CFS Board for some years, has been a great ornament to fire protection in the South-East. Before I came to this place he was awarded a prize for the protection that he afforded his own property. He has been a great example to fire fighting in the practical way. He is a very experienced landholder who has hitherto been a member of the CFS Board. Such people have this expertise.

I commend the Minister for the Bill he has introduced. As he said in his speech, it is an interim Bill and the body must be set up quickly. That is why we are meeting tonight. We do not want long speeches, but it behoves peole like myself to make some comments to country people who have been extemely concerned about what is going on. This subject is even vying with the Federal election as a talking point in my district, because it points up people's awareness about what could happen in a few weeks time.

I am sure that the Government will finally be able to appoint skilled people with administrative experience and who have an ability to get on with people. The organisation is different in that there are 15 000 people who are more than volunteers: they are dedicated people. Local brigades are at such places as Joanna and Beamma and as one drives around the countryside one sees small sheds alongside a water tank. I dare say at some time of the day one would see at least one of these people starting the motor and checking the pumps; it is their hobby, their sport and recreation.

I never cease to wonder at some of these young people who take part in fire drills and who on Sunday mornings in the off season think nothing of running hoses and thinking about action they must take. I think that the Deputy Leader made the point about the danger in attacking a fire. The loss of life we have seen vies perhaps with fighting a war. These people subject themselves to an enormous amount of training in order to have a grasp and complete understanding of the chemicals they use in fire control. This points up those 15 000 people who do so much right across the State to protect this State's heritage and its rural assets.

I have read the Bill. It came out quickly (one could not describe it otherwise); the Minister took a decision yesterday that he had to take. There may be some heartburnings but we must look to the future. The Bill will come into operation by proclamation, and the most expeditious thing we can do is to pass it. We could stand here and talk about it all night. However, we know the consequences of not having legislation to enable this enormous protective army that will meet on occasions; we do not know when that may be. It gives me pleasure to support the Bill. I would like to pay a tribute to everyone in the past who has made a wonderful contribution in seeing that this country is as good as we find it today, and hope that it will be protected to be a better place tomorrow.

Mr EVANS (Fisher): I support the Bill. First, I want to make some comments on the effect the CFS can have within our community but, more importantly, the opportunity that the officers should have to do more by way of prevention. However, in most cases they are stopped because the law does not give them power. I heard my Deputy Leader talk about the need for fire breaks and for preventive measures to be taken. I am the person who said several years ago that we would be wiser to build houses on the hills face zone and have exotic type trees that grow in the northern continent around those houses, green lawns, etc., in lieu of what in many cases now is noxious weeds, grasses that have been allowed to grow wild, or olive trees that burn just as rapidly, because of their oil content, as do the eucalypts. In some cases there are still the native eucalpyts, peppermint in particular, in the Mitcham Hills area. I know that I can be condemned by many for suggesting such a proposition and that that is unacceptable to the present society, so I do not advocate it as something that should happen tomorrow.

However, I do advocate that we should be looking at planting some other sort of growth on that hills face zone which is just as attractive as olive trees and dry grass in the

summer time but which is less likely to burst into flame and feed a fire if it starts in the foothills. It is not a matter of 'whether' a fire starts that any particular part of the State will be affected: it is a matter of 'when' it will start. Some will remember that only a few years ago I suggested that one day a fire would start north of Para Hills and race through the tree tops of the trees that people have planted over the last 20 odd years (and those trees are now well above the roof tops—earlier on they were not). When that occurs on a very hot day with a north wind blowing there is very little that anyone will be able to do with that type of fire raging through that area. I personally hope that I am not alive to see that occur. However, inevitably I believe that it will occur because we have encouraged people by saying that native trees were the only trees worthy of a spot near our homes.

When man first became involved with the cat he found that the smaller species were fairly easy to contain. When it came to tigers, lions and leopards, he found a method of living with them: either fencing them out or destroying them. I am not advocating the destruction of the native bushland, because I probably own more of it than do most people. I love it, but I do not have it near my home. Many others appreciate it because it is there, because they can see it, use it and have it as a place that they can enjoy as part of the environment. Man has learnt to protect, as much as humanly possible, the human family from the cruel aspect of nature, whether it be animal, flood or fire.

We should give our inspectors the power to say to landholders, 'What you have there is a dangerous situation, and we want you to slow burn it at the time of the year that you can do so. In some cases, persons could be told to remove the vegetation if it is an exotic type of pest such as blackberries or African daisy, although that does not burn that well. At least, inspectors could be given the power to take that action. We give it to members of the South Australian Fire Brigade in relation to buildings. We give weeds officers the opportunity to say to landholders, 'You will shift those noxious weeds.' What harm does that do to human beings? It does not kill them and it does not leap out and attack them. In most cases it is not a health hazard that will kill, but we say to the landholder, 'You will clean that up because it is a danger to the agricultural industry as far as an economic proposition is concerned.'

That is the only reason why we do it. However, when it comes to a fire, which is dangerous to human life, and it is a very bad one starting at Upper Sturt and going through Stirling, Bridgewater, Crafers, Heathfield and Mylor earlier in the morning at, say, 9 a.m.—not at midday, as most of them have in the past—the end result will be so disastrous that what we have seen so far will pale into insignificance. Yet, we are not prepared to give inspectors that power. We say to health inspectors that they can go to a house and say to the householder, 'You have to fix that sink, sump or the septic tank because it is a health hazard,' but things that affect something as bad as fire they must not touch. We will not give the officers that sort of power.

In regard to precaution, would it be unfair to say to each householder, 'You should have at least one knapsack which can be used on your property and which is full of water in the summer months'? Is that an unreasonable request? Some may say, 'What use would such an instrument be on a really bad fire day?' I say that those people who are fit and able—not the aged and handicapped, although some of the aged would be pretty capable, too, if it came to a pinch—should not be ordered out of their homes. The worst thing that we can do to fit and able people in the vast majority of cases is to tell them to leave their homes, especially if we have made them take the right precautions through inspections.

Very few homes—in fact I would say none—burn with the first impact of a fire, and those who live in the Hills would agree with that. A home just does not explode at the first instance the fire hits it and become a mass of molten ash and glass. That is not the case. The fire hits the house and races past if all the precautions have been taken; the house is alight, and if people are on the opposite side of the house to where the fire approaches they have time to walk out of the door on that side of the house. If the house is not badly alight, they can put it out themselves. It does not take very much.

Many people did that because they refused the instruction to leave their home. They wanted to save their home. They knew that they could save it: they had confidence in their ability to do it. I am not advocating that a parent with a young child should stay back with that young child and take a risk if there was a reasonable chance of leaving, but in most cases it would be safer to stay in the home. I emphasise again that we should take the right precautions months before. For the aged and handicapped, we need some form of community service to help. However, people do come to grief if they leave their home immediately after a fire, having decided that they cannot save it, and then suddenly go back to save some item. That is a disastrous action to take even by experienced people unless they are fire fighters and are wearing the right clothes and have the appropriate breathing equipment, etc.

They are the simple lessons that any of us can and should learn. I say that the power of the fire officers has to be extended as far as we have extended it for weeds officers, health officers, building officers, the South Australian Fire Brigade officers, or whomever else. I can even use the argument that we have (and the present Government is a great advocate for it) in the workforce safety regulations to preserve people's health, limb and life in the workplace. Why should it not happen in the place where people spend a lot of their time—in the home? I want to place a lot of emphasis on that area.

The undergrounding of power lines has some merit in the areas that are most dangerous. It is a costly item and will be a gradual process, but it is a lot easier to do this today than it was, say, 30 or 40 years ago in relation to trenching. I hope that, if we go to undergrounding power early, we do not breed a complacency that we should then forget about the road verges, let them grow back into a wilderness in the belief that no fires will be started by power lines because they are underground. Very seldom do two fires start from exactly the same cause and in the same situation. Someone can fall off a motor bike, have a motor accident or ride a trail bike where he should not in the summer months or whatever, and there will be a fire. If the road verges are a mass of undergrowth and fuel, it makes the task of firefighters virtually impossible.

Firefighters, male and female, are involved right across the State. There are 15 000 people involved and they give their time, much like Army, Air Force or Navy personnel, hoping that one day they do not have to fight a war—in the case of volunteers a war against fire. These people know that if it does occur they have a reasonable chance of understanding how to fight and control the fire and how to help the community also help to fight it. I thank those people for the magnificent amount of work that those persons have done over the years and the confidence that they have given to others in the community. They have also developed a community spirit through that effort.

I also refer to two people: the Director, who has now just stepped aside, and the Chairman of the Board. The Chairman of the Board and I are not close together in certain areas of philosophy or thinking. The Chairman would agree that at times I have differed with him on what I used to think

was his extreme views towards conservation of our native bushland where it has perhaps endangered human life and where he may have had an opposite view to mine. We were quite open in our discussions at times with some of those thoughts.

Professor Schwerdtfeger, as far as I am concerned, was always a very honest, dedicated and hard working man, was and still is a deep thinker. This Government and previous Governments gave him the opportunity of taking on the task of attempting to put into operation a virtual new unit—a unit which had new powers, new headquarters, new guidelines and new Ministers and a different Government to answer to. I do not say that he did a perfect job; nor could anyone else in this place do as perfect a job if they had the same task. It is humanly impossible to run a volunteer service, when another part of the service that is paid, without having some difficulties. Anywhere in society that is a problem. It was not a simple task for an organisation that was suddenly given large amounts of money to attempt to distribute that money and make grants to the right operational divisions.

They asked for an accountant. The Chairman was not an accountant; he is a scientist or meteorologist. I put on record that, as much as we differ in many areas, I admire the work, effort, honesty, sincerity and dedication with which Professor Schwerdtfeger worked for what he thought was best for the CFS, the protection of environment in total, including native and exotic vegetation, people's properties, farms or whatever else right throughout this State. I believe that Professor Schwerdtfeger was dedicated and honest in the approach he made, and I put on record my appreciation of the effort that he made in for the sake of others.

Mr Johns, the Director, came into the Service when it was moving to a bigger operation and more paid personnel. If anybody suggests that it was solely his doing or that of the board regarding more paid personnel that person would be telling falsehoods, because Governments have the opportunity to tell them to stop if it was thought that it was going too far. The Director came in when a new breed of volunteer was coming into the Hills, including more people from the plains who had not lived in the Hills before. They saw no difference with new uniforms coming out with extra polish. The old timers thought that it was a little extraordinary and more expensive looking. They may have commented about it, but they did not do anything that was harmful to the service or withdraw their volunteer help.

I put on record that, in every dealing I had with the Director, Lloyd Johns, he gave me straight answers. He co-operated when I had queries about any service in my area. He made the point if they did not have enough money that they needed more. He did not attack either side of Government when I made queries, whatever Government was in power at the time. Mr Johns also gave of his best, even though he was a newcomer to the State, for the sake of the people who served in the CFS along with those when they were serving, although many did not agree in total with Lloyd John's decisions or attitudes. I do not say that I agreed with him in every respect; nor do I agree with others in this place and other places because we are different as individuals.

I am a little disturbed at the way in which this has come about because it is a reflection upon two dedicated men. There was no need to corner them and bring about this change; the change could have been brought about in a more decent manner. I know that both men are strong enough to live through it, to laugh and say that they did their best and let others do better.

I emphasise again my statement about slow burns because I discussed the subject briefly with Professor Schwerdtfeger a long while ago. My view is that slow burns are essential because in doing that we do not kill all the small animals and reptiles, as we do not build up enough heat. They go down holes and are not cooked alive; they survive. Also, we do not kill the large scrub or trees; it is nature's desire that our scrublands should be burnt every now and again in order to cause proper regeneration, and that is what happens. Any of our scrubland which may have originally existed but which could not stand fire went before white man came here, because the Aborigines found that the best method of hunting was to burn the scrub and, when the animals came to feed on the young shoots, they had an opportunity to catch the game more easily. Lightning and other things burnt the scrub and the only native scrub and bush left is that which will regenerate quite rapidly after fire. If we were to slow burn through parks and other areas the noxious weeds would be a problem. African daisy comes up like the hairs on a cat's back and some other weeds are just as bad.

That is the only disadvantage but it is something that in these times we have different methods of controlling. It can be done, I do not say cheaply, but reasonably cheaply when compared with the costs of a fire that gets out of hand. In the case of a major fire, sometimes members of the community contribute and put in an effort, suddenly backing their mates. Everyone gets in and says, 'I will give something—food, clothes, money—and help those who have lost a lot or everything.' Many personal things can never be replaced. I believe that after the last bush-fire there was a lottery conducted which raised about $100 000. I wonder whether the Minister, if not tonight perhaps later, could inform me how much was raised in that lottery and, if it was about $100 000, what happened to it. I may have missed it but I have not seen what happened to the money, and the many people who contributed to it would also like to know.

Finally, communication is important. The claim that the area at the top of Mount Barker is a sacred site is hogwash. If every time that members of a minority group—and I have respect for one or two as individuals who I have known in another walk of life—start jumping around and saying, 'This is a sacred site, you cannot build on it', putting at risk people's property and lives, then we as a Parliament, as a pressing Government, should move in and say, 'We are building it; it is going there,' because in this case no-one has suggested in the past 150 years that it is a sacred site.

As long as man has existed, when he wants to communicate, whether with a mirror, flag, voice or whatever else, he has gone to the top of the highest point to get the best distribution. The highest point around Mount Barker is the summit, and the best place to communicate is from that point. If Aborigines think that that area would be a good spot to light a fire from which to send a smoke signal, they should realise that there is a better method available today. To suggest that that area is a sacred site and the communication tower should not go there is hogwash. If a unionist said, 'If you build it we will blackball it,' he should be told to get lost.

I support the concept of a smaller Board; it is a move in the right direction. In saying that, I do not reflect on those who have served on the previous Board. It was put into operation, and tested, and it may have been found to be wanting in a few areas. However, to each of those persons—unfortuntely, one of the great ones has passed on: Ray Orr who gave much service to the community not only in that field but in others—I want to put on record my thanks from the Hills communities in my district for its efforts.

In making the CFS more directly responsible to the Minister, whoever the Minister of the day may be, it provides a greater opportunity for Parliament to test whether the

right thing is happening with that service. The present Minister, who sat on the Select Committee, I and others whom the member for Victoria named found all along the line that perhaps there needed to be more direct control back to the Government and thereby through to the Parliament. So, I support that move quite strongly.

I look forward to CFS successfully continuing to work in this State with the volunteer service being backed by Governments, particularly local government bodies as they do. I also thank the women and men, including both aged and handicapped men, who work to support the CFS units with fundraisers with refreshments on the day of fires, and with the help they give in a time of crisis. I hope that we will never see another major fire, but we will.

I say to those people in my district in the Upper Sturt Gorge area, which has not been burnt out since 1934, and to the people in the parts of Upper Sturt that have not been burnt out since 1957, that when it comes if they have not taken the precautions there will never be enough CFS units to get to each home to protect it on such a day. I ask householders to use their common sense and realise that they are living near a hostile tiger, or a leopard, with which they would not let their children play and they are playing with that situation if they allow native trees and bushland to grow too close to their homes. I support the Bill.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I rise to speak briefly on this Bill, mainly to put on record that the CFS volunteers are doing a magnificent job throughout the State and certainly throughout Goyder. This area includes primarily the Adelaide Plains and lower north region, as well as Yorke Peninsula. On 30 September this year about 1 000 people, including almost 200 CFS volunteers, competed from 15 brigades throughout the State at the 1984 firefighting drill championships at Balaklava. Unfortunately, I was unable to be there, but the reports that have come back to me indicate that it was a most successful day.

Before looking at the efforts of the CFS one needs to appreciate what was clearly stated by the Minister yesterday in his Ministerial statement, as follows:

> Over the past two years there have been a number of reports and investigations concerning the financial administration of the Country Fire Service. These have included special reports to the Treasurer by the Auditor-General, the Public Service Board, the corporate review by external consultants and, of course, the recent substantial report of the Public Accounts Committee of this House. In addition, there has been the Lewis-Scriven Report and the report of the Coroner following the Ash Wednesday bushfires. These reports have all impacted on the administration of the CFS.

It is in this light that we need to bear in mind that the changes incorporated in this Bill are taking place—changes by which this Bill removes from office the existing members of the CFS Board and establishes a restructured membership of the Board.

People throughout the State need to take account of the various statements made by the Minister in the first place and many of the comments that have come out in debate thus far. In no way is it a reflection of the CFS volunteers who have been doing a magnificent job over the years. They spend hours in giving voluntary help, practising and making sure that they are ready and efficient for the time that may eventuate and, as we are all well aware in certain parts of the State, it did eventuate about two years ago. These volunteers pay meticulous attention to their equipment, and it is pleasing to see the community support these volunteers. In fact, on the Peninsula the Yorke Peninsula Barley competition, sponsored by volunteer help particularly through the Lions Club, has contributed many hundreds of thousands of dollars towards CFS equipment.

CFS volunteers demonstrate their concern for the community, and they assist it in many ways. It provides an opportunity for youth to have an outside interest, and it provides an interest for people after hours. We are seeing more women joining the CFS, and they are becoming involved in the competitions that are held, and so on. There is an opportunity for everyone to become involved and to help their community not necessarily for financial reward or gain. In fact, often it involves a real hardship. Of course, other factors are involved such as people being taught discipline and pride in their own communities. I emphasise that in no way do I see this amending Bill as being a reflection on any of those marvellous volunteers. These amendments have arisen following a variety of reports, and as we have heard tonight it is hoped that this will lead to greater efficiency in the CFS. I hope that the CFS has a lean year in terms of the fighting of major bushfires, although only time will tell.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT (Deputy Premier): I will not delay the proceedings of the House but I point out that this is a rather unique occasion for me to have brought a Bill into the House and find that every Opposition speaker in support of it. It makes me wonder whether or not I have done everything right! Rarely do I not have to make a very long reply in an attempt to try to convince members opposite about something. I have never been able to do so, but over the years I have tried. However I seem to have convinced members opposite on this occasion. So there is not a great deal for me to reply to at this stage. Although there are a couple of important points that I want to make.

This has not been an easy matter for me. I was given the new Emergency Services portfolio in February or March of this year when it was decided to administer the three emergency services under one portfolio. I knew then that to correct certain things that were happening in some areas would be a challenge. The CFS was one of those areas involved. It has been a difficult road for me. I am not the sort of person who likes to discharge people from the positions that they hold. Following the receipt of certain reports that came forward, one could visualise what would occur, and when the PAC report was finally brought down it was fairly evident that some strong action had to be taken.

Over the years I have not run away from my tasks and responsibilities. On this occasion I have acted in the way that I thought was proper. Only time will tell whether or not the actions taken will provide the complete answer. I acknowledge the point made in the editorial in the *Advertiser* this morning, namely, that it was hoped that the Government had got the game together on this occasion. Taking the action, making the public announcements about it and receiving the support of the Opposition does not, of course, make it a *fait accompli*. However, it is at least a good way down the track. It has been rewarding for me today to not have received a mass of telegrams or telephone calls in opposition to the Goverment's actions. In fact, I have had none, unless they were received by my office and I have not been made aware of them.

The Government has acted in the best interests of the CFS particularly in attempting to look after the many volunteers involved. All the members who spoke in this House tonight paid a tribute to the services given by volunteers. I also commend them. They are a unique band of people who give their services quite voluntarily, and they should be given every support, managerial and financial. As a Parliament we have a great responsibility to do that and to support those people who save the State many millions of dollars each year. Of course they save lives and property, but I am referring to the large financial commitment that

would have to be made by the Government if we did not have such volunteer services.

I congratulate the member for Alexandra, who was the chief Opposition spokesman on this matter. He made a very balanced speech. I was hoping that he would do that, but I was not quite sure what attitude the honourable member would take this evening because, like me, he has been under a somewhat sustained attack out there in the community by people whom I will not name. Personalities have not been referred to in this debate tonight, and the member for Alexandra would know about whom I am talking. One could have forgiven the member for Alexandra had he retaliated in those circumstances, although I am glad to say that he chose not to do so. He talked about the specific matters in the legislation, about the programme itself and about how he thought things could be improved.

I will be looking closely at his speech in the next two or three weeks and will examine the propositions put forward by the honourable member. Every honourable member who spoke pointed out that there was a very great need to keep the voluntary service. The Government does not disagree with that in any way and supports that proposition 100 per cent. I make very clear that there is no intention to do away with the voluntary service: it is absolutely essential that it be retained in this State.

A matter raised by several members opposite concerned the need to control the fuel load in national parks and in the hills face zone. I took particular note of the comments made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in relation to the hills face zone, and his remarks were fairly sensible, which was a change. The Deputy Leader made some relevant points which I will be looking at very closely, together with points made by other members about the fuel load. Another point raised by almost every speaker concerned the need for the CFS Board to issue orders in relation to section 51 for the reduction of the fuel load on properties throughout country areas. I think every member opposite referred to the Board not utilising sufficiently its power in relation to section 51. I shall certainly bring that matter to the attention of the new Board.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: The Board has never exercised that discretion.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: No; I accept the honourable member's statement. I shall bring that matter to the attention of the new Chairman as soon as he is appointed and I shall point out that they must pay particular attention to that part of the Act.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: What are you going to do about the tower on the top of Mount Barker?

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I do not see anything about the tower in this Bill.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: It is very important.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I realise that the honourable member was able to sneak it into his speech, but there is nothing about the tower at Mount Barker in this Bill.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: There should be.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: In fairness, the honourable member came and talked to me privately about this question. I gave him some private information which he now wants to test me about across the Chamber. I do not really think that is a fair proposition. I have told him what the situation is. He knows exactly what the score is. I could have brushed him off, but I did not. I spoke to him in an honest fashion, and he is now trying to embarrass me. I think the honourable member should back off from this question and raise it in an official way if he wishes to do so.

The member for Fisher raised a matter concerning the lottery money and wanted an indication as to what happened to that money that was raised. I am not in a position to tell the honourable member tonight. It was not in my area of responsibility. From memory, I think that fund raiser was between the Premier's Department and the Town Hall. I think they were the facts of the matter in the first place, but in order to ensure that the honourable member receives that information, I will obtain a full report and see that he receives it. At this stage I am not in a position to give that information, because I do not know exactly what happened.

Finally, there is not a great need for me to make a long speech in reply. I wanted to answer those points. I want to thank honourable members for their support. It has been a very difficult road and some difficult decisions have had to be made by the Government. I am delighted that the Opposition has seen fit to support those decisions. Of necessity I think there is one final thing I must do and that is to thank all of the Board members and the Chairman for the task they have had to perform under very difficult conditions over many years. During that time they received a great deal of criticism from all sources, living with and accepting the reports that have emanated over the last eight or nine months I would not imagine has been an easy task for those associated with it.

I want to say to those people that, having inherited this portfolio as late as February or March this year, I have not found it an easy task to make the decisions I have had to make. I know that every one of those persons would have individually accepted his responsibilities and carried them out to the best of his ability. I have no doubt about that, but collectively, from both the PAC Report and the CFS review report itself, it was clear that the Board was not activating itself in accordance with the Act, not carrying out its total responsibilities in that area, and I believe the Government had no alternative but to do what it did.

As I said earlier, one does not like to have to make these decisions, but if decisions need to be made Governments have to make them, and I think the Government in this area, as in all areas, has acted responsibly and correctly, and I again place on record my thanks to the Opposition for supporting this legislation.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): I move:

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it have power to consider new clauses relating to penalties.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—'Repeal of sections 9 and 10 and substitution of new sections.'

Mr LEWIS: Given that one of the members is to be the Under Treasurer, I take it that it is for the obvious reason that someone with some skill and capacity for responsibility in the Government's administration for matters financial will be included in the Board. I ask, in view of the fact that it is the Under Treasurer, whether the Minister might not be able to give us an explanation of what has happened to the $100 000 or so which was raised by the bushfire lottery and which has not been disbursed. I understand that members of the CFS Board have asked the Government about that matter but have never in the past received a reply. Are there still funds in the kitty and, if so, what is to happen to them?

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: It is obvious from that question that the member for Mallee was not in the Chamber a little while ago, because I covered that matter in response to a question raised by the member for Fisher. I said that that fund raising lottery was controlled by the Premier's Department and the Town Hall. I think the Lord Mayor was also involved in that. It was not under the control of the Minister of Emergency Services or the Chief Secretary at that time,

so I am not in a position to say what the distribution of that money was or where it has gone. What I did say was that I would obtain a full report from the Premier and bring it down for the member for Fisher. Now that the member for Mallee has raised that question I will bring it down for the House.

Clause passed.

Clause 5 passed.

Clause 6—'The Director and other officers of the Board.'

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: I ask the Minister to explain the circumstances surrounding the agreement that he apparently entered into with the Director of the CFS prior to introducing the Bill and the accompanying statements yesterday. I remind the Minister that he told the House that the Director of the CFS had offered to stand aside to allow the position of Director to be advertised on a national basis, but that he had indicated to the Minister that he would be an applicant for the position. However, in the event that he is not successful, he is prepared to continue to serve the CFS in another capacity.

What were the circumstances surrounding that situation that ultimately attracted that offer and precisely what undertakings were given to the Director at the time? I raise that subject because in the *Advertiser* this morning I read a report that fairly clearly conveyed that the present Director would in fact be the Chief Fire Officer under the terms of this Bill. Therefore, it implied that effectively the present Director was denied the opportunity, as conveyed to us in the form of the address by the Minister yesterday, or if not denial that it would be somewhat of a token arrangement with no guts in it at all and would really be quite ineffectual.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I wonder whom the honourable member has been talking to to raise that question.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: I just mention it because the two articles do not really fit.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: It seems to me that the honourable member has been having consultations with somebody.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: I asked the question.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: And I made a statement.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: It seems that the Minister is very sensitive.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I am not very sensitive at all. I answered quite fully. It seems to me very strange that the honourable member did not raise it in his speech.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: I have been approached within the last hour by a member of the media.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I said that the honourable member had had consultation with somebody, because he did not raise it in his second reading speech. What I am saying is that it is perfectly correct that he has had consultation with somebody about this matter. There is no secret about the fact. I spelt out the arrangements quite clearly in the second reading explanation. I did not offer the arrangements; the arrangements were offered to me by the Director that he—

The Hon. D.C. Brown: What was the choice?

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The honourable member has not bothered to be in this debate and he now wants to interject while I am trying to give a sensible answer to the member for Alexandra. If the member for Davenport wants to persist in interjecting, we will be here all night. If he takes the debate the way he has taken it so far we will get along the road very well: that is, he will say nothing now or in the future.

The agreement reached, if one can call it that (and I suppose it was), was that the Director offered to stand aside so that the Director's position would be cleared to be advertised and filled by either himself or somebody else, generating the viewpoint so far as he was concerned that he still could and should have the right to be an applicant for that position.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: Did you put up—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: If I have to put up with this ratbag from Davenport we will not get any sense at all. After all, he has not involved himself in the debate. He has shown no interest in the CFS at all. He comes in late at night, at 10.45, and upsets the very good debate that has taken place tonight. That is his usual form, so there is nothing new about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Davenport is out of order.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I should not be answering somebody who is out of order, I know.

Mr Lewis: That's right.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I will not in future; I will take notice of the member for Mallee. However, the position is clear and free for the present Director to make an application when the advertisement is placed in the newspapers. If the Board recommends the Director as the best applicant for the job, quite clearly he is entitled to have that job.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: So the Board—

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The Board will make the appointment, not the Minister. I do not want that responsibility.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: Even though the Director is responsible to the Minister under this new amendment and not the Board.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The Minister will have the power of veto if he wants to, but he will not make the recommendation; that will come from the Board. I have told the Director that; he understands it. Personally, I think that the offer made by the Director was a good one in the first place to allow us to move as quickly and swiftly as we did, otherwise there could have been—

The Hon. Ted Chapman: That is not really the question.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: There could have been some trepidation about what we were doing about the Director's position.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: The question is—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Alexandra is out of order.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: The *Advertiser* will want have to clarify it anyway, because their statement was different from what the Minister said yesterday.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The *Advertiser* has not asked me to correct any situation. I do not think that the honourable member has a right to put the *Advertiser's* point of view. I have answered the question.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: With due respect, the Minister has not answered the question at all. I asked him which of the two situations was accurate, because clearly the statement that the Minister made yesterday is in conflict with the statement in the *Advertiser* today in relation to that point. Generally speaking, one would accept the Minister's statement, tabled in the House, as being the position. If that is the case, may I pose the same question again: what were the circumstances that surrounded the situation that led to the Director's making the offer that he did, as outlined by the Minister, and what undertakings did the Minister give to the Director that he would be an applicant who would be considered on his merits, or whatever, along with other applicants, which would accordingly negate all that crap that was in the *Advertiser* today about it being a *fait accompli* that the current Director would be the next Chief Fire Officer?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has very grave doubts that the message that the member for Alexandra is trying to give the Committee is in order. Clause 6 deals simply

with the appointment of a Director and a Chief Officer. It does not deal with personalities or what might occur with any person being involved. The Chair has some very grave doubts about whether the member for Alexandra is in order.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: With due respect, I have not mentioned the name of a personality. I have mentioned the position of Director, which is clearly cited in clause 6. It is the appointment of a Director about which I am questioning the Minister. It is clearly the clause which embraces that subject, in my view. I have not mentioned a personality by name in the debate or in Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is, that this clause stand as printed.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: I posed a question to the Minister: is he declining to clarify the position about which I have asked?

The Hon. J.D. Wright: I thought it was ruled out of order.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will rule something out of order in a minute. The Chair has not ruled it out of order; it has pointed out that it has some very grave doubts about whether the question is in order. As to the member for Alexandra desiring the Deputy Premier to answer, that is up to the Deputy Premier and not the Chair. The Chair is putting clause 6.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I have related the circumstances regarding the matter raised by the Director about his offer to stand aside. I have made clear to the Director, and I have made clear in the second reading explanation (or, alternatively, the Ministerial statement) that the Director has the right to make application for a new position when it is called. If, in those circumstances he has the recommendation of the Board, he has every opportunity of getting that position. I have made that clear to him and I make it clear to the honourable member.

Clause passed.

Clause 7 passed.

New clauses 7a to 7m.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I move:

Page 3, after clause 7—Insert new clauses as follows:

7a. Section 32 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (2) the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "One thousand dollars".

7b. Section 39 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months"; and

(b) by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for twelve months".

7c. Section 40 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "two thousand five hundred dollars"; and

(b) by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars".

7d. Section 41 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out from subsection (4) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months"; and

(b) by striking out from subsection (4) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for twelve months".

7e. Section 42 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for twelve months"; and

(b) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "two thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "twenty thousand dollars or imprisonment for two years".

7f. Section 43 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out the passage "two hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "two thousand five hundred dollars"; and

(b) by striking out the passage "four hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars".

7g. Section 44 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) by striking out the passage "two hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "two thousand five hundred dollars"; and

(b) by striking out the passage "four hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars".

7h. Section 46 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "One hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "One thousand dollars".

7i. Section 47 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "One hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "One thousand dollars".

7j. Section 48 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the passage "Two hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "Two thousand five hundred dollars".

7k. Section 49 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (94) the passage "One thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "Five thousand dollars".

7l. Section 50 of the princpal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars".

7m. Section 51 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (6) the passage 'two hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars".

These proposed new clauses refer to sections 32, 39 to 44, and 46 to 51 of the principal Act. As I take the opportunity to move these amendments, I acknowledge that they are the result of a conglomerate input by the former shadow Attorney-General (Hon. K.T. Griffin), who brought these matters to the Upper House in the previous session, and that that Bill was accepted by the Upper House before the end of the last session and reported to this House. Because it was not possible in private members time to proceed, that Bill was reinstated to the Notice Paper of this House on 19 September and became Bill No. 15 on our Bill file.

Honourable members will recognise that earlier this afternoon I sought to have that Bill read and discharged, because it was agreed between the Deputy Premier and myself that it was of greater benefit, in relation to the passage of the Country Fires Act Amendment Bill, that a document went out which both incorporated the actions contemplated in the Bill that we are now addressing and picked up the penalty clauses that were contained in the Hon. Mr Griffin's Bill, which had been accepted by the Government in another place and which the Government intended to accept in this place. Instead of persons who are directly involved with the Country Fires Act having to look at two sets of amendments at a critical time, there was a distinct advantage in one set of amendments going forth which embraced both the action being taken by the Government in respect of the Board and which picked up the clauses that are a necessary addition to give some teeth to the Country Fires Act in relation to those actions which transgress reality and which are against the best interests of the community.

The amendments proposed in the Bill that I brought back to this House on 19 September were an upward trend. In many cases the penalties were up to 10 times higher than those included in the original Act. The Government has considered that those general actions were valuable and indeed necessary; in fact, the Government in its wisdom decided to pick up the Bill that I presented to the House, to increase some of the penalties and to decrease some of them. I have taken the schedule of alterations that was presented to me earlier this afternoon by the Deputy Premier and discussed them with my colleague the Hon. Mr Griffin in another place, and we accept without any hesitation the schedule of fees which were acceptable to and were to have been proposed by the Government.

Because there is a commonality of a number of them and because the same clauses are to be attended in this Bill as were in the previous Bill, I acknowledge that the amendments to which I am now referring could equally as well have been put forward in the name of the Deputy Premier or indeed of any other Government member. It is a recognition of the reality of this matter, and I commend the recommendations for these additional clauses that I have listed under the heading of new clauses 7a to 7m as being realistic. I do not believe that it is necessary to identify the individual penalties; they have already been identified to the House. There has been some fine tuning, and I am quite certain that support will be forthcoming from this side of the House, as indeed I understand it is forthcoming from the Government. These are commendable amendments, and I recommend them to the Committee.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I will not delay the House greatly in regard to this matter, except to say that the honourable member and I have been discussing this matter today. It seemed evident to both of us that the cleanest and quickest way of coming to a conclusion about increasing the penalties (and let me say that the Government, like the Opposition, is adamant that it will do its very best to ensure that proper penalties apply for people who deliberately start fires or who flagrantly misuse areas where fires can occur), considering that I had amendments as well, was to implement those amendments together, and we have done that.

We have discussed this matter at full length and, as the honourable member has pointed out, the result is a conglomeration of the work done by all parties. As the honourable member has said, he could have moved his amendments, I could have moved mine, and we could have been here all night. That seemed a rather useless way of going about the matter, and to expedite the business of the House it was agreed that the honourable member should have the opportunity of moving them as it was his idea in the first place. I commend him for bringing the matter to the attention of the House, which obviously drew the Government's attention to it. We on this side of the House hope that these amendments will prevent people activating fires in areas; that is why we, from both sides of the Parliament, have recommended for the first time in this legislation the possibility of gaol sentences.

I think that that establishes the seriousness that we place on this matter. We consider that prevention is better than cure in any circles, and I hope that the fact that someone can be charged with an offence under this Act and gaoled because of that offence will prevent any deliberate misuse of those areas to which the Bill refers and in fact any other area. The Government supports the amendments.

New clauses inserted.

Clause 8 passed.

New clauses 9 to 16.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I move:

Page 3, after clause 8—Insert new clauses as follows:

9. Section 53 of the principal Act is amended—
   (a) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months"; and
   (b) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for twelve months".

10. Section 54 of the principal Act is amended—
   (a) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months"; and
   (b) by striking out from subsection (3) the passage "one thousand dollars" and substituting the passage "ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for twelve months".

11. Section 55 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (2) the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "Five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months".

12. Section 57 of the principal Act is amended—
   (a) by striking out from subsection (1) the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "Five thousand dollars or imprisonment for six months"; and
   (b) by striking out from subsection (2) the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "Two thousand five hundred dollars".

13. Section 58 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (2) the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "One thousand dollars".

14. Section 61 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the passage "Five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "Two thousand dollars".

15. Section 62 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from subsection (1) and (3) the passage "One thousand dollars" and substituting, in each case, the passage "Five thousand dollars".

16. Section 68 of the principal Act is amended by striking out from paragraph (n) of subsection (2) the passage "five hundred dollars" and substituting the passage "one thousand dollars".

These proposed new clauses amend sections 53 to 55, 57 and 58, 61 and 62, and 68 of the principal Act. The nature of these amendments is similar to those that were moved *en bloc* previously. As the Deputy Premier has indicated, there has been a number of increases in penalty, including imprisonment.

I trust that courts will view the penalties that are now available as a fair indication of the seriousness with which Parliament regards these matters. It is not a minimum penalty but rather a maximum penalty. The discretion remains with the courts to consider these matters, and they will use that discretion, which has been their right. It is extremely important that I say this, on behalf of the Opposition and, indeed, on behalf of Country Fire Services officers and district councils that first brought this matter to my attention, specifically the District Council of Spalding and a fire officer, Mr Don Willsden, and the other officers of the Mid-North area who made a contribution in the orginal move to have these matters brought up to date, because they had the unfortunate experience of people wantonly starting fires and undertaking actions against the best interests of fire units. They believed that the decisions which had been taken by the Parliament many years ago had been allowed to remain for too long in their original form.

The Deputy Premier's comments are appreciated. It is a matter of co-operation and will eventually be to the benefit of the people of this State and, more particularly, to that of volunteers and the communities that support the provision of the volunteers' equipment. I recommend to members that these clauses be supported.

New clauses inserted.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. J.C. Bannon:

That the proposed payments referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

(Continued from 16 October. Page 1137.)

Mr EVANS (Fisher): The reports having come back from the Estimates Committees, I wish to say one or two things. In a State such as South Australia, which was originally very much agricultural and which became dependent upon secondary industry to some degree, our cost structure became

very important in relation to job opportunities or, more particularly, the opportunity for small or big business to survive. I become concerned that when in this State small businesses are still not running as rosily as some people may say. Those who must pay pay-roll tax, which is part of our budgeting, those who have to pay workers compensation as a result of legislation that this Parliament has passed, and those who own land and pay substantial land tax plus FID, along with fees to register the businesses or the practices that they carry out, are finding that the costs are gradually becoming prohibitive. Although we try to kid ourselves as a society that everything is rosy, it is not as rosy as many people claim.

The Government, through the present Budget and the immediate past Budget, has been able, with some Federal Government assistance, to create an expansion in the housing industry area. However, the amount of industrial work going on in development is not great. The amount of work going on in the construction and earthmoving field is virtually nil. We have had one industry only, apart from the rural industry, that has been running very sweetly, namely, the building industry. Up until very recent times the contractors have not had the courage to charge the fees thay they should to give them a reasonable chance of a profit to compensate for the capital that they have invested in many cases.

Government legislation and action that was taken in the recent Budget to enable more land to be subdivided in order to create allotments was taken too late. It had to be taken, anyway, to ensure that the situation did not become worse later on. For years, some people (and I hope I have been one of them) have been saying to all forms of Government that, as long as we have a land tax that applies on a graduating scale and increasing according to the land people own, we will force the subdivider in the private sector out of the market. If we set up a Land Commission and say that it is a Government agency and will therefore not pay land tax, we create an artificial market value for allotments that will end up catching up with us. We are merely saying that those who are buying a block of land in that situation are being subsidised by the rest of the community through some form of tax. That is what has happened. Because we have suddenly had a massive boom in the housing industry, we now have allotments selling at 100 per cent more that their value 12 months ago.

Tied in with that we have another problem. Over the years we legislated to license building. Over the years we legislated to attempt to guarantee that people would have a house that was faultless, with the builder or those who advised him carrying the responsibility for any problem for a six-year period. I will not go into all the problems that have been created in that area tonight, because there would be many other concerns out in the community and it would cause some actions to be taken that would be unpalatable to certain sections of the industry.

I warn the Government that what the legislation has attempted to do through the moneys made available is guarantee that every person who builds a house for another person under contract will be faultless for six years. One cannot build a house at a Holden price with Rolls Royce standards and that is what we have tried to do. It is impossible to do and never in the history of the housing industry anywhere in the world has it been done, nor will it be done. If we are to make money available to the Housing Trust, because the money is used mainly for rental, the Trust need not worry about this six-year period very much, but if we leave the private sector open to prosecution (whether it be consultants, builders or the local government authority—because in the final analysis it is one of the decision makers regarding the house being constructed), because the perfect house has not been built, then I say to the Minister of Housing and Construction and the Government that in the next 12 months the average house now being built for $50 000 will increase by no less than $15 000. That is because suddenly people are making use of the law and saying that they want the perfect house at a Rolls Royce standard for a Holden price.

I want to say something about what the member for Davenport said last night which disappointed me. Because what he said is on record, the only way I can correct an injustice that was done to me is put on record the truth about what happened concerning Reservoir Drive. The member for Brighton at the time (Mr Glazbrook) and I took up with the previous Government the question of the extension of Flagstaff Hill Road and Reservoir Drive. We were dedicated to the cause and believed that that road had to be created. With the development of the Hub, 900 children or more going to Flagstaff Hill school, and with the Aberfoyle Park development inevitably being built, the Happy Valley school with 600 children and all the houses in that area, in the most rapidly developing part of metropolitan Adelaide, lying at the bottom end of Meadows council area, the road system there was inadequate. So we took up that challenge with our own Government at the time, along with the southern regional council group and the then Mayor of Meadows council who did one or two things that disturbed some of my Ministerial colleagues. However, he was doing that on behalf of the group, the constituents and his ratepayers in that area, as were the southern regional councils.

Subsequently, when it was inevitable that there would be an election (because the three-year term was almost up) the ALP, nearly 12 months before the election, announced that it would build the by-pass road, creating the realignment of Reservoir Drive and the extension of Flagstaff Hill Road, in effect. There was some disquiet regarding the bottom end of Flagstaff Hill Road. However, Mr Glazbrook and I kept the pressure on our own Government saying that it was a necessary road that had to be built, and there were pressures coming from my own Government at the time to obtain moneys from the Federal Government. A few months before the election my own Government announced that the road would be built and gave an indication of what the alignment would be.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I put it on the ABRD programme.

Mr EVANS: My Government gave a guarantee that the road would be built. I am not worried about anything about which I have no knowledge—I did not know the present Minister did that. The alignment as suggested was unacceptable. The then Minister of Water Resources said that it could not come in any closer to the reservoir because of air pollution, the likelihood of spillage, and draining water from the residential areas. At that time much of Flagstaff Hill had been flooded, and there were some problems that the drainage, put in by local government in Flagstaff Hill, could not carry the floodwaters in an emergency. So, the E & WS were justifiably concerned about any road being built closer to the reservoir than had been suggested in the initial proposal, which was nothing more than a draft sketch of where the road was likely to be.

There was a change of Government, and around that time environmental impact studies were set up. I am not arguing which Government set them up, whether my own or the present Government. So, the Labor Government came to power, and immediately plans came out showing an alignment for the road that was varied with some pressures placed upon the authorities. In particular it was varied where it joined Blacks Road to give a more satisfactory approach which satisfied the council and the residents.

Then I found, as I have always done, that where there is a common interest between more than one member it does

not pay to play politics. So, I went to the present member for Brighton (Mrs Appleby) and said there were some concerns that she recognised and that we should meet the group. I took a deputation to the office of the member for Brighton—if I remember correctly, it was a Saturday morning—and we had discussions with the group about their concerns. We guaranteed to get a deputation to the Minister for Environment and Planning.

It has to be remembered that Cabinet had approved the alignment of the road as it was and that the EIS had not been fully analysed. The council had not made a decision, but when we went to the Minister for Environment and Planning the council was saying that it had to make a decision within 14 days. The deputation pointed out to the Minister that the EIS had missed some very important criteria and that to suggest likely pollution of the reservoir from the air was a pretty poor argument when South Road passed the other side and most of the prevailing winds came from the other way: the west and north, a little from the south and not very much from the east. So, the Minister could not give a guarantee at that time—it was impossible. How could he say, 'I will change the alignment of the road' without speaking to the Minister of Water Resources (Mr Slater) or going back to Cabinet?

Also, the Minister of Transport was involved, as he was the Minister directly responsible for the road's construction. About 10 or 14 days after we had been to the Minister for Environment and Planning when he had promised to investigate and take up the points raised and speak to the council to ensure that it did not make a decision on the matter until he had had a chance to assess the report again and the points made by the deputation, an article was published in the paper stating that my colleague the member for Davenport, who is shadow Minister of Transport, and my colleague the Federal member, the Hon. Steele Hall (who had been down to have a look), had said that the road should be shifted nearer to the reservoir, and away from residents. However, those very points had been put to the Minister and at that time the Government was still in the process of handling the matter.

At the time that that statement was made the Government was on the point of making a decision. As the local member I would have preferred to be invited to go and have a look, although I did not mind about not being invited because I had seen it many times. However, I was the first one to raise the problem of the destruction of native bush and of the fact that the birds in the area, rather unique because of the small numbers of certain species in that area, would have to relocate themselves. Further, I was first to raise the matter of how close the road would be to houses in the area. Therefore, it did disturb me a little to not receive any notice about what was happening from my own colleagues.

But then the decision was made to shift the road. I hope that we all had a part to play in getting the road moved, to the satisfaction of residents and the council while meeting the various needs involved. Last night my colleague virtually inferred that the alignment had been changed due to his efforts and those of Steele Hall. However, at Cabinet meetings the matter must have been discussed. The honourable member must have been made aware that at the time Dick Glazbrook and I were fighting to have this matter rectified. So, his comments did hurt me a lot. A lot of effort went into that project of nearly five years. Over five years were spent in fighting a cause that at one stage my colleagues told me would not be satisfactorily resolved, and it is disappointing to have one's effort neglected and to have it inferred that one virtually did nothing.

My recollections of what happened in relation to Reservoir Drive are now on the record. I used to drive on that road before it was closed in 1968, and I drove on it illegally after it was closed (because it was the shortest way through). I knew the road and the proposed alignment well. I was involved with the argument about whether 300 acres should be bought to protect the quality of reservoir water; part of that land was bought in Tom Playford's time, with the remainder being bought during the time when Des Corcoran had responsibility for the matter. I hope that that clears the record and that I have made it clear that it was not simply one or two Parliamentarians who persuaded the Government to change its mind. Negotiations took five years. I thank all of those who co-operated in this matter, whether in the Liberal Party or the Labor Party. That co-operation resulted in the improved alignment of the road. I hope to see the day when it is completed and in use.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Murray): I intend to speak only briefly in support of the motion. I want to refer to a couple of matters that I did not have time to raise this afternoon during the debate on the urgency motion moved by the Leader, namely, 'That in view of recent incidents in Yatala Labour Prison, the Government must immediately review its deliberate policy of more lenient treatment and less discipline of prisoners.' I referred to a number of matters. The Government's policy was mentioned in regard to its attitude of peace at any price, as was the concern of prison officers within the prison system, particularly those at Yatala, about the erosion of authority and lack of discipline. I refer to the Minister's fudging of issues in regard to events that have occurred in recent times, and particularly to the drug overdose that occurred at Yatala on Monday, on which occasion much information was withheld by the Government, as was emphasised by the reaction of the parents of the inmate involved. This afternoon I indicated the concern of Opposition members who participated in the Estimates Committee dealing with the Minister of Correctional Services' lines. At that time it was quite obvious that the Minister was not prepared to provide the Committee with any substantial information and that he went out of his way to ensure that as much time as possible was taken up by Government members asking Dorothy Dix questions to which he gave long replies. If ever there was an instance of filibustering, that was it.

I also referred briefly this afternoon to the lack of action taken in regard to the correctional services legislation which was passed by both Houses in 1982. The Bill before the Parliament at that time was seen as being important legislation. With the support of the Opposition it was passed, although as yet has not been proclaimed. In reply to questions asked about this during the Estimates Committee, the Minister made it quite clear that the Government was procrastinating in regard to the future of that legislation. When Opposition members asked about the regulations (and I point out that the regulations were almost completed when the previous Government left office), we were told that there was still much work to be done on those regulations. It is quite obvious that the Minister is not keen to take any decisive action that is needed within the prison system to clarify a number of issues relating to the administration of prisons.

I also referred to the matter of pornography in gaols and the Government's attitude thereto, as well as to the fact that it is likely we will see quite a bit of dispute on the part of prisoners concerning the operation of the industrial complex that the Government hopes to open on 5 November. I have been led to believe that the prisoners will bring forward a list of claims and that the Government will be expected to give them a fairly significant increase in pay. I also believe that the prisoners intend to make further claims in regard to working conditions, etc.

There are a number of other matters to which I will refer briefly. This afternoon the Leader, in speaking to the motion, referred to the need for the appointment of a fire and safety officer at Yatala. I reiterate what he said on that occasion and I will make a couple of other comments in that regard. The Minister of Labour has said lately that he is very anxious to see improved safety requirements in Government departments. I would have thought, that if ever there was a need for a fire and safety officer, there is a need in the Department of Correctional Services, and particularly at Yatala. However, prison officers at Yatala have been told that it is not on and that there is no need for a training officer. I dispute that. There is a need for training and the standardisation of equipment in prisons particularly.

The prisons are very vulnerable as far as fire is concerned and I do not have to remind the House that in recent times both A Division and C Division have burnt down. The emergency procedures at Yatala were severely criticised in a recent Coroner's report into the fire at C Division. However, as I have said, prison officers at Yatala have been told that a specialist position of fire officer is not required there or within the Department. I find that quite staggering. It has been suggested that local community fire-fighting resources can look after country prisons and specialised fire-fighting resources in the metropolitan area can do the job as far as the metropolitan prisons are concerned.

As the Leader indicated earlier today, the Minister has been made aware of the fact that in very recent times an embarrassing situation has developed at Yatala as a result of the fact that no person is given the responsibility of looking after fires and other emergencies. As a result of a false alarm, nine fire units sat outside the western gate of Yatala for 25 minutes because they were not allowed to go in. It was thought that there was a fire in the industrial complex and the fire units sat idle for 25 minutes while confusion reigned.

It is not just the concern felt by the Metropolitan Fire Service; it is also the cost to the taxpayer, and the cost on that particular occasion would have been somewhere in the vicinity of $1 000. I hope that the Minister responsible and the Government generally will look at the matter again, that they will reconsider employing a fire officer, and that they will recognise the need for close liaison between the Metropolitan Fire Service and the Department.

I also refer to the Correctional Services Advisory Council. The House would be aware that the new legislation contains a provision for the establishment of the Correctional Services Advisory Council, which will assist in matters of policy and other matters. I am firmly of the opinion that this council is not being used effectively. In fact, I was rather concerned to see in the Correctional Services Department Report that the only reference to the Advisory Council is that it was making work for the Department. These people are very busy and have a great deal to contribute in regard to policy matters and other departmental administrative matters generally.

I would have thought that the Minister would have recognised his responsibility under the legislation to take advice from this council. On a number of occasions I have asked about support services available to the Correctional Services Advisory Council. I understand that they are almost negligible. I have been told that in comparison with New South Wales, where they have lavish provisions and where they are provided with very effective services, the South Australian situation is a complete disaster and something of which the Government should be ashamed.

I wonder how often the Minister meets with the council, what matters the council advises the Minister on, and on what occasions the Minister seeks advice from the council. What role does the Minister see for the advisory council? I repeat that these people are very busy, they contribute a great deal, and they are obviously being pushed aside. I suggest to the Minister that he should seriously reconsider that situation. If he feels (and I certainly do not) that he or the Department do not need the Correctional Services Advisory Council, he should tell each member and dismiss them. Personally, I see a great advantage in having such a council.

This afternoon I mentioned some of the matters relating to staff confusion at Yatala, and I will briefly refer to that. I have been told that, with the reorganisation and the new jobs that are being created at Yatala, there are no job specifications at this stage. Therefore, the officers and staff generally do not know what is expected of them as a result of the new positions that have been created. I understand that Yatala is now being split into three units: accommodation, operations and industry. Three chiefs have been appointed. However, at this stage, the officers are finding it difficult to recognise where they may go.

If an officer decides that he or she should go into the accommodation or operations unit, they request the opportunity to fill a job in that unit, but have no job specifications to indicate what is required of them in that position. This has been going on for some time and it is a matter that is causing much confusion and frustration on the part of the officers at Yatala. This matter needs to be addressed by the Minister and those responsible for the administration of Yatala.

We are now told that there is something like 107 persons employed in the head office of the Correctional Services Department. I cannot help but feel that it is a situation where there is an enormous amount of chiefs but very few indians. To ease the situation at Yatala and remove a lot of the frustrations that are currently being experienced, the Minister needs to take some positive action in that regard. The same applies to concerns being expressed about the position of Prosecuting Officer, where it appears at this stage that he is to wear two caps. I would like to know the responsibilities of the Prosecuting Officer? Also, the Government is apparently expecting the chiefs in each new unit to prosecute. I will not go into a lot of detail on this matter at this hour of the night. The Minister should be aware of the concerns being expressed, and I ask him to look at the situation in an attempt to clarify it.

I ask the Minister whether it is general practice that, when a sentencing judge expresses an opinion that an offender should serve a sentence under protection, this actually happens? Under what circumstances does this not occur? Recently, I received a letter from an inmate presently housed in one of the protection yards. He indicated that he has been told he is to be shifted from that protection yard. He points out in the letter that two Supreme Court justices, Mr Matheson and Mr Johns, both expressed their wish that his sentence be served in the protection yard at Adelaide Gaol.

Mr Matheson actually ordered that where possible these were to be two separate sentences. The inmate also underwent a pre-sentence psychiatric report at Northfield Security Hospital. It was carried out by Dr Moyle, who in his summary suggested:

> The protection in the appropriate area of the prison from other prisoners is essential.

The Acting Keeper's reply (as indicated in the letter to which I refer) to those points was:

> We do not have to take any notice of judges or doctors.

This matter has been referred to me on previous occasions and is something about which I am concerned. The writer concludes by saying:

> I earnestly implore you to give this matter your urgent attention before someone is moved out of the yard (protection yard) and severely injured, if not killed. None of us in here have at any

time asked to be taken off protection but we are not given a choice.

Certainly, concern is being expressed by prisoners in that situation. Again, I believe that it is essential that the Minister look into that matter urgently.

I asked a question of the Minister during the Estimates Committee in regard to facilities within the Northfield Security Hospital. I asked about the costing of a particular facility. I did not mention at that time that it was the infirmary and, of course, the Minister gave me information which I already knew and in which I was not particularly interested then, but I am concerned that the infirmary at the Northfield Security Hospital was commenced during the time of the previous Liberal Government. It has been completed for over 12 months, and it is more like 18 months. Twelve or 14 beds are provided in the infirmary for prisoners who are recuperating or who need to spend time after being in hospitals outside the prison system. That very expensive facility is still not being used. That is quite scandalous because a lot of taxpayers' money has gone into it. It is vitally important that we know, and that the community is told, why it is not being used.

I understand that it is a result—as is quite often the case—of problems with the unions. It is essential that the situation be clarified and that the community be told whether their taxes are being wasted in this way. If that facility is not to be used we need to know what other alternatives the Government has for the use of that building, which was constructed through the use of taxpayers' funds.

Finally, I refer to the confusion being experienced by prison officers. I have referred to this a couple of times today, but I want now particularly to refer to prison escorts. Members would be aware that this matter is of concern at present to prison officers, that an industrial dispute has come about as a result of it, and that further action is to be taken in that regard. I can certainly understand the concern of officers.

I have been given copies of minutes that have come out of the Department, and if this is the sort of thing that is going on, I find it very confusing. This is outside the main problem that is being experienced in regard to the provision of adequate numbers for escorts. However, I note that on 20 June a minute was written by the Executive Director to the manager and keepers of a number of institutions (Yatala, Adelaide Goal, Northfield Prison, Cadell Training Centre, Port Augusta Goal, Port Lincoln Prison and Mount Gambier Goal, and so it goes on) relating to escorts and hospitals watches. Under 'Restraints' (4.2) the minute reads:

> Every prisoner, regardless of security rating, will be dressed in pyjamas and dressing gown for the above escorts, except with the special approval obtained from the institutional head to the contrary.

That makes sense. It is seen as a precaution that, if a prisoner is being transported to or from a hospital and there is an attempt to escape, prisoners will be recognised because of their dress, and that is clear in the minute. That information was released in a minute to the heads of those institutions on 20 June. However, the staggering thing is that on the previous day, 19 June (and officers at Yatala did not receive this until some days later), a minute signed by Mr Ellickson, Manager, Yatala Labour Prison, was distributed in respect of prisoners, dress for medical appointments. It is addressed to all staff at Yatala Labour Prison and states:

> Consideration is being given to altering the custom of prisoners—

and this minute is dated the day before the minute to which I have just previously referred—

> dressing in pyjamas and bath robes for outside medical appointments to a tracksuit style attire. It is anticipated that this tracksuit would be common in colour and style for all metropolitan institutions.

I understand what the prison officers are complaining about in regard to confusion if that is an example—and I believe it is a good example. Here we have two minutes going out on consecutive days with two completely different and contradictory messages. I understand that when officers sought further clarification it was just not forthcoming. I have a number of examples of minutes and documents that have come out of the Department that add to the confusion and frustrations being experienced by prison officers, but I certainly will not refer to them at this time of night.

The evidence is there, and it is no good the Government's continuing to just indicate that it is not particularly concerned, that officers are pulling my leg and saying that that is not happening, that they are not frustrated and that there are not problems at Yatala—there are, and there are many examples to prove it. I wanted to refer those few matters to the House. I intended to do so earlier today, but I did not have time. I ask the Minister of Correctional Services in the present Government to take on board the matters that have been raised and, where I have asked specific questions, I hope that the Minister will provide that information.

Finally, I was aware at the time of the Estimates Committees that, if information requested was not available at the time, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee made it known to the Minister responsible, the Minister being questioned, that further information was to be provided for inclusion in the *Hansard* report, and I am sure it was suggested that the information should be made available by 17 October. As far as I am concerned, I have not seen any of that information that was to have been forthcoming, and I bring that position to the notice of the House because it was an instruction laid down at the time of the Estimates Committee. That instruction should be adhered to. I hope that, because I have been able to raise those matters, the Minister will take them on board.

Mr OSWALD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 18 October at 2 p.m.