

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 23 October 1984

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

TRANSPLANTATION AND ANATOMY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill.

POLICE (COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS) BILL

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

PETITION: TANUNDA-ROSEWORTHY ROAD

A petition signed by 1 873 residents and tourists of the Barossa Valley praying that the House urge the Government to reclassify the Tanunda-Roseworthy road from a category 4-5 to a category 3 road and provide funds for its restructuring and sealing was presented by the Hon. B.C. Eastick.
Petition received.

PETITION: FISHERIES ACT

A petition signed by 24 residents of South Australia praying that the House amend regulation 18 of the Fisheries Act to delete the necessity of daily details as required by the South Australian Inland Water Catch and Effort Returns and reduce the severity of penalty referred to subregulation 7 was presented by the Hon. P.B. Arnold.
Petition received.

PETITION: KINDERGARTEN UNION

A petition signed by 11 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to reconsider its intentions to disestablish the Kindergarten Union and to allow it to remain under the care and control of the Minister of Education was presented by Mr Ingerson.
Petition received.

PETITION: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A petition signed by 11 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to ensure that the course in early childhood education at Magill campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education be retained in its present form was presented by Mr Ingerson.
Petition received.

PETITIONS: ANTI DISCRIMINATION BILL

Petitions signed by 61 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. P.B. Arnold and Messrs Ashenden and Blacker.
Petitions received.

QUESTIONS

The **SPEAKER**: I direct that the following written answers to questions on the Notice Paper, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 21, 54, 56, 73, 92, 109, 115, 123, 156, and 160.

VISITING OFFICER

The **SPEAKER**: We have with us today Mrs Robin Graham, Clerk of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly. She is with us on attachment to the staff of the Clerk for one week, and I am sure I speak for all members in wishing her a warm welcome. From time to time she will be on duty at the table, and I hope that all members will give her the same courtesy and consideration as they do all other table officers.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Hon. J.D. Wright, for the Minister for the Arts (Hon. J.C. Bannon)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. Jam Factory Workshops Incorporated—Report, 1983-84.

By the Minister of Labour (Hon. J.D. Wright)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. Labour, Department of—Report, 1983.
- ii. Industrial Court and Commission of South Australia, President of—Report, 1983-84.

By the Chief Secretary (Hon. J.D. Wright)—

Pursuant to Statute—

Friendly Societies Act, 1919—Amendment of General Laws—

- i. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Grand Lodge of South Australia.
- ii. Friendly Societies Medical Association Incorporated.
- iii. Lifeplan Community Services.
- iv. The South Australian United Ancient Order of Druids Friendly Society.

By the Minister for Environment and Planning (Hon. D.J. Hopgood)—

Pursuant to Statute—

Planning Act, 1982—Crown Development Reports by South Australian Planning Commission on proposed—

- i. Car Park and Access Road at Blanche Point.
- ii. Borrow Pit, Hundred of Wallaroo.
- iii. Additions at the Coorara Primary School.
- iv. Borrow Pit, Tumby Bay.
- v. Port Pirie College of Technical and Further Education.
- vi. South Australian Urban Land Trust—Report, 1984.

By the Hon. G.F. Keneally, for the Minister of Education (Hon. Lynn Arnold)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. Fisheries Act, 1982—Regulations—Southern Zone Abalone.
- ii. Marketing of Eggs Act, Report of the Auditor-General on—Report, 1983-84.
- iii. Stock Diseases Act, 1934—Proclamation—Prohibition of Introduction of Cattle above Dog Fence.

By the Hon. G.F. Keneally, for the Minister for Technology (Hon. Lynn Arnold)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. South Australian Council on Technological Change—Report, 1983.

By the Minister of Local Government (Hon. G.F. Keneally)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. Outback Areas Community Development Trust—Report, 1983-84.
- ii. Parks Community Centre—Report, 1983-84.

By the Minister of Community Welfare (Hon. G.J. Crafter)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. Trustee Act, 1936—Regulations—Authorised Trustees.

By the Minister of Housing and Construction (Hon. T.H. Hemmings)—

Pursuant to Statute—

- i. South Australian Housing Trust—Report, 1983-84.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Members would be aware of the considerable interest that has been generated by the possibility of Adelaide's staging a Formula One Grand Prix car race. The Government, the City of Adelaide, and the Board of Jubilee 150 have been actively engaged for some months in negotiations both in Australia and in Europe to secure this race for Adelaide.

Recently the governing body of international motor racing (FISA) announced that Adelaide had been placed on the calendar of Grand Prix events. However, detailed organisational and financial arrangements remain to be negotiated with the Formula One Contractors Association which, by agreement with FISA, is responsible for the organisation of individual races.

As most members will be aware, the Premier left this morning to travel to London to take part in the final negotiations concerning the contract between the Government and FOCA. The decision that the Premier should make this trip was made at very short notice, and I regret that earlier advice could not be given to the House.

Officers of the Government have been involved in these detailed negotiations with FOCA for some weeks. However, they have been unable to reach agreement on a number of matters relating to the financing of the event. It has always been accepted that the Government would need to contribute to both the capital costs and the recurrent costs of staging the race. It is also clear that the financial returns to the State as a whole will far exceed the likely expenditure. The benefits to the State simply in terms of the international recognition it will give us in an increasingly competitive tourism market will be considerable, not to mention the tourism income generated directly by those who will come to Adelaide to see the race.

However, the Government is determined to ensure that the direct financial costs to the State are kept to a minimum and that the opportunities for participation in the financial rewards of the race are maximised. The Premier expects to

return to Adelaide at the weekend and, of course, will not be present in the House until next week.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

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

Mount Barker District Soldiers Memorial Hospital (Redevelopment).

Ordered that report be printed.

QUESTION TIME

COSTIGAN REPORT

Mr OLSEN: Will the Deputy Premier give a guarantee that the South Australian Government will arrange to have tabled in this Parliament the final report of the Costigan Royal Commission into organised crime to ensure that the South Australian media has full legal protection in publishing and reporting the contents of that report? Mr Costigan is due to hand down his report to the Federal Government late this week, but there is considerable confusion about its privilege status because it will not be tabled in the Federal Parliament. The Prime Minister has said that the report will be tabled in the Victorian Parliament. However, we have been advised that the privilege of Victorian Parliament does not extend to South Australia: indeed, it extends only to New South Wales, which does not give any legal protection to South Australian based media.

To ensure that the South Australian media is fully protected in dealing with the report, I ask the Deputy Premier to initiate immediate discussions with the Federal Government with a view to arranging tabling of the Costigan Report in this House as well, as soon as that report is available. As Mr Costigan took evidence in South Australia on two occasions about alleged irregular trade union activities, it is also important to ensure that there is no denial of any opportunity for this Parliament to consider and, if necessary, debate the contents of that report.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The Leader of the Opposition has made a statement, about which I am not actually sure (although I imagine that he would have checked it), that the Victorian Parliament's information can extend to New South Wales, but not to South Australia. I would not have thought that that was correct. I am not positive about this, but it seems rather strange to me that one Parliament can pick up information supplied to another State when they live under similar constitutional laws.

I do not know how that applies, but if the Deputy Leader has checked that out he may be positive of his facts. I am not, and I am quite surprised that that is the case. However, I firmly believe that the Costigan Report should be made available publicly all over Australia. I do not believe it should be privileged in Victoria or New South Wales. I believe that South Australians, Queenslanders and the Australian public generally ought to have the opportunity to examine that report because it affects everyone's life in very great detail. In those circumstances, I will do all in my power to ensure that we obtain a copy for South Australia.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I am not sure whether I am permitted to do that. I am giving the honourable member a guarantee that we will attempt to obtain a copy of that report, and if we are in a position to be able to table it—

Mr Olsen: The Minister can table whatever he wants.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I am making quite clear to the Leader—

Mr Olsen: You are in a position to table it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: We may not be in a position to table it because we may not get it.

Mr Olsen: Make arrangements to get it.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I will attempt to get it. I will do what is in my power to get that report. If we are in a position to table that report, after having obtained it, quite clearly I think that it becomes the property of the public of South Australia, and I would have no hesitation in tabling it.

The SPEAKER: I neglected to mention that in the absence of the Minister of Education questions normally directed to that Minister will be taken by the Minister for Environment and Planning. I call the honourable member for Elizabeth.

PSYCHIATRIC VIOLATIONS

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: I do not know if it is a swan song, but I am certainly getting a certain degree of preferential treatment in my dying days in the place. Will the Minister of Tourism, representing the Minister of Health in another place (and it is not a political question, I hasten to add), investigate an alleged incident which occurred on Friday 13 July and which is reported in a circular that I think is sent to most members, headed 'Citizens' Committee on Human Rights Incorporated—Psychiatric Violations'. This newsletter came into my hands recently, and one of the allegations in it is of a most serious kind. The newsletter reports it as follows:

Tourist kidnapped off streets by psychiatry—

I thought that, considering the Minister of Tourism was going to answer on behalf of the Minister of Health, it was most appropriate. The newsletter states:

Friday 13 July was a very unlucky day for a Melbourne visitor to Adelaide. At around 10 p.m. that night 'Simon' was sheltering from the rain at the shops in Glenelg. He was picked up by the police for loitering and then sent to Glenside psychiatric hospital. He was held there for two weeks and forced to have a moderate injection, until he saw any opportunity to escape and caught a bus interstate.

Simon had over \$100 cash on him; he had just moved out of a boarding house due to a personal disagreement with another resident. He was detained because, fearing the consequences of telling the police he had no address, he gave them a fictitious address. The police surgeon saw this as evidence of insanity and dispatched him to Glenside for it. Here he protested the situation and asked for a lawyer, to no avail.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: No, I do not, but I think that if these allegations are being made they ought to be investigated properly and put to rest. The newsletter continues:

Simon would have survived a loitering charge yet by sending him to Glenside the police were able to circumvent justice and strip him of his rights. Naturally the psychiatrists (with their compulsion to treat people) were only too willing to co-operate and deny Simon his rights. Has psychiatry really changed in South Australia?

I ask the Minister to investigate that matter and bring down a report at a future time. I do not believe that those sorts of allegations should be left simply floating around the community; they ought to be answered.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I certainly appreciate the honourable member's directing the question to me. It may well be that his next question will be directed to the Prime Minister, so I could be in very good company.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I am quite happy to enter into the frivolity and hilarity of the moment if members opposite want to continue making jokes. The matter that the honourable member has brought before the House is one of great concern to everyone. It ought to be investigated and a report provided for the House and for the honourable member, and I will make it my business to do that. I hope that the report will be back so that we do not have to send it over to Canberra for the honourable member's attention, but, no matter how long it takes, the investigation will be thorough and the House will be advised of the results thereof.

COSTIGAN ROYAL COMMISSION

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: What has the Minister of Marine done to investigate and, if necessary, take action based on evidence given to the Costigan Royal Commission into organised crime about alleged blackmail and lawlessness on the Port Adelaide and Port Stanvac waterfronts?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Port Stanvac?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: The honourable member must be ill informed if he finds something in my question to jest about. During sittings of the Costigan Royal Commission in Adelaide late last year and earlier this year, allegations were made about activities of the Ship Painters and Dockers Union at Port Adelaide and Port Stanvac, despite the local Minister's lack of knowledge. In particular, it was alleged that officials of this union regularly sought payment for work and activities that they did not undertake, under threat that ships would be tied up in port if the payments were not made by shipping operators.

Port Adelaide was said to be the worst port in Australia for this form of blackmail, with one representative of shippers stating in evidence that agents had been advised not to come to Adelaide if vessels needed work done. Because these allegations were so serious, I assume the Minister initiated immediate investigations into them. In particular, I ask him whether consideration has been given to the establishment of an authority to employ all painters and dockers on a fixed wage basis, rather than the present contract system, to resolve the serious abuses which seem to be taking place.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I am not aware whether the Department of Marine and Harbors has received a copy of that report. However, I will undertake to investigate the matters raised by the Deputy Leader and bring down a report for him.

TOURIST ROAD GRANTS

Mr WHITTEN: Will the Minister of Transport advise the House of the financial allocation for 1984-85 in relation to tourist road grants, forest road grants and national park road grants? It is my intention some time next year to travel extensively through this State due to my retirement from this Parliament and I intend to visit the great tourist facilities that we have in South Australia. I therefore wish to know on what type of roads I will be travelling.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I thank the honourable member for his question. I do have that detail at hand. I am afraid that I will not be able to make any specific recommendation to the honourable member as to which tourist attractions

he ought to visit—I will leave that for him to work out. A total of \$340 000 is allocated in the schedule of works for 1984-85 for tourist road grants, as set out in the following table:

Tourist Road Grants Allocation in 'Schedule of Works' Folio 9-2 1984-85		
Council	Project	Grant \$
D.C. Kingscote	Seal Bay Road—Final allocation of \$100 000 commitment	20 000
C.C. Mt. Gambier	John Watson Drive 2 year prog. (year No. 2) and Final	10 000
D.C. Mannum	East Riverfront Road	20 000
D.C. Elliston	Venus Bay access road	80 000
C.T. Wallaroo	Wallaroo Foreshore Road	70 000
D.C. Le Hunte	Wudinna/Mount Wudinna Rock turn-off	16 900
D.C. Port MacDonnell	Cape Northumberland Road car park	16 000
D.C. Warooka	Daly Heads Road—2 year prog. (year No. 1)	9 000
D.C. Tumby Bay	Trinity Haven access road	13 000
D.C. Kanyaka-Quorn	Arden Vale Road	12 500
D.C. Mount Remarkable	Alligator Gorge Road	10 400
	Mambray Creek access road	7 000
D.C. Yorketown	Coast Road Goldsmith Beach	6 000
D.C. Victor Harbor	Access road to Rosetta Head	13 000
D.C. Morgan	Hogwash Bend Parade	12 500
D.C. Paringa	Lock 5 Road	17 700
D.C. Saddleworth and Auburn	Clare/Watervale scenic drive (sections)	6 000
TOTAL		340 000

The allocation for forest road grants totals \$200 000 and is comprised as set out in the following table.

Forest Road Grants Allocation in 'Schedule of Works' Folio 9-2 1984-85		
Council	Project	Grant \$
D.C. Mount Gambier	Airport Road	40 000
D.C. Port MacDonnell	Blackfellows Caves Road (Kongorong)	25 000
D.C. Penola	Logging track (Tantanoola Forest H.Q.)	110 000
D.C. Penola	Poolaigelo Road	12 000
D.C. Lacedpede	Murraup Road	15 000
TOTAL		200 000

The allocation for the national park road grants is as follows:

National Park Road Grants Allocation in 'Schedule of Proposed Works' Folio 9-2 1984-85		
Council	Project	Grant \$
D.C. Warooka	Inneston National Park, access roads	51 000

GRAND PRIX

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I direct my question to the Deputy Premier following his Ministerial statement. Will he now specify the detailed financial aspects of the Grand Prix on which an impasse has been reached requiring

the Premier to fly to London today, and will he inform the house of the precise extent of taxpayers' funds which the Deputy Premier has just admitted the Government proposes to commit to the staging of the Grand Prix? The Opposition has facilitated the visit of the Premier to London by agreeing to the granting of a pair for this week, and we hope he can bring back a good deal for South Australia. Our positive attitude is in stark contrast to the statements made at the time the former Premier was required to go overseas at short notice to deal with problems associated with the petrochemical project. Even though that trip by Mr Tonkin secured significant Japanese interest in the petro-chemical project, the present Premier described it as 'only a stunt' in a press statement on 16 September 1980.

In expressing the hope that this visit is as beneficial to the State as was Mr Tonkin's, I ask the Deputy Premier to spell out to the House the outstanding financial aspects of the contract which need the Premier's presence in London. I also seek information on the precise amount of taxpayers' funds which the Government proposes to commit to the staging of the Grand Prix, as I assume this matter was settled in Cabinet yesterday.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is tending to repeat the question.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: While a Grand Prix will obviously bring significant benefits to South Australia, the public also deserves to be informed of the extent to which its money will be spent to secure those benefits.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: First, I would like to thank the Opposition for wishing the Premier well in his deliberations in London. Obviously, the Premier did not want to undertake this trip if it could have been avoided.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Premier.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: Negotiations have broken down at officer level, and it is therefore necessary for the matter to be taken up at Premier level. Whether the Premier will be a good negotiator or not will be established, not before he goes, as has been indicated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but after the negotiations are completed. I am pleased that at least the House wishes him well in those deliberations.

As a passing remark, I might say that the Premier, in his former capacity as industrial officer for the Australian Workers Union, was one of the top negotiators in the State for many years. I have a great deal of confidence in the Premier's negotiating ability, and I am more than hopeful that on this occasion he will be able to come to suitable terms in the very difficult negotiations ahead of him. In reply to the direct question, I am not in a position at this stage to declare publicly where these differences are. I am informed that—

The Hon. Michael Wilson interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I am informed, not only by the Premier's Department but also by other interested people to whom I talked this morning on this particular subject, that it could jeopardise the negotiations that are currently going on.

The Hon. Michael Wilson: You must have discussed it in Cabinet.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: We certainly discussed it in Cabinet yesterday; there is no question about that. That is one of the reasons why the Premier is going to London to follow up those discussions. I am not in a position to comment, because I have not been directly involved in those negotiations. Therefore, I must take notice of the people who have been involved in these negotiations for some months. If I did not do that, I would be a fool. I am not going to jeopardise what they have told me is the position at the moment, and that is that we should not disclose

publicly the differences between the constructing company and the Government at this stage. Obviously, that matter will be picked up quickly in London. One could almost be certain that the agency would have a filing system whereby there would be press releases coming out of this State, all other States and other countries where a Grand Prix is held. However, as soon as these negotiations are in place, I will undertake to bring down a full report to the House so that not only the Opposition but also the people of this State will be aware of the final position.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANT

Mrs APPLEBY: Can the Minister of Local Government give some details on how the \$25 000 grant to the South Australian Government will be spent in relation to public attitudes and the reasons for low public participation in local government? The announcement at the weekend that the South Australian Government would receive a Federal grant under the Federal Government's Local Government Development Programme has generated some inquiries as to how the grant will be spent in relation to an awareness programme leading up to the 1985 local government elections. It has been put to me that with the recent changes to the Local Government Act this is the most appropriate time for such a commitment.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for her question. This is a most appropriate time for the State Government to have received a grant from our Federal colleagues, because of the recent changes to the Local Government Act and the education programme that now needs to be put in place. I ask members to cast their minds back a year or two to the discussions that took place between the Government and the Local Government Association about a plank in the Government's platform policy on local government, and that is compulsory voting. It was the Government's intention (and it still is our policy) to have compulsory voting for local government. We reached agreement with the Local Government Association that we would try to ensure that the voting turnout for local government elections increased dramatically, rather than implement compulsory voting at the moment, and the way to do that was to have a public awareness programme. That is one of the bases for the programme that we have in mind.

The other factor is that there is a very poor understanding among those in the community in South Australia of the role that local government plays. The feeling is that local government is responsible for only rates, roads and rubbish. Of course, local government is involved in a vast array of human services; for instance, in the provision of libraries and neighbourhood houses. Local government is becoming increasingly involved in a whole range of activities of which, by and large, the community is unaware. So, first, we need to have a market research programme to identify the reasons why people do not vote at local government elections and also to identify those areas of local government activity of which the community at large has very little or a poor understanding.

Following that market research programme, we will then be able to mount an educational awareness programme. We are anxious to have as much as possible of the market research completed by the end of this year or early next year so that we can have our voting education completed by May next year, when the next election will be held. There is a second arm involved, namely, a community level campaign involving dissemination of information by community and special interest groups and organisations, as well as participation in a range of activities in local communities,

involving councils wherever possible. Current proposed activities include the organisation of volunteer speakers, production of a speaker's kit, production of display aids and resources, newsletter articles, general handouts and, if possible, a slide presentation or video. The community level campaign will also be involved in the organisation of street theatre and the use of community radio and free television interview time. This package of activities will begin in 1985 and will not directly result from the market research programmes in which we will be involved, but certainly the information fed into it will be more relevant to that being provided to local government.

I believe that the grant that we have received from the Commonwealth Government is a very welcome one. It has been made at an appropriate time, and hopefully at the end of our community awareness programme there will be a greater understanding in South Australia of what local government does for the community, resulting in a much larger turnout at election time. Quite frankly, at many local government elections in South Australia there is an abysmally poor turnout of voters. In fact, at many elections there is no contest at all, because there is only the one candidate. The whole idea of this programme is to increase the awareness of people and to encourage them to participate more in local government activities. Those people who do not want to stand for election will at least be encouraged to go out and vote for those who do want to stand.

MOUNT BARKER COMMUNICATIONS TOWER

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Will the Minister of Public Works say when work will be resumed on the police communications tower at Mount Barker? Work on that project, which is vital for the police and other emergency services, was stopped on 3 August, almost three months ago, by Aboriginal land rights activists who have received trade union support. Four unions have been picketing the site, despite the fact that the Minister for Environment and Planning and, as far as we understand, the Minister of Emergency Services have said that the work should be allowed to proceed.

On 19 September the Minister of Emergency Services said in this House that the Government hoped to be in a position to make a final announcement about the project in the near future. However, another month has gone by, and still work has not been resumed. Many people living in the area are saying that the Government is giving in to sectional interests and union bullies, such as officials of the Builders Labourers' Federation, who are showing a complete disregard for the safety of life and property in the Adelaide Hills. The need for improved communications for our emergency services was highlighted by the Ash Wednesday fires, and this was commented upon by the Coroner in his findings following his inquiry into the tragedy. Therefore, I ask the Government to stop being lily livered with these activists and union officials—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: —and to take immediate action to ensure that the work on this vital project is not further delayed.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Just before I respond in depth to the question of the member for Murray—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: —I would like to make some comment. It seems that there is a point of view on the other side of the House, such as the one expressed by the member for Mitcham, that the views of the Aboriginal

people in the Mount Barker area should be dismissed because all they are worrying about is a few sticks and stones. I would like to think that that comment is not shared by most members opposite. However, this Government has not been lacking in this matter: we are trying to resolve it, and I will now respond in detail on what this Government has been doing.

At a meeting of all interested parties at Parliament House on 13 September last, the State Government explained what it was prepared to do to accommodate the concerns of the protesters—both white and black. At that meeting, the Aboriginal people made known that they considered the whole of Mount Barker to have sacred significance. This precluded a tower of any description being built on the mountain.

The union representatives present made clear that their members would not be party to acting against the wishes of the Aboriginal people. The implication of this, of course, was that no labour would be available to build the tower on Mount Barker. Nonetheless, the State Government is sensitive to the feelings of the Aboriginal people on this matter and, while it is our objective to meet the improved communication needs of the police, we would not ignore the concerns expressed and build regardless—even if we had agreement with the unions involved.

On this basis, as Minister of Public Works and thus the Minister charged with the actual job of building a tower, I have been continuing communications with both white and black representatives of the protesting groups. I personally visited the site on 26 September and talked with most of the parties involved. I have looked at the alternatives to building at Mount Barker, and I have made the implications of those alternatives known to all those involved. The Government is continuing the process of communication, and I am hopeful that perhaps we can reach a satisfactory arrangement soon.

INSURANCE TRIBUNAL

Mr MAYES: Will the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Attorney-General in another place, investigate the establishment of an independent valuation tribunal to assist in resolving disputes between insurance companies and the public? I have been approached by several constituents who have experienced considerable difficulty and delays in receiving payouts from insurance companies for the loss of their motor vehicles damaged in vehicular accidents.

Briefly, I wish to explore one case that has been recently brought to my attention by a constituent. On 19 June my constituent's car was damaged beyond repair by a client of a large Adelaide insurance company. The company placed a valuation on that car which my constituent regarded as being below current market value. When my constituent inquired, the insurance company assured him that in fact it was a true and real valuation and a fair one on market terms.

He then approached the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia for an independent valuation, which he found was 30 per cent higher than the insurance company valuation for the same vehicle with the same mileage. My constituent has waited some four months for repayment on his vehicle; he has been without a replacement vehicle for that time and is still in dispute with the insurance company.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for his question, which raises an issue on which I myself have had representations, and I am sure that other members have received similar representations. I understand that

whilst it is possible to purchase market value insurance for motor vehicles there is, even there, a dispute as to the value for which a vehicle is insured. Most certainly, where the motor vehicle is insured for market value, disputes arise, such as the dispute to which the honourable member refers. I shall be pleased to refer the matter to my colleague for his inquiry.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Minister of Housing and Construction resolve the clear public disagreement between himself and the Minister of Education about the establishment of a Government Employee Housing Authority? In a statement to the Estimates Committee the Minister of Education said that the Government had already decided to establish a Government Employee Housing Authority. Using the Minister's own words, I quote:

That matter—

referring to housing—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The quote continues: was examined and considered by Cabinet. As a result of further consideration, we determined that we would establish a Government Employee Housing Authority.

The Minister of Housing and Construction, during questioning in the Estimates Committee, said the following words in answer to a similar question:

A committee has been set up by Cabinet to look at the whole aspect of Government employee housing, but it has yet to bring down its recommendations to the Government.

As this obvious conflict between the two Ministers has caused great concern about the possibility of rising rents amongst tenants of Government owned housing, especially those in the 1 839 properties rented out by the Teacher Housing Authority, can the Minister say whether in fact Cabinet has already created a new authority to cover all Government employee housing?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: There is no disagreement between the Minister of Education and me on the whole subject of teacher housing. The only disagreement I have with the Minister of Education is the fact that we travel home together after Parliament adjourns and it seems that I am the only one who is able to use my Cabcharge. So, that is the only disagreement I have with the Minister of Education, and it is a very important disagreement!

Dealing with the question that the member for Light asked, there is no disagreement whatsoever. I stand by the answer that I gave to the member for Light during the Estimates Committee debate: the Government has set up a committee to look at the whole matter of teacher housing and whether there should be one body covering all aspects of Government housing. That committee has not reported to the Government but, when it does, an announcement will be made.

PASTORAL INDUSTRY AWARD

Mr PLUNKETT: Will the Minister of Labour inform me whether he has had any complaints over some New Zealand shearers breaching the award in the pastoral industry? After the violence that erupted at Coleraine, Victoria, it was reported that it was over the use of wide combs. My information—

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr Hamilton: Why don't you just keep quiet?

Mr PLUNKETT: Just let him go; ignorance is bliss. It is my information that this is not the case, as reported on a television show recently. The reason given to me is that these shearers are breaking all the conditions in the award which have been fought for by the people in the shearing industry for many years by shearing six days a week and all hours, and breaking all other conditions. I would appreciate the Minister's letting me know if any of that type of thing is going on in South Australia.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The honourable member warned me yesterday that he would raise this question, which I know is very dear to his heart, having been a shearers and an organiser in that industry for a long time, upholding the conditions that have been fought for and won over the years. Honourable members will recall that approximately 12 or 15 months ago (I am not sure of the date) I entered into this matter publicly of my own volition when I could see that things were not going to be normal in the shearing industry following Commissioner McKenzie's decision. I make no criticism whatsoever of the decision, except to say that I think it was a very well written decision and one that was very difficult from which to appeal. It is one that I would not support. Nevertheless, the Commissioner had to give a decision as he saw fit on the evidence before him.

I called the parties together on that occasion (as members may recall) and thought I was close to getting agreement at least in South Australia between the interested parties, that is, the employer organisations and the Australian Workers Union. Those negotiations broke down, and I will not go into details as to the reasons. However, I was disappointed at that stage because I thought that the formula that I was putting forward was of use in attempting to prevent the things that were likely to happen at Coleraine, in New South Wales, and in other parts of Australia in relation to this very worrying issue. It is important to put into *Hansard* some of the feelings of the Australian Workers Union Secretary, Mr Allan Begg, who wrote to me some time back. I will not delay the House by reading it all, but there are some very pertinent points that the House ought to be aware of. In part, Mr Begg stated:

I write as to a problem that has developed with the advent of Commissioner Ian McKenzie's decision to allow the use of wide combs in the Pastoral Industry Award.

Graziers are not satisfied with the introduction of wide combs but are now embarking on an organised campaign to deregulate the pastoral industry.

Many non-unionists have emerged since the dispute on wide combs.

Mr Begg states that many non-unionists have emerged. Honourable members should note that. That causes trouble in itself in the pastoral industry. He further states:

Many are New Zealand imports who are prepared to break all rules or award conditions that prevail, such as—(a) working at weekends—

that is quite illegal under the Federal or State Pastoral Award—

and extended hours during weekdays.

That is also quite illegal. In fact, they are working nine to 10 hours a day and no penalties are paid, the reason being that the award does not provide for penalties for shearing. Mr Begg goes on to point out:

(b) many sheds are done without shed hands; shearers grind their own tools; sheds are being done without a cook.

When I was in the industry that was sacrosanct. In three or four stand sheds one is always provided with a cook. The letter continues:

Shearers' wives do the cooking, some New Zealand workers' wives and other members of the family work in sheds for much less than award wages.

Australian shearers and shed personnel cannot compete with these 'scabs'. Grazcos Shearing Company and N.Z. Shearing Contractors employ New Zealand scabs who are willing to work for less than award rates and conditions. Also these 'scabs' are supported by graziers who are executive members of the Australian Wool Board. I consider that the rank and file graziers do not want deregulation of the industry.

The Australian methods of wool handling are looked on as being most advanced in the wool industry world. Shearers are hard working individuals who live and work under the worst conditions of any worker in this country.

He goes on to state:

Pastoral workers are being intimidated by police in Bourke, Walgett and Moree. Pastoral workers in Bourke now face 180 charges in their efforts to retain their jobs.

The letter continues and finishes with a resolution that was carried in all States of Australia. It is important to record it in *Hansard*, as follows:

This meeting expresses concern at the continuing adverse effect of New Zealand workers, who are taking employment opportunities from Australian workers in all areas and, in particular, the pastoral industry.

We believe that this solution is also having a very serious effect on the employment opportunities for the Australian Aborigines, and request that the A.W.U. gives full support to any action which will help Aboriginal job seekers who are already suffering from many problems of discrimination in most industries and other sources of employment.

It seems unfair to us that New Zealand is able to sign agreements with such places as Tonga, to teach people from there various trades and skills, then obtain jobs for them in the Australian workforce, often breaking down conditions in these areas.

We feel that it is high time this Trans-Tasman agreement was reviewed, and that it is high time this Government took a look at itself and started some training schools like this for our own Australian Aborigines and slow learners. We have plenty of good Australian citizens who, given the same opportunity, can fill these situations.

Surely the Trans-Tasman agreement was not drawn up to solve the unemployment problems in New Zealand and Tonga and increasing the number of Australian citizens unable to obtain jobs because of their colour or education standards.

This Government is slowly starting to lose the support of good solid Labor voters who have never voted anything else but Labor, if they don't impose work visas into the agreement.

Clearly that letter was directed to the Federal Government because it, and not the South Australian Government, controls visas for entry into the country. This matter was drawn to my attention. I wrote back to Mr Begg, thanking him for his letter. I said:

I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Director, Department of Labour, for his information, and asked that particular attention be paid to the Pastoral Industry Award. If you have any specific instances of breaches of this award please do not hesitate to contact me.

In reference to your comments on New Zealand shearers, I have sought comments on this matter from the Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, the Hon. R. Willis, M.P. I will write to you as soon as his report comes to hand.

I said to Mr Begg that if any specific award conditions were being broken down in this State that were under the control of the Department of Labour in South Australia, clearly those infringements would be attended to.

In relation to the more general question concerning the entry into this country of New Zealanders and other people whom it is alleged are breaking down conditions, I forwarded that letter for the comments of the Federal Minister. His letter states:

I refer to your correspondence of 28 March and 9 April 1984 concerning problems which you see arising in the pastoral industry from legislation of wide combs and access which New Zealand shearers have to the industry. You also wrote to the Prime Minister on the subject. That correspondence has been referred to me for direct reply. Of particular concern to you was your belief that New Zealand shearers are willing to work for less than award rates and conditions.

As you will recall, this matter was the subject of discussions between myself and representatives of the Australian Workers Union in April this year. As a result I arranged for officers of

my Department to meet with Federal and State officials of the union. I understand that meeting took place on 4 May 1984.

I am advised that the discussions were constructive and wide ranging. I understand that attention is being given to requests made of the Department to secure a consolidated, current correspondence listing to the Pastoral Industry Award and to initiate discussions with State inspectorate services to maximise Federal/State co-ordination—including the possibility of conducting joint inspections in selected rural areas. Officers of my Department will be following up these matters directly with the union.

The union's views regarding penalties under section 119 of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and the staffing levels and methods of operation of the Inspectorate, have also been brought to my attention. Clearly we share the aim of ensuring award observance and I believe the recent discussions will assist in achieving that objective.

Your correspondence also raised matters which go directly to entry arrangements applying to New Zealanders. I have referred that element of your correspondence to my colleague, Stewart West, the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for direct reply to you.

That letter was addressed to Allan Begg and sent to me by the Hon. Ralph Willis. I want to place that on record because it is a very serious problem when workers fight amongst themselves in public or anywhere. Some of the incidents that we have seen on television of late and in some of the newspaper recordings that we have witnessed are a disgrace in my view and Federal and State Ministers and, for that matter, farmers, shearers and the AWU, ought to be getting together in a much closer alliance to try to correct this anomaly. Until they do, this problem will not go away.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr ASHENDEN: Can the Deputy Premier say whether the present Government, since its election, has made any grants to the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy and will he give an assurance that CANE will not be given any Government assistance in the future? Representatives of CANE have said that the organisation is about \$8 000 in debt, mainly as a result of expenses incurred at the latest Roxby Downs blockade.

Before 1979 the South Australian Labor Government gave financial support to CANE, and constituents are concerned that the present Government might have resumed this practice. It has been put to me that CANE has demonstrated time after time that its activities are not worthy of taxpayers' support and, because its activities at Roxby Downs during the past two years have cost South Australian taxpayers more than \$2 million, I seek an assurance from the Deputy Premier that no State Government assistance will be given to CANE to overcome its present financial difficulties.

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: I understood the question in the first instance to be: has the State Government given any money to the CANE organisation? Is that the question? The honourable member cannot ask two questions: he can ask only one question. Which question does the honourable member want answered?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: If we are going to debate that matter, I can recall the member for Alexandra as Minister taking 35 minutes to answer a question, and the Leader sat in his chair laughing. We complained about that. I apologised to the House before I read that letter and I said I did not want to take long. In fact, I cut out more than three-quarters of the letter so that it did not take too long to read. Anyone who lives in a glass house should not throw stones. When the member for Alexandra was Minister of Agriculture he deliberately held up the business of this House every day

with his back-benchers asking Dorothy Dix questions. The member for Davenport was not much better when he was in full flight, so do not let those who live in glass houses throw stones. In answer to the question, I am not aware of any money that has been given to the CANE organisation, and I am not aware of any intention by the Government to do so.

HOUSING TRUST CONVERSIONS

Mr MAX BROWN: Will the Minister of Housing and Construction encourage the Housing Trust to expand its programme of converting old double unit Housing Trust houses into flats, thus providing more accommodation on the same block of land? The Minister may or may not be aware that recently the Trust converted some double units in Whyalla, resulting in three units where previously there were only two houses. These smaller units, usually with two bedrooms, are ideal for housing age pensioners and single people. I specifically stress single people, because the Housing Trust has not gone into this area of accommodation previously. There is a great need in my district, and I suspect throughout the State, for suitable accommodation for the aged and single people, and I ask the Minister whether he will be promoting this programme generally throughout the State.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: There are some people on this side of the House who know it is a significant day for me today, and the fact that I have had three questions so far shows that there are people on the other side who also want it to be my day. I thank the member for Whyalla for his question, which he kindly gave me advance warning he intended to ask. So far it has been only a small programme of conversion, but I believe it has great potential. It is an initiative of the Trust itself but one that is in accord with the State Government's policy of seeking diversification of housing stock to meet changing community needs.

There have been conversions of double units into flats at several locations, including Whyalla, resulting in, as the member for Whyalla said, three two-bedroom flats from two double units of three or four bedrooms. The benefits are several, including:

- a change in Trust housing stock to meet the changing pattern of demand with the increased proportion of smaller non-family households;
- the release of land for new development, sometimes in areas with severe land shortage (I might add, without land acquisition costs);
- more Trust rental applicants being housed; and
- areas of uniform double unit development being given variety.

I am very impressed with this programme, meeting as it does the sort of innovative housing policy goals of the Government. I certainly will be encouraging the Trust to expand it where possible, but I suspect that the Trust will require little encouragement. The Trust is once again showing that it is the foremost public housing organisation in Australia. With the Trust's ability and the Government's policies, low-rental housing has an expanding and vigorous future in this State.

STEAMTOWN PETERBOROUGH

Mr GUNN: Is the Minister of Tourism aware that Steamtown Peterborough has sold a considerable number of its assets to a private individual? I have been provided with

information that clearly indicates that the organisation known as Steamtown Peterborough has sold certain assets. Minutes of a recent meeting of the association state:

That the council of this society recognises the current situation, whereby the expressed wishes of the majority of members are being constantly thwarted by factors beyond council's control. Accordingly, the Chairman is respectfully requested to conduct a secret ballot to decide the following motion: that, in accordance with clause 2k of the constitution the council votes to sell to . . . the following society assets as defined hereunder:

Locomotives PMR 720; plus a considerable number of passenger carriages; a van 16 (kitchen car); rollingstock; Massey Fergusson front end loader and back hoe (which was donated by the Rotary Club); a fire trolley and pump; other equipment including three railway emblems from the former Commonwealth Railways and South Australian Railways and other equipment. All items will be sold on an 'as is where is' basis and the total purchase price of the above assets to be \$500.

Another motion that was carried stated:

That the President and Secretary of the society be empowered to affix the common seal of the society to the deed of sale of the items listed in the preceding motion, to attest to the irrevocable validity of the sale.

The minutes deal with the expulsion of two members: I understand that the Town Clerk has been asked to show cause why he should not be expelled, and I understand that the Mayor has been refused membership. Also, a number of people have been refused membership of the organisation. Yet another motion which was carried states:

Applications for membership: it was moved and seconded that the following 30 membership applications be accepted and that all other applications for membership of the society be rejected.

The minutes show that 30 people were accepted and only one of them came from Peterborough, yet a number of Peterborough people desire membership of that organisation. I therefore—

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

MR GUNN: The equipment is of considerable value. I therefore ask the Minister whether he will do everything possible to ensure that this equipment is not transferred from Peterborough and that the assets of Steamtown Peterborough are protected and not sold to private enterprise.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question. I appreciate and understand his concern about this matter and his long-time support for Steamtown Peterborough. I will certainly do what I can (and I have been doing what I can) to solve this unfortunate problem that has occurred. I would like to go back to 6 February 1980 when the previous Minister of Tourism (the member for Coles) approved a grant of \$60 000 for Steamtown Peterborough. In the letter she wrote to the Town Clerk of Peterborough, Mr Dunstan, she stated:

... I have approved a subsidy of an amount not exceeding \$60 000 for this work. The availability of this subsidy, however, is conditional on the following:

- (1) that the corporation takes over the lease of the subject land from the society;
- (2) that the corporation guarantees an acceptable long-term loan of \$20 000 to the society;
- (3) that the corporation is represented on the society's management executive.

I have informed Steamtown and the Corporation of the Town of Peterborough that it is my belief that those conditions still apply and that no action should be taken by Steamtown that does not have the approval of both the council and the Government. Recent action taken by Steamtown does not have the approval or support of the Peterborough council or the Government. I shall give a little of the background, as I understand it, in relation to Steamtown at Peterborough. As a community Peterborough suffered considerable economic shock as a result of the decision by Australian National to downgrade railway activity at Peterborough—'to rationalise the workshop', I think, were the words that were used.

As a result of that decision, Governments of both persuasions have tried to do something for Peterborough. A matter agreed upon was that a viable tourist facility could be built at Peterborough in the way of an historical steam railway attraction. That is the reason why the Government supported the project at Peterborough, namely, because it is a railway location and because a down-turn in the local economy had occurred. The Government's decision was very strongly supported by the local council: in fact, I do not think it could have been viable without the support of the local council and the Mayor, and the Executive Officer of Steamtown at Peterborough at that time was a member of the Peterborough council.

I think that what has happened is extremely unfortunate. I have spoken to both the council and Steamtown and have written to both those bodies asking them to resolve their difficulties, although obviously the matter has gone further than that now. I drew their attention to the original conditions under which the grant was provided and to the fact that those conditions still apply. The honourable member's question on this matter is pertinent, and it is appropriate that it should be raised in this place. I shall do what I can to ensure that the matter is resolved. Peterborough is a railway town, and I strongly support Steamtown's remaining there. I give an undertaking that I shall do everything within my power to see that the problem is resolved.

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

HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 19 September. Page 1011.)

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): The Opposition supports this measure. However, I want to refer to a number of points in relation to the new 10-year agreement. In bringing this matter into the House the Minister of Housing and Construction took the opportunity to give a major overview of South Australia's housing industry and referred to the Government's and the Department of Housing's activities. It became very clear that the Minister was lauding the work of his own Party (and certainly we would accept the lauding of the work of the Department because it has been under pressure and has produced a very tangible and worthwhile result). However, the Minister then extended his comments by giving an element of congratulation to the Hon. Mr Hurford and the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction. In a moment I shall refer to some of the comments that the Minister made about the Department of Housing and Construction following his return from Hobart in May this year. The end result is no different from that predicted in May. The base figure for distribution under the 1984-85 housing projects across Australia was to be \$623 million.

The Minister of Housing and Construction drew specific attention to the objects of the new 10-year project. At that time they were not read out and so I think it would be beneficial for me to read into the debate the objects of the 10-year agreement as outlined in the Bill. I refer, first, to clause 8 under Part IV of the schedule of the Bill, which provides:

The object of this agreement is the provision by the States and by the Northern Territory with financial assistance from the Commonwealth of housing assistance for rental housing and for home purchase in accordance with, and in fulfilment of, the principles set out in Recital (D).

Although Recital (D) is quite lengthy, I shall read it into the debate because I believe that the full impact of Recital (D) is of importance to anyone interested in housing matters. It is as follows:

The primary principle of this agreement is to ensure that every person in Australia has access to adequate and appropriate housing at a price within his or her capacity to pay by seeking to:

- alleviate housing-related poverty; and
- ensure that housing assistance is, as far as possible, delivered equitably to persons resident in different forms of housing tenure;

in implementing this principle, assistance provided under the agreement will also reflect the following detailed principles:

(a) Assistance Generally

- the primary consideration in delivering housing assistance under this agreement will be the needs of people, rather than to attach assistance to particular dwellings or categories of dwellings;
- housing assistance provided under this agreement will be available to all sections of the community irrespective of age, sex, marital status, race, religion, disability or life situation. However, priority in granting assistance shall be determined by the need for assistance;
- in delivering housing assistance, as far as possible, people should be given an equal choice between the types of housing assistance available;
- housing assistance programmes developed under this agreement should be designed so that maximum social benefit is derived from previous investment in housing;
- housing assistance provided under this agreement should be co-ordinated with housing assistance programmes that are developed outside this agreement;

(b) Public Rental Housing

- programmes and funding arrangements under this agreement should seek to develop the public housing sector as a viable and diversified form of housing choice and refrain from discrimination;
- programmes and funding arrangements under this agreement shall be developed so as to increase progressively the availability of public housing to a level commensurate with the need for it in the community;
- public housing should reflect general community housing standards and should be accessible to community and other services. Poor location of dwellings, an inadequate range of choice of dwellings, and stigmatisation of the status of public tenants should be avoided to the maximum extent practicable;
- public housing stock should, as far as possible, be designed to cater for the needs and preferences of current and likely future applicants;
- clear recognition should be accorded to the separate but complementary roles of:
 - capital expenditure on constructing and acquiring dwellings;
 - financing of rental operations;
 - managing rental operations including assistance for tenants; and
 - sales of dwellings;
- the design, style and siting of public housing will, to the maximum extent practicable:
 - reflect the need for accessibility and suitability for habitation by disabled persons, Aborigines, youth, the elderly, or other identified groups; and
 - support the energy conservation policies of the governments;
- public housing authorities should ensure that tenants have maximum opportunity to participate in the management of their dwellings and estates and in the development of public housing policies;

(c) Income-Related Assistance to Tenants

- programmes developed under this agreement should recognise the problems created by the inability of some tenants to afford adequate rental accommodation in both public and private rental sectors;
- assistance measures in the public rental sector should be co-ordinated with assistance to private tenants and should recognise the income support nature of the assistance and the inter-relationship of this assistance with Commonwealth assistance to pensioners and other beneficiaries under the Social Security Act 1947;

(d) Home Ownership Assistance

- assistance under this agreement shall seek to provide home ownership opportunities for those unable to obtain or maintain affordable finance from the private sector or from other sources outside the agreement;

(e) Implementation

the State will be able to exercise maximum autonomy and flexibility in developing the administrative arrangements necessary to achieve these principles;

They are ideals or objectives which any member of this House, and indeed I believe any member of any House across Australia, would want to see implemented.

Undoubtedly, there will be a variation of the priorities given to the implementation of certain of those objectives in various States. That will reflect the particular thrust or attitude of the Government of the day. There would be some question as to whether the words expressed there in those objectives may not be perhaps better expressed in a slightly different way in this or that subclause, but I think that would only be nit picking.

The general thrust of the observations is acceptable and certainly provides the matrix of a solid housing policy for the whole of Australia at a time when we all appreciate that there is a need for a further increase in housing. We also accept that there has been a major lift in the number of houses being built, which has taken place in the past 18 months as a result of the Federal Government taking up the initiative suggested to it by the National Housing Industry Association, plus collective Governments. I stress the point about the National Housing Industry Association because the Prime Minister (no less) made that statement on the occasion of the nineteenth convention held here in Adelaide in April this year, when he indicated publicly within six weeks of coming to Government in March 1983 that, by accepting the basic directives given by the Housing Industry Association, the Government was able to initiate a number of programmes or actions which led to the improvement that has taken place.

I refer to some aspects of the agreement (which now replaces the 1981 Housing Agreement), being a document which is to be effective for a period of 10 years. However, we should very quickly recognise that during that 10-year period there is to be an evaluation after the first three-year period. Therefore, whilst it is a static document in one sense, it is quite possible that by agreement between the Federal Minister and Ministers of other States—and that is specifically stated in the schedule—variations can be undertaken. We also could say that the commitment has been given by the Federal Government that for the first three years of the agreement there will be a minimum amount expended of \$1 550 million across Australia.

We find that for the year 1984-85 the injection of funds into housing represents 41.5 per cent of that guaranteed \$1 550 million. That begs the question as to whether away from the context of an election year—and I do not hesitate to be cynical—the Federal Government will say, 'Ah! But for the next two years the amount of money available will be only the balance of 58.5 per cent.' If there is 58.5 per cent available only in the next two years, very obviously there will be a considerable decrease in the sum available for housing across Australia in the 1985-86 and 1986-87 years.

There would be those who would say that it is possible that after the growth rate which saw the delivery of about 135 000 homes across Australia in 1983-84 and the possibility of an increase to 145 000 homes across Australia in 1984-85, there will be a reducing requirement for housing. If one listens to a number of economists and takes advice from quite a number of departmental officers (both in this State and elsewhere), one would know that there are arguments which would suggest that by stimulating the housing industry overall—and hopefully with an increase in private rental accommodation—the demands upon the Government to provide for public housing will diminish as the years go by.

We would be looking into a crystal ball to be able to say whether that will be the position in Australia or indeed in South Australia. So far as South Australia is concerned, the position is that, at a time when the Minister is indicating an urgent need to increase housing stock here, the actual input of funds for 1984-85 has not shown a significant increase taking into account the escalation factor or the additional costs associated with housing.

I do not want to go back over an argument which we have already had across the floor of this Chamber on two occasions thus far relative to the number of units delivered in 1983-84; that position is understood. We were 6 per cent under our target. Hopefully, we have caught up in the early stages of 1984-85, and certainly if it needs the support of the Opposition the leeway will be made up or at least we will meet target in 1984-85.

However, mitigating against that we have the other problems associated with the housing industry broadly which has tended to overheat and which has a number of problems of its own, not the least of which is the inability of some building organisations to deliver within the terms of their contracts or to deliver far beyond the terms of their contracts.

Questions have been raised by members on both sides of the House as to why that should be. It is a fact of life that there are a number of issues at present that play a significant role, not all of which relate to dollars and cents or to actions of Government. I have only to refer to the Campbelltown affair, or the problem associated with footings and the ongoing problem that that has created in the housing industry now with a number of court claims being made against not only building operators but also against all the councils that agreed to the building of certain homes within their areas.

We talk of the difficulty in obtaining sufficient skilled labour. We recognise that two organisations have gone beyond the State to obtain skilled labour to bring back to inject into the housing industry. We recognise that people who have skills in building industries have been able to become much more selective.

Because of the overall taxation problem that exists today a number of them found that it is not a bad thing to go fishing on the fifth day instead of putting in five days in the industry and that is a factor that is mitigating against the end delivery of houses. There are others who are prepared to contract to do certain tasks and not turn up, and therefore the principal operator has to negotiate with someone else to come on site, and there may be a delay for three weeks or seven weeks. There are all manner of external pressures on the industry at a time when it is self heating in the sense of the magnitude of its improvement and also the dearth of operators.

I mentioned previously in relation to skilled labour that questions were asked as early as April this year of the Minister of Labour, and in an answer that I received in June this year the Minister said that the question was unfounded: there really was not a problem with skilled labour. The Minister would need to eat his words on the facts exhibited day by day in the housing industry. There was a lack of understanding or appreciation (and I do not say that it was a deliberate misunderstanding) by a number of people in the system who failed to bring people into the industry or to make provision for additional labour as early as might have been necessary. It has also been exhibited very clearly in the CEP programmes where large numbers of programmes that were to provide work accommodation for people out of work, more specifically those with skills like bricklaying, cement laying, plumbing, electrical work and so forth, have not materialised.

A lot of the CEP programmes have gone way beyond their time. Special dispensation has been given by the CEP programmers to allow employed persons with those particular

skills to come on site so that that particular facet of the CEP programme can get under way, and the other unskilled areas can then be picked up and undertaken. They are all problems currently associated with the housing industry. They will continue to have their mark, and will play some part in the eventual delivery of units into the market. The question of whether the private industry will pick up and increase the number of units that it makes available for rental—and then the question arises as to what will be the cost of the rental—is another matter where we will have to wait and see.

There is some evidence that it is rising to the demands. There are other areas of concern that it might be only half hearted about rising to those demands because of uncertainty about being able to get rental related to the direct cost associated with manufacture. That is a fact of life against which no Government can specifically legislate: it is the market place, and unless there is a very clear change of attitude by a number of investors, with perhaps some more positive protection for persons who expend their funds in this way that they will get a just return on their money, it may be that that necessary increase of units will lag behind the overall demand.

I mentioned that the State had not put into housing in South Australia in 1984-85 a major increase of funds. On the figures made available earlier I think that the increased sum of money for South Australia was about 5.14 per cent in 1984-85, and that is certainly well below inflation. We know that there is an injection of \$8.1 million, underspent in 1983-84, back into the programme for 1984-85, but it was not a sum of money on top of what might have been an expected increase made available for 1984-85, with this underexpenditure being put in as an addition.

Whether the Government took the attitude that to put \$8.1 million on top of a true increase in 1984-85 would burst the bubble at a time when there is heat in the system is something that the Minister might be able to reveal to the House later. However, in actual terms we in South Australia do not have sufficient funds available at this stage, albeit that large sums are available, to make available the number of units that the State would want to add to its stock. I draw only peripherally the attention of the House and the Minister to the very massive increase in the cost of delivering a home unit at a time when one of the components—not the only component—associated with that increase is the marked increase in the cost of land; that is, the serviced block, that has in many cases gone up by 40 per cent, 50 per cent, and I believe that in some areas it is approaching 100 per cent in a 15-month period, and that all reflects on the end result.

On the figures given to this House during the Estimates Committee of the amount of funds expended on the 2 800-odd homes made available in 1983-84, I found by simple arithmetic that the cost of every individual unit, whether it was a cottage flat, a two, three or four bedroom home, a flat in a high rise development, a two or three storey Housing Trust development or whatever, was in excess of \$41 000 per unit. With increases being revealed day by day in respect of land alone, there will be a fairly massive increase in the cost per unit right across the 1984-85 year. With the relatively lesser sum of money being made available, we will be in some difficulty.

I laud (and I know that I speak on behalf of all members of the Opposition) the improvement that exists in this agreement whereby the Commonwealth has allowed the part cost of rent rebates, because it is recognised as an essential part of an income support problem, to be utilised for the relief of those who are in some need. Where the State has had to be totally responsible in the past, it has been an increasing problem to the State, and no-one would deny

that. How far the Commonwealth will go and how much special funding will be made available in subsequent years to assist the States in that regard is a matter that we will watch with some interest.

It is certainly a very heavy drain on the total social package required of any Government in the State sphere. It is good to see that it is being shared in some part by the Commonwealth. I would only hope that we will not find a position that again (and I am being cynical and recognising that in 1984-85 those funds are there in tangible form which allows for some assistance), come post election, and assuming that the Labor Party were in a position to have the reins after 1 December, it would see fit in subsequent years to reduce the direct amount available for that purpose. I know that the management of the overall funds in this compact is basically with the State, but there are guidelines.

States have to follow criteria in respect of all areas where funding is undertaken. We know only too well that the Commonwealth can exert certain influences in a number of ways, and this can cause great difficulty to a State in developing its own priorities and following its own preferred course of action. I note that for this year, and for this year only, the sum of money made available for home buildings does not have to be matched dollar for dollar right across the board. In fact, there is about a 91.4 per cent matching requiring dollar for dollar, and the balance of the fund is available for the State to put into its housing programme without difficulty. However, in subsequent years the State has to match the Commonwealth fund or miss out on it.

With the sort of commitment that has been undertaken by successive Governments in this State to funding of the previous welfare, currently public, housing (I draw the distinction that, although welfare housing has been a commonly used term—it was used by the Premier when it was not being used by the Minister, but we will not go over that ground—it has been used extensively and is well understood. However, it is not now the preferred word and we now talk about public housing), I would expect Governments of both political persuasions to put funds into it. However, where they have to match dollar for dollar and the Government of the day finds that it has priority demands in relation to education, health, community welfare or whatever, it would not be the first time that a Government has turned away Commonwealth funds because it was not prepared to match the dollar for dollar requirement in order to obtain the Commonwealth funding.

The Minister's colleague, the Minister of Transport, knows full well at the moment (and he has made no bones about it in reference to this House) that some of the present requirements in the transport area stipulating dollar for dollar funding are causing considerable difficulty in that Department's programming. I mention these matters as ways and means that the Commonwealth has had in the past of causing some difficulty to the overall programme of a State Government.

The rental system will be changed from previous market values to a cost rent formula, and the second schedule gives some indication of how that costing will be determined. The Minister has publicly stated that the South Australian Government finds difficulty with the cost rent basis for public welfare housing as against home owners who are benefiting from costs associated with and based on historical costs of dwellings. I am certain that there will be an ongoing debate between Ministers of Housing across Australia as to a formula which is better than, or a refinement of, cost rental. I have noted from interstate press that some other Ministers, following the May meeting in Hobart, were not

happy with all aspects of the cost rent basis that was placed on them in this agreement.

I mentioned earlier that the Minister lauds, in his presentation to the House, the actions of the Hon. Mr Hurford, the Federal Minister. One should really come to grips with that. Although the Minister has delivered a package that is acceptable to Governments across the Commonwealth, some fine tuning has undoubtedly been associated with the original document that was presented to Ministers. It still did not come up to the expectations of those Ministers and, indeed, quite a number of press cuttings give a clear indication of that point.

I refer members to the *Advertiser* of 19 May 1984, featuring the headline 'Housing talks end in row over funding'. Our own Minister said how despicable it was that the Commonwealth would not come to the party and do the right thing by the States, referring particularly to South Australia. On the same date, under the heading 'Bannon wants boost for housing', an article claims that new levels will hit jobs; there was a clear indication of his being unhappy with the attitude expressed by the Commonwealth. Subsequent statements have indicated that some concern still exists about the manner in which the Commonwealth has reined in the amount of money made available.

I also mentioned earlier that on the occasion of the Housing Industry Association's nineteenth Commonwealth conference in Adelaide earlier this year, the Prime Minister gave a very clear indication of the benefit that the Housing Industry Association had been to all Governments in getting an early response to housing programmes which, in themselves, have been responsible for markedly increasing the number of job opportunities. We find in South Australia that we have had better than our due percentage of the housing boom. That also raises the question whether we can expect that benefit to continue indefinitely. As can be seen from page 11 of the original script which was given to that organisation, the Prime Minister stated:

The Government's earlier confidence that the housing industry would pull off such a dramatic recovery will, in the event, be amply justified.

That was stated after the Prime Minister had talked of 135 000 homes being built across Australia in 1983-84. He went on to state:

We cannot, and should not, expect a repeat performance of these growth rates next year. The housing industry in 1983-84 has done a magnificent job—some might have said earlier an impossible job. But the circumstances of the recovery have been very favourable: housing finance has been readily available; resources were left considerably under-utilised after the recent recession; and the First Home Owners Scheme gave a strong one-off fillip to demand last year.

The task before us now is to sustain what has already been achieved, to prevent the 'bubble from bursting'.

They are the Prime Minister's words, not mine. The report continues:

On this matter, the IPC's forecasts give us all reason for encouragement—they indicate dwelling commencements reaching a 'plateau' of some 145 000 in 1984-85.

Those predictions were made in good faith in April this year. Clear indications are starting to develop that the predictions may not be so beneficial in the future. How far into the future I would not like to say, but in the Indicative Planning Council's long-term projects report of 1984 a clear indication is given that it sees a decline taking place. I now refer to its table 4.2, under the heading 'Average underlying requirements for new dwellings—States and Territories—1983-84 to 1987-88'. The table is purely statistical, and I seek leave to have it inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Average Underlying Requirements for New Dwellings, States and Territories, 1983-84 to 1987-88

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	W.A.	S.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Annual Average '000									
Net Increase in Households	37.2	29.4	22.8	13.3	9.2	2.9	1.7	3.2	119.1
Increase in Vacant Dwellings	3.4	2.9	2.7	1.4	0.9	0.4	0.1	0.2	11.9
Replacement for Net Stock Loss	3.0	4.0	1.0	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.1	...	9.5
TOTAL	43.5	36.3	26.2	15.3	10.4	3.5	1.9	3.4	140.1
Share %	31.0	25.9	18.7	10.9	7.4	2.5	1.4	2.4	

Note: Figures may not add due to rounding.

... Indicates nil or less than 100.

A constant 400 dwellings per annum has been added to the Northern Territory but is not included in the national total.

For further details, refer paragraph 4.3.4.

Source: Council projections.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I also have table 4.3, showing the underlying requirements for new dwellings for Australia from 1988-89 to 2000-2001. While these are crystal ball figures, I fully appreciate that they give some overall view of what housing requirements may be. They are quite significant in relation to the uncertainty of the housing industry in the longer term. I seek leave to have this table inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

TABLE 4.3: UNDERLYING REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW DWELLINGS, AUSTRALIA, 1988-89 TO 2000-01
Average Annual Requirements

lower demographic, higher economic						
From to	88-89 90-91	91-92 95-96	96-97 00-01			
Series A—						
		%	%	%		
NSW	48 600	30.4	45 900	30.0	40 000	29.4
Vic	41 500	26.0	38 500	25.2	32 900	24.2
Qld	30 400	19.0	30 800	20.2	29 400	21.6
WA	17 700	11.1	17 400	11.4	16 600	12.2
SA	11 800	7.4	10 300	6.8	8 300	6.1
Tas	3 700	2.3	3 300	2.2	2 800	2.1
ACT	4 000	2.5	4 100	2.7	4 000	2.9
NT	2 300	1.4	2 600	1.7	2 600	1.9
Aust	159 600		152 500		136 200	
Series B—						
NSW	45 300	30.2	39 600	29.6	34 400	28.8
Vic	38 900	26.0	33 800	25.3	28 800	24.1
Qld	28 800	19.2	27 500	20.6	26 200	22.0
WA	16 800	11.2	15 600	11.7	14 800	12.4
SA	11 000	7.3	8 900	6.7	7 100	6.0
Tas	3 500	2.3	2 800	2.1	2 400	2.0
ACT	3 800	2.5	3 800	2.8	3 700	3.1
NT	2 200	1.5	2 300	1.7	2 400	2.0
Aust	149 900		133 800		119 300	
Series C—						
NSW	50 000	30.7	45 100	30.3	40 800	29.9
Vic	42 000	25.8	37 400	25.1	33 000	24.2
Qld	30 500	18.7	29 600	19.9	28 500	20.9
WA	18 700	11.5	17 900	12.0	17 400	12.7
SA	12 000	7.4	10 000	6.7	8 300	6.1
Tas	3 600	2.2	3 000	2.0	2 600	1.90
ACT	4 000	2.5	3 900	2.6	3 900	2.9
NT	2 300	1.4	2 400	1.6	2 600	1.90
Aust	162 800		148 900		136 600	
Series D—						
NSW	53 400	31.0	51 600	30.7	46 700	30.3
Vic	44 500	25.8	42 300	25.2	37 400	24.2
Qld	32 200	18.7	32 900	19.6	31 900	20.7
WA	19 600	11.4	19 700	11.7	19 100	12.4
SA	12 800	7.4	11 400	6.7	9 600	6.2
Tas	3 900	2.3	3 400	2.0	3 000	1.9

From to	88-89 90-91	91-92 95-96	96-97 00-01
ACT	4 100	2.4	4 300
NT	2 400	1.4	2 600
Aust	172 500	168 000	154 300

Note: Figures may not add due to rounding.

For a brief description of the assumptions used refer sections 3.4 and 4.4

a A constant 400 dwellings per annum has been added to the Northern Territory but is not included in the national total. For further details, refer paragraph 4.3.4.

Source: Council projections.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I have just drawn attention to the amount of funding which has been made available for housing, and I appreciate that those funds have been received. However, it would be wrong, having regard to all the money that has been injected by the Government, as well as that which has been made available through a whole variety of banks, including the State Bank of South Australia, which is having a massive input to overall housing (private and public), if the money being spent on housing was not matched by the amount of money being spent on the furnishings within the houses. Although there have been some quite sizable benefits to the manufacturing industries in whitegoods and other areas directly associated with the housing boom, there are clear indications that those improvements have not by any means matched the number of new homes that have been brought on to the market.

I suggest to the Minister and to the House that this is because so many people going into housing today are at the limits of their financial capabilities, more specifically when untoward additional costs come upon them that are directly associated with council requirements or delay. Also involved is the inability of these persons to stay in their own home which they are selling (if they happen to be going into a second home), as a result of which they must go into higher priced private rental accommodation while they wait for their own home to be completed. It may be that some very heavy costs have been charged against a development by the E & WS Department, ETSA and other organisations. I am not being critical of them at the present moment, although I am particularly critical of the attitude of ETSA to demand undergrounding of supplies when contracts have already been entered into, thereby increasing the costs to the owner, because there is no way in which the contractor can pick up the additional bill of somewhere between \$400 and \$500.

These matters are all additions: they are unforeseen costs. They have always occurred in the building industry in the past, and they will continue to occur. However, because they exist and are unknowns, they are causing pressures upon young people going into housing, who have less oppor-

tunity to spend money on furnishings and in the secondary white-goods areas.

If the overall benefit to Australia's economy is to continue there must be a balanced improvement across the whole spectrum, not just in one particular area. Whilst appreciating that that boom is currently occurring in housing, one must recognise the difficulties which exist in other areas and that, if there are not sustainable benefits to other industries, obviously the overall package of financial benefit to a State will wane.

The points that need to be made are basically now on the record. One could question a number of the other issues to which the Minister laid claim during the presentation of this Bill. We could, for example, point out that a sizable amount of funds is spent on rents and rent rebates. It is a tragedy that that has to occur. In 1983-84, the State had to find over \$32 million for rent rebate for people in public housing.

Home purchase assistance is out there. I previously indicated that some problems are associated with the first home programme because, if funds are injected into a scheme by way of subsidy, it invariably acts as something of a wedge from the bottom and increases the overall cost. That has always been the case and it shows up more specifically now in the home programme. Some people go into the market ahead of schedule because they see these benefits available to them, and they are the ones who perhaps have the greatest difficulty in meeting the extras that come on top of their purchase.

The Minister has also indicated the very great importance of coming to grips with private tenants and making sure that benefits are available to them. There have been benefits and they will continue to be made available. It will be a continuing problem. It is not specific, I suggest, to this overall housing agreement at this moment, and I will not develop it. However, I do make brief mention of the specific housing assistance programmes which are now incorporated and possible under the housing agreement. I refer to the local government and community housing programme and the crisis accommodation programme—vital elements of a current social difficulty that we are experiencing. I refer also to matters that will help in some measure, as well as to problems which exist in the community. Local governing bodies are showing a distinct inclination to assist whenever they can, either by making land available or by making other arrangements.

The crisis accommodation programme is fraught with a number of dangers, not the least of which is people who want to buck the rules once they get into crisis housing. Over the weekend we had the misfortune of having made public the problems that a very worthy community group, the Salvation Army, was having with people who wanted to use the system for their own benefit rather than accepting the assistance of the community that is available to those who are in need. All those matters are ongoing. They will continue to be benefited by the document which we are considering this afternoon. I only reiterate that it is the intention of the Opposition to support the measure.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I commend the member for Light on his contribution. He has analysed the agreement and done his homework in his usual competent way. I support him and thank him for his support of this measure. I must say that I enter this debate with pride because of the housing record of the present Government. I understand that the number of units that have been completed in the previous 12 months is something of a record and stands up against a previous record of something like 27 years. It was one of the things that this Government promised before the last election and that promise has been honoured. Honour-

able members will recall that we undertook to stimulate the economy by increasing the size of the building industry, which is a big job multiplier in this area.

There are one or two points which the member for Light made and to which I would like to reply. On the one hand, he said that there was no increase in 1984-85 in the amount of money available for housing in South Australia. On the other hand, he complained about over heating of the present situation. I would hope, and I believe that the Government hopes, that on the graph of housing commencements in South Australia we will not see the rise and fall that we have seen in the previous four or five years. The skilled labour programme to which the honourable member also referred is tied up with this proposition. Many skilled building industry workers left the State during the recession in South Australia in order to get work elsewhere. It is only natural that with an upgrading of the system it would take some time for these building workers to return from the other States. I understand that many contractors have been successful in bringing skilled building workers back from places such as Queensland, and that will assist in solving this problem.

The honourable member made play of a difference of opinion between the State and Federal Housing Ministers during the time of the negotiations. I believe that it is only fair that the Housing Minister representing South Australia should go in and get the best deal for South Australia when negotiating with the Commonwealth and, because one would see from time to time differences of opinion, it would not be unnatural to see newspaper headlines of differences on this issue between the State and Federal Housing Ministers. The document we now have which will lead us on to the next 10 years has now been supported by all members in this House, and therefore the Minister must be commended for that document.

I wish to refer to two facets of the newly arrived at Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, the first relating to the rental purchase scheme which is an updated version of the home programme which commenced in October 1983. The new Commonwealth-State Housing Authority encourages the States and the Northern Territory to introduce rental purchase schemes along the lines of the one that has been in operation in this State since 1983. The State Government selection programme for housing included a range of measures designed to broaden and extend the availability of assistance to low income households who had difficulty in obtaining or maintaining home ownership.

It is commonly recognised that some households have greater difficulties than others in saving a deposit for a house. This, of course, applies particularly to many low income couples, particularly those with dependants, earning less than 90 per cent of average earnings. Having disposed of their weekly budget merely to maintain living standards, they have little savings left and many couples earning 90 per cent of the average income find the purchase of a home has been extremely difficult. The low deposit purchase scheme operates for two years to assist households with difficulties in saving a deposit to buy a home. However, the relevance of this scheme diminished with the introduction of the Federal Government's home ownership scheme, and the South Australian Government has decided to replace it with the rental purchase scheme.

I would like to make sure that the record reveals that I am totally in favour of the Federal Government's first home ownership scheme. This scheme has certainly been of assistance in boosting the South Australian economy, and I believe it has been substantially responsible for an increase in building activity in this State. The rental purchase scheme which operated until 1979 was a popular and effective method of facilitating home ownership for low income families and

for those with reservations about taking on the obligations of a mortgage. Unlike the previous scheme, the new scheme applies to houses in the private market as well as to Housing Trust houses, and that should make it more attractive than the previous scheme. Of course, this is another example of a Labor Government co-operating with private enterprise. Private entrepreneurs can have input into the scheme, and this ensures that the building industry is utilised to the maximum.

It is estimated that attracted to this scheme would be a number of households, including low income households; households experiencing difficulty in saving a deposit, as I have already mentioned; and households who could meet the obligations of a mortgage but are reluctant to do so because they fear the consequences of not being able to meet the repayments, such as foreclosure proceedings. I would like to refer in more detail to the last group.

I have been involved in an industry that has been subject to very sudden introductions of technological change. It is now quite common knowledge that the new technologies turn over about every seven years. In other words, the introduction of a computerised type-setting system, for example, in any printing establishment, with its consequential upheavals of redundancies and changed job classifications that usually follow, is not the end of the story. In modern printing establishments it is now possible for new technologies to be introduced every seven years; electronic systems in the printing industry are now being taken over by more modern and up to date systems, and often more revolutionary change occurs than occurred with the introduction of the first models. Many people have found themselves in the situation of being retrained for the first onslaught of new technology, and after about seven years they find themselves having to be retrained again. Although we have seen in recent years the introduction of new protective measures, the redundancy payments are not sufficient to support someone who is out of work possibly for the rest of his life.

Mr Ingerson: What has this got to do with housing?

Mr FERGUSON: If the honourable member had listened to the introduction to my speech he would certainly be able to wake up to what this has to do with housing. If he wants to represent the State then he ought to be taking notice of measures like this, because it is extremely important. In many industries, not only the printing industry, there is a fear that if people take on the obligation of mortgaging a house (this is a strong point I want to make, and this is what I hope the honourable member is now starting to grasp) they would be able to meet the repayments in the foreseeable future while the industry remained reasonably stable, but they fear that they will not be able to continue with the repayments for the 25 to 40 years life of a mortgage.

This is the problem that confronts many people who know that they would be in a better position if they could purchase their own house and who sometimes are in a situation where they might be able to do so although, because of fear of the future and the changing world in which we live, they are not prepared to take the plunge. That is where this rental purchase scheme is extremely valuable. Not only does it provide security for proposed purchasers but also it has a stimulating effect of increasing activity in the building industry and providing for that industry a set of prospective buyers who in normal circumstances, without this sort of a scheme, would not be prepared to make such an investment.

The rental purchase scheme means that a family may buy a home with a minimum deposit—as little as \$500. The Housing Trust buys the home and the purchaser makes the repayments for the house to the Trust. At the end of the agreement period the Trust transfers ownership of the home to the purchaser. The purchaser is responsible for the maintenance and the rates. This is an important provision, because

it means that in due course the Housing Trust is released from the obligation that it would normally have in a rental situation, and that enables the Trust to provide more units for rental.

The purchaser may convert to purchase by way of a mortgage at any time provided that the purchaser has a sufficient deposit to obtain a mortgage from one of the lending institutions. This is another great advantage of the scheme, because it means that as a purchaser improves his financial standing in the community, as he gets a better job and receives wage increases, he can take on the responsibility of a mortgage for himself and thereby obtain the full equity of the house. In those circumstances he may later sell the house if he so desires, and in due course that would provide more finance for the Trust.

The important thing about this scheme, as I have already mentioned, is that if a purchaser has any difficulty meeting repayments, the purchaser may be able to resume renting the house from the Trust instead of buying it. This provides the sort of protection to which I have already alluded and minimises much of the risk in buying a home, while providing security and tenure for the person who has already paid a deposit. It is interesting to note that the maximum house price is flexible and depends on how much deposit the purchaser has.

Those applicants with the \$500 deposit and who are eligible for the Federal Government's first home ownership scheme grant would be able to obtain a house costing up to \$42 000 if they have two children; \$41 500 if they have one child; and \$41 000 if they have no children. The larger deposits can be made on homes up to the maximum price limit of \$55 000. The people eligible for this scheme are the same people who would be eligible for a low interest loan from the State Bank. Eligibility is mostly dependent upon the determined income in line with the repayment as a percentage of average earnings. The interest rates involved are also the same as those applying to State Bank loans.

The demand for this scheme is very strong, and one can understand why it is extremely attractive. As at 30 June 1984 the Housing Trust had received a total of 1 287 listings for the scheme, comprising about 19 per cent of the total State Bank waiting list. There are additional people on the bank's waiting list wanting rental purchase who have listed with the bank rather than with the Trust. It can be appreciated that this is an extremely popular and valuable scheme. During 1983-84 a total of 167 settlements were completed under the rental purchase scheme, and many more will be listed this year. Unfortunately, the State Bank has a waiting list of 12 months which means that people who have been listed for consideration under the scheme since October 1983, when it was introduced, will start coming through the system in October this year. I extend my congratulations to the Minister of Housing and Construction on foreseeing that this scheme initiated in South Australia eventually could be applied to the whole of Australia. I am pleased that the Commonwealth has been convinced that this is a scheme that should be supported, and it is now available throughout Australia and the Northern Territory.

The new funding arrangement of the Commonwealth-State Housing Authority in relation to the community housing programme is new as far as the Commonwealth is concerned and, once again, the idea emanated from South Australia. South Australia has been involved with co-operative housing since about 1978, at which time the first agreement was signed with the Women's Shelters Housing Association and 46 units were constructed. I congratulate the current Minister of Housing and Construction and the former Minister of Housing for the introduction of a housing co-operative.

In regard to funding, a minimum of \$7 million will be provided by the Commonwealth in 1984-85, and \$10 million will be allocated in 1985-86 and 1986-87. Of course, the States will have the flexibility to enable them to allocate additional funds out of the general Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. During 1984-85 South Australia's share is \$620 000. As I mentioned earlier, the States have the authority to top up their allocation by using additional money from general funds if they wish to do so. I am sure South Australia will tend to do that, provided there is a demonstrated need.

Housing co-operatives have been established in South Australia previously, and I referred previously to the Women's Shelters Housing Association. Others include the Northern Aged Housing Association, which commenced in September 1981 with about 50 units; the Hindmarsh Housing Association, which commenced in May 1982 with six units; the Ecumenical Housing Association, which began in February 1983 with eight units; the Manchester Unity Housing Association, which began in July 1984 with five units; the Southern Support Housing Association, which began in June 1984 also with five units; Portway Housing Association, which began in October 1984 but for which buildings have not yet been commenced; the Frederic Ozanam Housing Association, which commenced in September 1984 with three units; and the Somewhere Cares Housing Association which commenced in October 1984 and for which one unit is under contract at the moment.

Co-operative housing associations or co-operative building programmes, although comparatively new to Australia, are not new in Great Britain, Germany or Scandinavia. On the European scene, the history of housing co-operatives can be traced back as far as 1850 and beyond in Great Britain. Of course, the housing co-operatives concentrated more on providing the actual finance for housing rather than moving to the phase of actually building houses. With the example that they now have from the continental area, this is changing, and the co-operatives themselves are not only generating the finance but are producing the homes.

Co-operatives work in many different ways throughout the world. Some co-operatives are formed with the idea of disbanding as soon as a building programme is completed, and all homes are eventually owned by those who invest in the co-operative. As soon as full home ownership is achieved for a determined number of people, the co-operative automatically goes out of business. However, in the main co-operatives are formed for tenancy and mainly to provide accommodation for low income families, the co-operatives build housing for tenants and are non-profit making organisations where all the returns are ploughed back into new housing for future tenants.

Many of the co-operatives, of course, have the advantage of planning their own environment and providing for their tenants the sort of accommodation and general surroundings that the members of the co-operative desire. There is also the great advantage of community decision making. Many of the rules state that decision making is available to those people who are prepared to pay an entrance fee to the co-operative and take out a number of predetermined shares.

The Scandinavian countries, which were devastated during the war when the housing stock was severely reduced, find themselves in a situation where more than 25 per cent of their homes are built by way of housing co-operatives. In Denmark, for example, there are more than 650 housing associations with more than 300 000 completed dwelling units. Almost a third of the country's rented dwellings are being or have been provided by housing co-operatives. The dwellings are owned by non-profit housing organisations and are single family properties, either individual, terraced or semi-detached properties.

The multi-storey blocks and apartments made up mainly of three storey buildings are also about 19 per cent owned by building co-operatives. Many of the housing co-operatives were formed by building unions in Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Shortly after the Second World War, the building unions found themselves without sufficient work, and the co-operative building development has arisen from these activities.

It is interesting to note that local government has been prepared to assist the building co-operatives in these countries by providing building sites. The building sites are not transferred freehold as we would probably receive in this country, but the local government authority grants building rights to the co-operative and this building right lasts for 80 years. After 80 years, the land ownership then becomes a matter of negotiation for payment for the land between the building co-operative and the local government authority. This system, of course, would not be applicable in Australia and would be difficult to constitute, but it is interesting to note that local government authorities have a large say and assist the building co-operatives in the Scandinavian area.

More than 50 countries in the world are now involved in some way or other with the provision of housing through co-operative societies. It would seem that there is ample reason for optimism in suggesting that housing co-operatives could extend the housing stock in South Australia. There is no reason why co-operative housing ventures should not succeed. There is a strong co-operative tradition in this State, notably in the agricultural industry, although it has already been applied to housing. Since its inception in 1978, the banks and building societies have so far provided nearly \$4 million for 74 homes; this is a small but encouraging beginning, which has injected new finance into low income housing and involves the tenants themselves in the management of their accommodation.

The local government and community housing programme is a recognition by the Commonwealth of the innovative work done in South Australia; the funds could be used to further develop and stimulate co-operatives into a major form of housing tenure. Co-operatives have a management structure which provides the opportunity for that special ingredient called independence. People who enter a co-operative can be self-managing; they can be responsible to themselves for the way in which their home is organised and run, and that, surely, is the most desirable objective after the provision of the actual physical shelter.

I hope that local government organisations take up the challenge. The programme specifically includes local government in the role of providing low cost housing. Until now in South Australia, although local government has not been excluded from the field, it so happens that co-operatives have become established as a viable concept without any direct local government involvement so far. Another important point is to realise that under the guidelines provided funds for the programme may now be used to buy or renovate existing buildings, build new dwellings, lease dwellings, subsidise funds borrowed from the private sector or for other purposes as agreed between Ministers.

The last provision was inserted into the Commonwealth-State Agreement because of the representations made by South Australia. The reason for this is that there is the emerging problem of co-operatives providing the funds to employ people to develop and expand the co-operative itself. This point needs to be developed, and I understand that the Housing Trust is looking at means to provide the necessary mechanism to ensure that this problem is looked at.

We are particularly fortunate to have in South Australia the South Australian Housing Trust. This body has been active and sympathetic towards the ideals of providing and actually establishing co-operative housing ventures. I believe

that the Housing Trust would look forward to working closely with private groups who are interested in either establishing a co-operative or expanding an existing one. It is very necessary to fully utilise the funds that have been made available under the State-Federal Housing Agreement and I would hope that the co-operative scheme is used to the fullest, which will enable further housing development in South Australia and provide more units of shelter which are so badly needed.

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Mount Gambier): The speaker who has just addressed the House painted a fairly rosy picture of the situation confronting young people who seek to purchase a first home, largely, he maintained, as a result of the initiatives taken by the Federal Government in making provision for first home owners in the last two Budgets. Of course, that scheme was an extension of the schemes which were in operation under two or three former Governments of different political colours. I notice on the first page of the major address which the Minister presented one statement that an aim was to ensure that first home buyers got the best assistance possible in purchasing their homes. The picture that has just been presented to us is, I would suggest, some several months out of date.

While it is true that a large number of first homes are in the course of construction, they were the result of the programme of first home lending from the previous financial year (1983-84), during which some \$140 million in Federal funds was committed—a figure which, I understand, was some \$70 million to \$80 million higher than the Federal Government had anticipated and which placed quite an additional drain upon Treasury resources.

One means that was obviously taken at the last Budget was to reduce very considerably the opportunities for first home purchasers to have access to the present lending scheme. I point out simply that the very low income earners are finding that around Adelaide—and I know that the position has been much more acute during the past 12 months than for some time prior to that—it is extremely difficult to find building blocks, because there are no blocks available.

If people do find a block on which it is suitable to build at an economic price, they find that it is very highly priced. Whereas three years ago people were able to look at a home in the \$38 000 to \$45 000 range, they are now looking at something in the range \$55 000 to \$60 000—and indeed they are very lucky to find such a home. The average price for a three bedroom home is becoming \$60 000 and over.

Prospects for the low income earners have never been grimmer: they are finding that they simply cannot save sufficient money to provide that bridging gap between the maximum loan permissible on their low salaries and the price of the most reasonable houses on the market at present.

There is a \$5 000, \$10 000, \$15 000 or a \$20 000 gap, depending on a person's income and what they are prepared to go for by way of substandard homes, which would be the very lowest standard on which a bank would be prepared to lend. The margin is increasing. So, there is a great deal of pressure on low income earners, particularly single income families. What happens when a young man or woman or a young couple are earning more? We find that the amount of money that they are able to borrow decreases at a fairly rapid rate, so it becomes increasingly difficult for them. They, too, have to provide a substantial bridge before they can purchase a home at the price that they are attracting in South Australia at present.

The result of the Federal Government's most recent initiatives in home loan assistance schemes is that the demand

is still strong, as the former speaker said. However, obtaining the maximum loan and a loan that is sufficiently large to enable one to purchase houses currently that are on the market, given the price of the cheapest ones, is making it extremely difficult for young people to find any housing. While the former speaker had a reasonably prepared speech, either he or whoever wrote that speech was more in touch with the Federal Government and its aims and objectives than he was with the market place. The young people who constantly come before me in my electorate office, and in Adelaide tell me how difficult it has become in the last few months to stand any chance of getting a reasonably large loan to enable them to purchase their first home.

So, I suggest that the promise will not be made up by realisation in the present financial year, however good it may have been in the previous financial year, for the \$140 million lent out. I believe that that was one of the main reasons why the member for Light, who addressed in a most competent fashion a very wide range of issues that are relevant to this debate, told members of the House that he suspected that the housing market would be a fluctuating one in the next two or three years. It is quite obvious that if there is a boom year, such as we had in 1983-84, followed by an increasingly difficult first home ownership scheme, the recognition that the previous scheme made it fairly straightforward to obtain a home has to be followed by a recognition that this constrained lending scheme will create difficulties for young people.

It is already doing so, and any member of the House who says that that is false is simply not in touch with the market place or the young people who are looking around for blocks, units and homes and who are trying to make their way in life by buying their first house. The problem is already there, and any person who listens will identify it. In case anyone thinks that this is just a specious argument from a member of the Opposition who is trying to write down the importance of first home ownership schemes, let me point out that in the *Australian Quarterly* for winter 1984 (that is the current edition which has just been released) Judith Yates, senior lecturer in economics in the University of Sydney, addressed this problem in an article, on page 195, which she entitled 'Home purchase assistance for low income earners'. In support of my argument, I would like to quote from what Judith Yates has to say, as follows:

Australia, in recent years, has had a succession of home purchase assistance schemes for first home buyers. The most recent of these is the First Home Owners Assistance Scheme (FHOS) which was introduced in October 1983 by the current Federal Labor Government and has been widely acclaimed as being a distinct improvement on previous schemes. This new scheme, however, is still of little assistance to households on lowest incomes. Even with maximum Government assistance, the amount such households can borrow often falls well below the price of the cheapest three bedroom homes available to them. Because of their low incomes and their need to pay rent, these households are unable to save a sufficient amount to bridge the resultant deposit gap. This paper proposes reforms by which the Government might overcome this problem.

In quoting a number of reforms which have not been enacted by the present Federal Government and which therefore leave the present scheme still very much short of what low income earners need, at the same time that she propounds the theories Judith Yates mentions on a number of pages of the article that first home owners are still having problems in Australia. For example, on page 197 she publishes a table, headed 'Impact of subsidy on borrowing capacity of dual income households obtaining funds from a permanent building society'. I seek leave to have that statistical table inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Impact of subsidy on borrowing capacity of single income household obtaining funds from a permanent building society

Gross weekly income (annual income in brackets) \$	No subsidy		Maximum subsidy, option 1	
	loan ^(d) \$	repayments \$	loan \$	repayments ^(e) \$
275	(14 300)	24 700	298	34 200
300	(15 600)	27 000	325	37 300
325	(16 900)	29 200	352	40 000
350 ^(a)	(18 200)	31 500	379	42 100
375	(19 500)	33 700	406	45 200
400	(20 800)	36 000	433	48 200
425	(22 100)	38 200	460	50 000
450	(23 400)	40 500	487	50 000
467 ^(b)	(24 300)	42 000	506	50 000
500	(26 000)	45 000	542	50 000
535 ^(c)	(27 900)	48 100	579	50 000

(a) male AWE, June 1983 = \$347.30; for NSW, male AWE, June 1983 = \$360.40.

(b) maximum subsidy available up to this income.

(c) no subsidy available after this income.

(d) based on 14 per cent loan for 25 years; repayment capacity = 25 per cent weekly income \times 52/12.

(e) based on 25 per cent of income in year 5, assuming 6 per cent annual rate of growth of income.

Source: Information provided by Mary Donnelly, Permanent Building Societies Association, November 1983.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Immediately following that table Judith Yates states:

From table 1, it can be seen that a household with a single income of \$275 p.w. (approximately 80 per cent of AWE) can obtain no more than a \$34 200 loan. If such a loan is taken out, and if income does grow at the assumed rate of 6 per cent per annum, then after five years repayments will still absorb 25 per cent of taxable income. If income grows less rapidly, the repayment burden will be greater.

In the papers that were handed out in support of the Minister's second reading explanation, there was an indication that in appropriate cases the Minister may be able to defer or amend the repayments made by people who have borrowed and who still after several years find themselves with a declining purchasing power instead of an increased income, and I acknowledge that he has made some reference to that. There is provision for some further assistance to be given. However, I would point out that, first, the borrower has to be able to obtain the money and that it is very difficult for low income earners to obtain the bridging gap. It is extremely difficult for them to save between \$5 000 and \$15 000 when they are so busy just existing, State and other charges having risen so rapidly over the last 18 months. The writer of this article further states on page 199:

Despite this dramatic increase in borrowing capacity from \$24 700 to \$34 200, however, some low income first home buyers still face considerable deposit gaps. Real Estate Institute of Australia figures for September, for example, show that the median house price in Sydney was \$80 300, median unit price was \$62 700 and that only 20 per cent of all dwelling sales were under \$60 000.

Those figures for Sydney would be considerably greater than those for South Australia, but, of course, the earning power in South Australia is considerably lower. The article further states:

Earlier home purchase assistance schemes were criticised as being inequitable because they favoured those who had the greatest capacity to save. The current scheme has removed the explicit savings requirement attached to the subsidy but has left the far greater implicit requirement. Both past and current schemes have implicitly provided a subsidy to the lowest income groups only if they are able to exhibit a far greater savings rate than their higher income counterparts in order to overcome the greater deposit gap they face.

She highlights the problems facing our lower income earners which certainly have not been redressed by the present first home owners scheme. On page 199 she states:

Thus the first home owners scheme is apparently geared to households with incomes at or above average weekly earnings or to households with prospects of strong income growth.

At page 200 she further states:

The conclusion is that the first home owners scheme may not really help those most in need of assistance.

At page 201 she continues:

Whilst the Government's first home owners scheme is a considerable improvement upon its predecessors—

and there have been several under both Liberal and Labor Governments at the Federal level—

in providing access to home ownership to the marginal home buyer and goes a long way towards reducing the inequity of earlier schemes, it does not address the fundamental inequity which arises from the fact that not all households are marginal home buyers. Owner occupation involves a considerable saving decision on the part of the household.

It is that savings decision, I suggest, that confronts the low income earners far more acutely and seriously than it does the higher income earners. I believe that, when the member for Light predicted rises and falls in housing supply and demand over the next two or three years, he was predicting with great accuracy, as the housing boom we have had for the last 12 months or so will be declining in the very near future because of the problems confronting first home buyers—not only the low income earners but also those young, slightly higher income earners whose prospects of getting a maximum loan are diminished simply because when they are saving together their chance of having the maximum loan also diminishes.

They still have the same savings gap for bridging finance to meet the difference between the maximum loan and the cost price of the most reasonably priced houses on the market. The gap has widened very considerably in the last two years under a socialist Government in South Australia, and I do not think that there is much source of pride in that for the Minister of Housing and Construction. It is an irrefutable fact: every time one picks up a newspaper one only has to look at the real estate sales to see that prices have steadily risen, and that applies right across the whole range of suburbs of Adelaide and in country areas.

I am also wondering what has happened in South Australia to a number of people in South Australian Housing Trust accommodation who seem to be the forgotten men and women of housing. I agree that the South Australian Housing

Trust has done a remarkable job since the Playford era in the late 1940s when it was established. Let us not forget that for several years during that Playford era houses were built at the rate of 3 300 to 3 500 a year—a figure which, during the last year when we had a sudden boom, created great joy in the Minister's heart. The Housing Trust is now confronting problems that it had only in a relatively small proportion in preceding years.

We are told in statistics released early this year that the Housing Trust is responsible for some 60 per cent or so—in fact, is almost the sole provider—of welfare housing in South Australia. Some 60 per cent of tenants in South Australian Housing Trust homes are receiving subsidies of one form or another. Many of the people in Housing Trust homes are receiving maximum subsidies giving relatively cheap accommodation when one considers the private market. It does not seem that those great burdens placed on the South Australian Housing Trust are being met with increased assistance from Government.

Being in close contact with the user—that is, Housing Trust tenants from whom I receive a considerable number of complaints—I ask the Minister whether the tremendous emphasis being placed year after year on new homes and first home ownership cannot be met with a little more consideration for people who have been in Housing Trust homes since the late 1940s and 1950s. These people have been stable and static in their accommodation and have had the same Housing Trust home for 20, 30 or 40 years. They find that many problems facing them are not being redressed by the Housing Trust, simply because it has a great shortage of funds for every day repair and maintenance.

If a house is vacated and a person who is a new tenant is moving in, the chances are that that person will be entering a Housing Trust home that has been repaired, renovated, repainted and generally freshened up. If it is an old house it will have been improved in some way with old water heaters, fire places and combustion heaters having been renovated, upgraded or replaced. However, if a tenant stays put and keeps the house neat, clean and tidy with a pleasant attractive garden—an ideal Housing Trust tenant—one often finds that repair and maintenance is not carried out, because that tenant is not the moving kind and is therefore among the neglected. Among the range of problems brought to my notice as recently as the last few weeks in my electorate—and not always in the oldest houses, as a whole range of complaints has arisen in comparatively new houses constructed over the last five or six years—are such things as damp in bathrooms and bedrooms; mould growing over because of bad ventilation and design; paint coming off woodwork and walls; fixtures degenerating and wearing out; walls cracking (depending on where the houses are located on the varying Adelaide or country soils); fly screens not having been replaced; and heater and water systems, fences, woodwork, stone work, roofing and guttering all, or any one, needing some repair and maintenance in various Housing Trust areas.

In the older areas where houses are 25 to 30 years old the problems are acute, and the low income earners simply do not have the money or inclination often (because they move into a sadly maintained house) to do their own occasional casual repairs as many people have been inclined to do to keep their accommodation livable. Many Housing Trust tenants have been very responsible in that regard. I therefore ask the Minister whether, amid this spate of funding that he claims has been given over to the construction of new homes in South Australia, the State or Federal Government can provide considerably increased amounts of money for repair and maintenance for these forgotten people in South Australian Housing Trust accommodation—people who have been extremely patient over the years, to my

knowledge, because I have had not a little association with the South Australian Housing Trust since 1955 when, as an employee in a real estate firm, we acted as agents for the Trust. Even in new homes we were confronted on a weekly basis with demands for repair and maintenance.

These homes are still there and still occupied by Housing Trust tenants; very few homes have been sold to private owners. I have a large proportion of South Australian Housing Trust homes in my electorate of Mount Gambier, and I would like to see a better deal since the Minister is so proud of the considerably increased funding that the Federal Government has been making available to his Government. Perhaps there can be some balance in the expenditure of those funds over the next 12 to 18 months.

I did say that the member for Light addressed the many issues which are raised in the debate on this Bill, and I do not propose to enlarge on any more of those issues, as they have been adequately dealt with. However, I ask the Minister to give some regard to the Federal Government's present policy, that is, the present first home ownership scheme which was announced during the current financial year's Budget, and not the one applying in the preceding year of which the former speaker spoke with such glowing praise.

The situation has changed quite dramatically for young first home seekers across Australia, and the market in South Australia is certainly much more difficult for those young people who are seeking to obtain accommodation for themselves rather than go on to the welfare housing provided by the South Australian Housing Trust. It is time, I believe, that the Federal Government had another look at its first home ownership scheme, made it fairer so that there are not the peaks and troughs which will undoubtedly come as a result of the present changes and, in making it fairer for the first home owner, also making it easier for the South Australian Housing Trust and the South Australian Government to ensure that there are not peaks and troughs and that the demand continues at a steady pace and continues to contribute towards South Australia's development and the well-being of its people.

Mr PLUNKETT (Peake): I support the Bill, and I want to talk about the need for low housing costs in the inner city suburbs and to say how the agreement relates to that need. My electorate covers the inner city suburbs of Torrensview, Mile End, Thebarton, Hilton, and Hindmarsh, etc., where there is a great need for low rental accommodation. However, there is little land available for the development of public housing. One alternative is for the Housing Trust to buy established properties and, after basic restoration work has been completed, to make the properties available on a low rental basis. The additional funding provided under the new agreement, which now has a base level funding of \$500 million guaranteed for the next three years, will enable the Trust to pursue this approach to the provision of housing on a much greater scale, and there can be no doubt that low income earners' housing needs are still very great. This is confirmed by some figures that I will come to shortly in relation to rent relief and the Emergency Housing Office.

Another solution to the need for housing assistance in the inner city suburbs is to offer rental assistance to those renting houses in the private market. This form of relief keeps rent within reasonable proportions for low income recipients. At a time when it was necessary to spread the public housing dollar further, rent relief provides a very efficient and a most effective alternative to the construction or acquisition of dwellings. During 1983 and 1984, 8 806 applications for rent relief were lodged in South Australia, and 7 047 were approved. The average level of assistance

was about \$20 a week, and currently there are about 6 000 householders receiving rent relief in our State.

Obviously, this form of assistance is valuable to many families, and its continuation is most welcome. The rent relief scheme is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments to provide assistance to those who face genuine hardship in meeting rental commitments. Many of my constituents fit into this picture. About six in every 10 inquiries at my office relate to housing. There is a desperate need among these people to find suitable inexpensive and permanent accommodation. For the aged or handicapped, it is inappropriate to offer public housing outside their familiar environment. With a rental relief scheme, many more people can now avoid such dislocation and remain in their comfortable and secure areas, with affordable rental commitments.

The ratification of this 1984 agreement and the extra funding it will bring will also mean that another important area of the Trust's work will receive a financial shot in the arm—this is the Emergency Housing Office. The Emergency Housing Office provides counselling, advocacy, assistance in locating private sector tenancy, and financial assistance in the form of bonds or rent in advance. The demand for this service again reflects the pressure created by the shortage of public housing. In 1983-84, over 10 000 household groups contacted the office seeking assistance. This was an 18 per cent increase over the number who sought assistance the previous year. Assistance with bonds and rent in advance cost a total of \$916 000; this compares with \$511 000 in the previous year and represents an increase of about 18 per cent.

There are all sorts of reasons why people seek emergency housing. Recently, in my electorate, I had complaints from electors about the use of private backyards as caravan parks. The operator was supposedly providing an alternative to people seeking low cost housing. Such blatant exploitation can be stamped out only when the need for low cost housing can be satisfied legislatively by public instrumentalities such as the South Australian Housing Trust. When the scheme cannot keep up with demand, the Emergency Housing Office provides an emergency service to assist urgent cases of need until a more permanent solution is found.

Rent relief and the Emergency Housing Office are, of course, only two strands in the fabric of a broad and equitable housing statement that the State Government has sought to establish in this agreement. Many of us on this side of the House, with electorates composed mainly of low income households, were most upset with the old agreement that we are seeking to replace. That agreement has enshrined in it, incredibly as it still sounds to me, a requirement that public housing authorities gradually move the rent charges for public housing because of the level of rents charged in the private rent market. This insensitive dogmatic attempt to somehow make public housing tenants pay what they would have to pay as private tenants typifies the theme of the Housing Agreement perpetuated by the Fraser Government. Not only did it contain this utter contradiction of a very purposeful public housing policy: the old agreement was under funded and lacked direction. I believe the ideology of the Fraser Government hoped that the housing issue would just go away and that that restrictive agreement would help bury housing as an issue. The new agreement has reversed the situation: it provides the framework for a continuing revival of public housing in the long term. It includes increased funding, long term planning and a variety of programmes specifically designed to address the needs of those in the community who cannot afford to buy their own homes.

Rent relief and emergency housing are two programmes in which I am particularly interested, but the commitment

in the new agreement to public housing generally is a landmark in the State and Federal Labor Governments' attitudes towards social needs in our country. This issue is one of caring, based on recognition of the fact that society is not equal and that human beings are not of the same abilities and characteristics. It is an attitude based on the fact that society's resources need to be distributed in a way that ensures that all members of the community are entitled to certain basic requirements—in this case, shelter. I commend the Federal and State Governments for their efforts in bringing down this new agreement, and I am particularly keen to refer to the role of the Minister.

I know of the commitment he has made since gaining office to having the agreement renegotiated and subsequently structured in a way that was effective in directing real assistance to those most in need. He and his officers have done a magnificent job in helping to ensure the laying of a solid base on which to expand in the next decade. This agreement goes a long way towards resolving significant and widespread problems, including a shortage of affordable housing from which home ownership can be derived, and involving issues, both social and economic, often allowing the rich to grow wealthier while the poor remain poor. The new agreement makes a real contribution to reducing that issue.

Mr EVANS (Fisher): I support the Bill. There is no doubt that we should all agree to any Bill which involves Commonwealth funds being made available to be used with South Australian funds to benefit South Australia. People in this State pay taxes, and some of those taxes will be made available for this new scheme. However, it will be not just the people voting today who will be paying off that debt, but the children of those people will be paying off the debt on the homes that this money will provide. However, children of parents who buy houses with no assistance whatsoever from the Government will also be paying off the debts.

In supporting the Bill on that basis I want to take up the issue of the benefits of rental purchase and Government provided shelter for people who are in need of it. In looking at that issue we have to move into what might be called a cure area rather than a preventive area. I am not talking now only about present or immediate past State and Federal Governments, but for a long time Governments have refused to take up the challenge in relation to the provision of housing, and I place much of my criticism on Federal Governments of the past. We have allowed business men a taxation concession for capital assets they have developed by building certain facilities in their businesses (if they acquire machinery they receive a tax deduction); we allow people in certain trades to claim as a tax deduction tools of trade and the mode of travelling backwards and forwards to work; we have allowed people to claim their health insurance and other aspects of their health care as a tax deduction; but we have blatantly refused to encourage people to start a special savings account for house purchase. We have failed to suggest to people that perhaps a couple should open a special account with, say, \$6 000 (I choose that figure as being a reasonable one) or a lesser figure for individuals that will be used to start a housing savings account to buy an allotment or a house in the future.

We do not do that, and yet the inflationary trend in housing over the last 18 months is such that it is now almost impossible to acquire what was then a \$40 000 or \$50 000 house for under \$70 000 today. In other words, the price of the \$40 000 or \$50 000 house has risen by 40 per cent in the last 18 months or two years. Few couples or individuals on average incomes (or even above average incomes) would have the capacity to save that sort of money

every year over and above their normal savings: \$10 000 a year, is just not there. What have we done for people in relation to housing in the community in the last two years? We have allowed the cost of housing to go through the roof, talking in particular about established housing. We have allowed the price of that to go to the market place to reach a point where the average family cannot save at a rate fast enough to keep up with the inflationary trend.

I am not suggesting price control, because that will not work: the rich will develop a black market system to beat it. But we as Governments in the past did not set out to make sure that there was an ongoing availability of housing in the private sector, let alone the public sector. We created a situation in the community of fear about what was going to happen in the future. Interest rates went through the roof on the world scene, and we allowed conditions to develop that stopped people in the trades from taking on apprentices. Any employer who employed only a few people could not be bothered putting up with all the conditions entailed in an apprenticeship to employ an apprentice. Nor was there within the community enough stability in the housing industry for it to guarantee that they could retain the apprentice until the apprenticeship was completed. Therefore, they did not take on apprentices.

One member of my family used to ride a bike, because of bad public transport facilities, all the way from Mount Lofty to Elizabeth to work on some sites as an apprentice. That was the only way that person could get to Elizabeth to work on a building site during his apprenticeship, because no public transport facilities fitted in with the times of his work. That is one example of the difficulties facing an apprentice in the building industry. When we talk about raising the driving age we should think about that problem, because it is an area of great concern to many people.

I know that if I was in a small business as a bricklayer or a carpenter I would be reluctant to take on an apprentice. I know that is a cruel thing to say but we as a Parliament, through the arbitration system, have made employers take that attitude. If we were employers and had to put our houses at risk through a mortgage, if we were putting that at risk to enable us to run a business, we would not be taking on apprentices either. The sooner we wake up to that fact the better. We lowered the age of majority to 18, and yet on the labouring side (and I have little respect for the Builders Labourers Federation) we have allowed through the arbitration system a provision that allows a person 16 years of age who works on a building site as a labourer to receive an adult wage, although such a young person might be physically unable to do the work of an adult. I did that work at one stage and at 14½ and 15 years of age I was physically unable to do what the more mature men were doing. However, these people have to be paid the full rate.

As a Parliament how can we stand aside and say that that is all right, that the arbitration system has allowed it and that it is justified because the Builders Labourers Federation has fought for it? All that has occurred is that a person has been priced out of the market place or that such a massive burden has been placed on the building industry that it must add the cost of that extra burden to its building costs.

So, I come back to the point about taxation. If ever a Federal Government (and as there is a Federal election just around the corner it is a good time to talk about it) had had the courage to allow people to put money away in a special account to remain there to be used only for providing a form of shelter, such a scheme would have meant a decrease in the tax intake by the Government of the day but it is certain that for every dollar decrease in that tax intake future Governments and people would have benefited from a massive saving, and we would not have built up the

large deficits that we have today due to borrowing money from overseas and from within Australia. The burden on the Government has now reached a stage where 64c of every dollar borrowed federally has to go towards paying interest on money that we have already borrowed. Those who are not very concerned about that are really very blind and ignorant of the long term consequences of that.

Mr Ferguson: Which Federal Government are you talking about?

Mr EVANS: Every Federal Government since 1961 has to some degree engaged in the process of borrowing money.

Mr Ferguson: Tell us about the Fraser Government.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr EVANS: If the honourable gentleman wants to go back and look at the Whitlam Government and to see what happened with the borrowings at that time, he might have something to talk about. I am not playing politics on the Party scene: I am saying that Parliaments throughout Australia have got us into that hole in that we are now spending 64c in every dollar that we borrow: that is what we are doing. If the honourable member wants to play politics I will do so, but I point out that as Parliaments we have got ourselves into this hole. I was talking only about the Federal area of the interest burden that we have. We also have a massive State burden.

Mr Ferguson: This particular Government brought the deficit down.

Mr EVANS: I am not going to get into that. My colleague the member for Light has suggested that I refer to what happened with the inflationary trend in the 1970s under the Whitlam Government and why we got ourselves into a hole. I do not wish to get into that, even though the member for Henley Beach has such a chip on his shoulder that he wants to stir me to that point.

Mr Ferguson: Why don't you tell both sides?

Mr EVANS: I am telling both sides, if the honourable member would listen. We are in the position of not being game to do something in the preventive area in regard to providing a tax concession for people on average incomes, to apply to all people with an ability to save. I admit that there are some people in the community who do not have the ability to save, because of a handicap, an inability to obtain work because of the present situation, a low income, or because they are supporting a single parent family, or whatever. Since the 1930s, when the Housing Trust came into existence, it has assisted people in need of housing, and I accept that it has played an important role. However, we must concentrate on the area of rental-purchase schemes which provide people with the opportunity to buy their own home once they are in a position of being able to afford to pay off a home.

Those members with a good enough memory who are honest enough to accept it would remember that this is something that I advocated when I came into this place in 1968, namely, that we should encourage people to acquire the homes that they were renting from the Housing Trust and that the money raised by that means could then be used to build more homes for others. I also suggested that the effort that people had put into a home, whether by way of putting on a patio or doing the footpaths or just generally keeping it in excellent order, should be taken into account. In recent years we have been doing a little of that, but I do not think that enough of that sort of activity has been undertaken. The Federal Minister for Housing and Construction, Mr Hurford, said in recent times that within 10 years enough money will be available to enable the Housing Trust to double the number of homes under its control. I think that that is great, but it would be even better if it could be anticipated that at least half of those homes expected to be under the Trust's control will be under individual

ownership and being paid off by their owners. If that could be achieved we would have a more satisfactory housing situation.

The inflation rate applying to homes in established areas has been 40 per cent or more in the past two years. It is not quite as high yet in relation to new homes. There are builders who are still quoting at figures that will only just get them out of the red—they are not making big profits. We can be assured that from next February onwards the cost of constructing new homes will rise much more drastically than has been the case during the past 18 months. That is a frightening thing for any young person who is looking, either individually or collectively, at achieving home ownership. At the same time housing allotment prices have doubled in many areas in the past 18 months. They will not come down. However, they may stabilise (and perhaps they may even sneak up a little) towards the end of next year, say, from September onwards. But from now until then they will virtually stabilise at the present level.

So, what is a young person looking at today? He may have just matriculated and at 18 years of age be entering the work place and anticipating that by 23 or 24 years of age he will have a deposit for a home. Going back, say, two years, people were looking at trying to save a deposit of say \$20 000 to buy an established home, with a mortgage of about \$30 000. Those people may have had an old bomb partly paid off or have been still paying a hire purchase company for a few sheets of metal with wheels that they knew they would never own. Now, two years later, those people are 20 years of age but houses now cost \$70 000: they now need a deposit of \$35 000 and need to borrow \$35 000. However, it will not be possible for those people to save that amount of money by the time they are 24 years of age. Tax alone will kill them.

So, have we really solved the housing problem in the last couple of years anywhere in Australia? Of course, we have not done so. To say otherwise would be kidding ourselves. Granted, we are building more homes in the public sector to house those who cannot afford to buy their own, but all the time we are doing that the number of people who are getting in a position of not being able to afford a home is increasing dramatically. Because the cost of housing is going through the roof, more and more people are getting on the line for public housing on a subsidised rental basis, or a loan at a low interest rate, or whatever.

So we are not solving the problem. We are not better off now than we were two, four or five years ago. In fact, in real terms we are worse off, except that we can say that the Government is borrowing money and in terms of numbers of houses is allocating more to the public housing sector than was the case in the past. However, in terms of the percentage of people who want housing accommodation but who are unable to get it, we are not really catching up at all. More and more people are getting on the band wagon and requiring Government help because we cannot produce houses now at a price that they can afford to pay. We will make a lot of land available for housing in the south and in the north-east, but by the time it gets on to the market it will cost \$20 000 or, in some cases, \$30 000 an allotment. Although we are quoting \$15 000 now, by the time it gets on to the market it will be much higher than that.

If we say to young people who are 20 or 21 years of age that they need \$30 000 to get a block of land before they start, it must send cold shivers down their spines. If we really think about our housing situation, we find that prices are worse now than they have been since the 1950s in terms of what people earn and what they can afford to pay, because they are confronted with many more taxes.

In the 1950s perhaps the value of a house, as against earning capacity, was about the same. It is not the amount

of money earned that counts: it is the possible amount saved. It is difficult to save now, and that is one of the hang-ups that any Government will have to face now or in the immediate future. There is no doubt that it is extremely difficult to save to buy a house or any other item because taxes are killing us.

I hope that we understand just how serious a situation it is for a young couple with, say, two children. The husband may be a metal worker (or some other kind of tradesman) earning about \$300 a week. The other partner—and a woman can be a tradesperson—may find that for certain reasons he or she cannot get employment, or may choose to look after the children because by the time the couple pay child care costs there is no real benefit from their income. Can such people afford to pay off a mortgage of \$40 000? If they do get a house, how much basic furniture do they need, especially if they want to invite friends to visit and say 'Hello' to them?

Although we endorse the amount of money made available and the conditions provided under this agreement in that it does help, unless we as Parliaments throughout Australia are prepared to take up the challenge and are aware of the seriousness of the situation in which people wishing to acquire their own home and furnishings find themselves, we will fail.

For years I have argued that every dollar we save on housing is a dollar we can spend somewhere else in such areas as health, education, child care, or research into cancer and other diseases. We spend much money on advertising to make people aware of certain precautions that they can take to ascertain the first indications of cancer. Also, we spend money on advertising campaigns in relation to smoking: we distribute pamphlets and advertise on television pointing out the harmful effects to health. We ask people to be cautious.

We have committees of inquiry; Governments advertise asking people to save water during the summer months. We ask people to turn off dripping taps and not to waste water. We have a tap dripping on to a stone that is wearing the stone away all the time, yet we are not prepared to advertise in order to tackle that problem. We could ask the Film Corporation to produce films showing that, if people in their 30s were prepared to make some early sacrifices and to take a different path from what might appear to be an easy one, this could affect them favourably in 30 or 35 years.

My colleagues and members on the other side will say that one cannot change people's lifestyles totally. I do not suggest that we can but, if we convince only 100 people each year that they can afford their own homes, we will have 100 fewer people for whom we need to provide public sector housing. That saving will be greater than the cost of advertising: it is not a great number to convince.

I believe that we would finally convince hundreds of people to at least go part way down the path, which would make it easier for them. We come back to the human aspect of this problem. I believe that we do not put enough emphasis on the pressure on a marriage or partnership; nor do we put as much pressure on the children. I am amazed that we do not seem to depict on film the view that, if one takes a different path from that which seems trendy in our society, one will be a much happier and more fulfilled.

If people were prepared to do this from their mid-30s onwards, they would not always have to worry about what future Governments might do in relation to housing rental. I hope that a Government will some day take up that challenge. I convinced Federal Minister Newman in the 1970s that it was a good idea, but then there was a change of Ministry. I hope that that was not part of the cause of that change, because he accepted the challenge. The scheme

would work if we were to face that challenge. We do not do it because there is no collective pressure group of individuals telling the Government to do so.

Many comments have appeared in the newspapers about aged people being locked into their homes. They cannot get out because they are elderly; their homes are too big and they do not want to move away from their friends. Some council zoning regulations preclude building small unit accommodation, or no land is available. That is a pity, because many people are now reaching an age at which they find it more difficult to look after their gardens and larger homes. They still would like to be accommodated in their own areas, but in the end they are forced out by rates and taxes.

In Housing Trust areas people have grown up and made friends, but they may have a three bedroom home in which they have raised a family that has moved on. We may have to say to such couples that we want them to make their homes available to younger couples and provide them with smaller accommodation somewhere in the same environment, even if it means modification of some homes, so that we make better use of resources. That attitude has not been accepted in the past and perhaps it will not be accepted now. However, it may be forced upon Governments or on the Housing Trust.

The previous speaker spoke about inner city area development and about people buying older homes. I have advocated for a long time that we could do that on a gradual basis and in the right areas. There are some large elongated blocks with vacant land at the back that is not being used much. If one was to acquire most or all of such properties in a particular area either to redevelop or build houses on the areas behind original homes, one could leave the original homes standing but upgrade them. We would in that way make better use of resources. People would live nearer to schools, public transport, and so on. That has happened to a small degree, but I believe that it could be done to a greater degree if we were determined about the cause for which we are working. I support the Bill.

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): I speak in support of the Bill, which is a recognition of the promises made by Federal and State Labor Governments. Those policies were clearly spelt out by State and Federal Governments before their re-election. It is interesting to note the Federal Government's Budget provision for housing, which directly affects South Australia. In the 1984-85 Budget the Federal Government provided an estimated \$1 252 million for housing, an increase of 21 per cent on the 1983-84 allocation and a 69 per cent increase in funding provided by the previous Government in 1982-83. Expenditure on the first home owners scheme will be \$265 million in 1984-85, a dramatic increase of more than 85 per cent. Federally, this will mean 80 000 more new home owners following the 50 000 who were helped under the scheme last year. The

scheme will still apply only to those earning less than \$27 900 a year, but the full grant of \$7 000 will now go to families earning up to \$20 000 a year.

The amount will be reduced gradually for incomes between \$20 000 and \$27 900. However, in future the income limit for sole applicants without dependants will be half that of others, that is, a \$5 000 full grant for singles only if they earn no more than \$10 000 a year, with eligibility cutting out at \$13 950 a year. The \$623 million to be provided to the States this year under the renegotiated Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement includes a net increase of \$50 million for welfare housing. In relation to this State's allocation, I reiterate to the House part of the Minister's speech, as follows:

This year, for the first time, the State's allocation will be provided entirely as grants with an indication of at least 75 per cent grants for each year of the agreement. Any Loan funds will be at 4.5 per cent interest over 53 years, as was previously the case. South Australia received \$62.3 million in 1983-84 and \$73.1 million for 1984-85. This year, South Australia will again be able to nominate its total Loan Council allocation of \$135.9 million for housing, thereby attracting a concessional interest rate of 4.5 per cent.

South Australia's total housing allocation this year is \$227.7 million. The Federal funding programme now presents South Australia with the opportunity to continue its current efforts. If nominated funding continues, South Australia will now have the opportunity to mount a vital three year programme of around 9 000 Trust homes, 9 000 low income loans, and housing benefits to another 40 000 households in the private rental market, requiring resources of more than \$600 million.

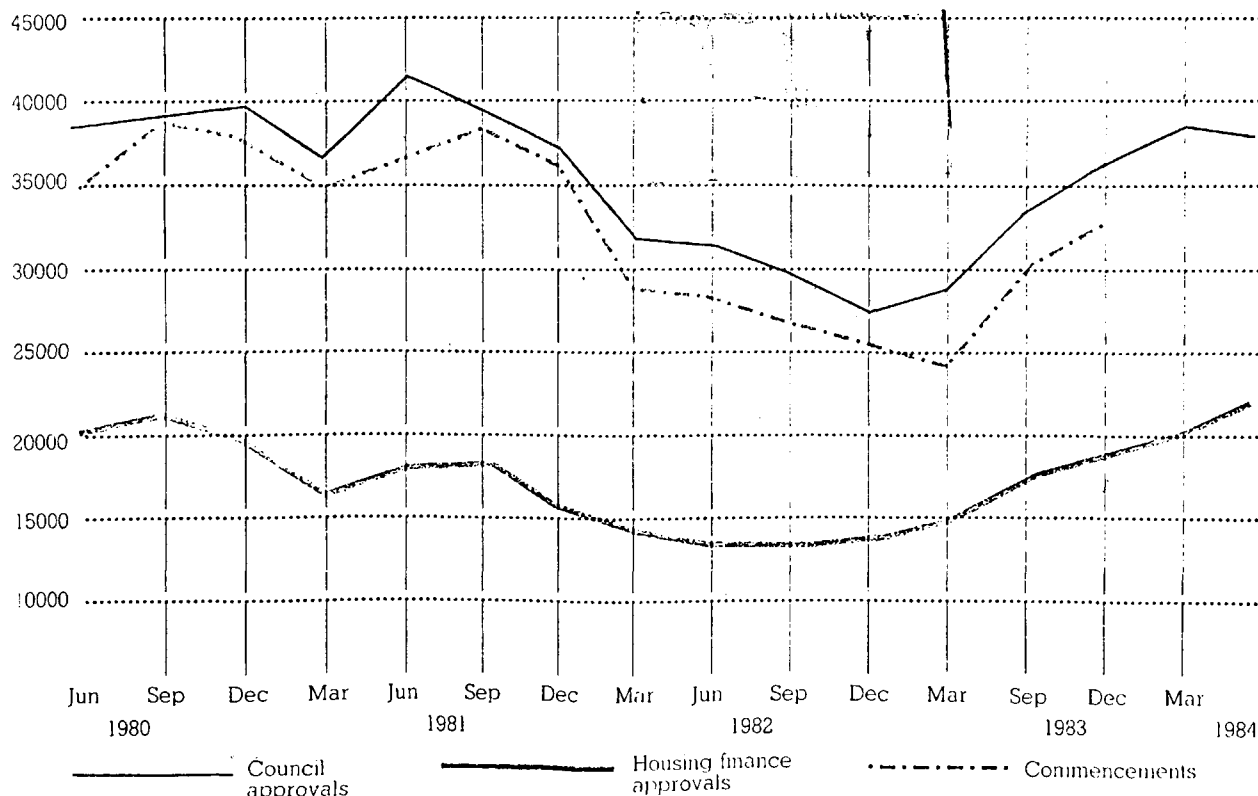
Clearly the Government, particularly the State Government, is living up to its promises made leading up to the 1982 election campaign. I recall quite vividly seeing those advertisements and the benefits that would accrue to the economy of this State. They are not just my words: that is supported by financial institutions not only in South Australia but throughout Australia. One has only to look at the leading article that I obtained from the research library in the *National Australia Bank Monthly Summary*, dated June 1984, headed 'Recovery in the housing industry,' to see the following:

The level of activity in the housing industry in Australia has proved to be a consistently good barometer of our overall economic wellbeing. The large decline in home construction in the early 1980s coincided with the most severe recession experienced by the Australian economy in the post-war period. Similarly, the strong recovery in the economy over the past year has in part been due to the rapid improvement in housing activity. This article will review developments in the housing industry in Australia during the 1980s to date, embracing both the early downturn and subsequent recovery, before considering the prospects for the industry in 1984-85.

I commend that article to members; it talks in terms of a collapse in 1981-82 and in terms of the relationship between new and existing home prices. I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a statistical table showing the total number of new dwellings, including council approvals, housing finance approvals and commencements from June 1980 to 1984.

Leave granted.

Total number of new dwellings



Mr HAMILTON: One of the issues on which I have concentrated since coming into this place is, of course, the question of aged accommodation. I make no apology for that, because of the following reasons. The number of Australians at or above retirement age will skyrocket within 30 years. A report by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs states that the number of men and women at or above retiring age will more than double from 1.63 million to more than 3.49 million by the year 2021. Whilst this is certainly a distant forecast, it highlights the need for Australia to concentrate more on the needs of retired people in the community. For example, in the Woodville council area there are 12 000 retired persons, and this amount is increasing by 4 per cent annually.

Currently the State Government and several organisations are helping to solve the growing pensioner housing shortage. The Government has contributed to two programmes that have led to a 10-fold increase in aged cottage flat accommodation in six years. There is a joint venture scheme with the South Australian Housing Trust under which outside bodies, that is, councils, community-minded organisations and private companies, provide resources such as land, cash or services to help increase the Trust's cottage flat construction programme. Under the Jubilee 150 scheme, it aims to build 1 000 homes for pensioners to mark the State's 150th birthday in 1986. To achieve this target the Trust is also acting in concert with local government bodies and community groups.

Before the introduction of a scheme to pool resources neither of the groups nor the South Australian Housing Trust could cope with that demand. Combined together they go much closer to achieving their respective targets, as Government aid can go only so far. However, it does boost our efforts in many areas. Government assistance directed specifically to the aged in Australia now accounts for an expenditure of more than \$7 500 million annually and can be expected to grow further as the proportion of elderly

persons in the population expands. I am sure that all members of this House share that concern for the aged in the community, not only in South Australia but indeed in this country.

It is interesting to reflect on some of the demographic details in relation to the aged, not only in South Australia but indeed in Australia. In 1947, people aged 65 and over comprised 8 per cent of the population of this country. In 1980 they comprised 9.6 per cent of the population of this country, and in the predictions for the year 2001 it will be 11.7 per cent. Based on 1980 figures this will be a 67 per cent increase in the 65-years-and-over age group, representing an increase of 22 per cent of the aged population. Included in those figures are the frail aged—those over 75 years. In 1980 they comprised 35.5 per cent of the aged population; in the year 2001, based on current predictions, they will represent 45.8 per cent of the aged population—an increase of 29 per cent. In June 1981, 10.6 per cent of the population was over 65, and 3.7 per cent was over 75—equivalent to 35.4 per cent of the aged population being over 75 years.

In the Woodville area 12.2 per cent of the city's population was over 65 years of age and 3.9 per cent was over 75 years—31.7 per cent of the aged population. In the Adelaide metropolitan area, in June 1981 (and I believe it is important for these figures to be incorporated in *Hansard*) 11 per cent comprised people over 65 years and 4 per cent of the population was over 75 years of age, representing 36.3 per cent of the aged population. In terms of accommodation in Australia, 90 per cent of aged people live in private dwellings, 70 per cent of whom are home owners or buyers, 9 per cent private tenants, 4 per cent public tenants, and 7 per cent in other situations. Of the 10 per cent of aged who live in non-private dwellings, 4 per cent are in nursing homes, 2 per cent in hospitals, and 4 per cent living in hospitals, boarding houses, etc. The needs of the aged are large and varied. I could speak at some length on the recognition received and needs in the community in respect of the aged population.

One of the surprising aspects (although not surprising in some ways) is the increasing number of female aged in this country. That category certainly needs recognition, and about 75 per cent of the aged are single, with about half the number living by themselves. This conjures up many problems in my mind in terms of the accommodation needs of this section of aged, and one problem that readily springs to mind is that of security. Members will also be aware that for some time I have expressed my concern about aged accommodation needs, as touched upon by the previous speaker, involving granny flats and dual occupancy. These matters must be addressed and, although I know that they were addressed by previous Governments, they are now becoming more acute.

As I have mentioned in this House on many occasions, granny flats are a method of providing accommodation for the aged whilst combining independence and support from family and friends. The Victorian Government has for some years provided portable granny flats for purchase or rental, and they can be sold back at an agreed price.

Mr Evans: Most councils here wouldn't let that happen.

Mr HAMILTON: The honourable member may be pleasantly surprised. You, Mr Acting Speaker, as the member for Henley Beach, would be well aware that, at a recent meeting with a number of council representatives in the north-western suburbs, informal comments were made by members of those councils, including mayors and some town clerks. I believe there is a gradual recognition in the community, particularly from local government authorities, that these needs have to be addressed. I fully support those views and would encourage people to look closely at the specific needs of accommodation for the aged. Many of us in this Chamber in the not too distant future will fit into that category. Whilst some of us may have an income and our own homes, others certainly will not. As legislators we should consider very deeply the needs of the aged in our community.

The New South Wales Government is providing motel type accommodation with dual occupancy and allowing the division of an existing residence into two self contained units. In New South Wales some group housing schemes are operating where local government provides a house and support services through a welfare office. These support services are very important not only to those people in need but also to the community at large. The need for people being retained if possible in their own environment has been touched upon by previous speakers.

I know only too well of five nursing homes within my electorate of Albert Park. I have seen problems over a period of five years where people have gone into nursing homes, after being uprooted from their local community (they come from the northern suburbs), and found themselves at, for example, Acacia Court, which is a great nursing home and provides modern accommodation. However, a number of residents have come to my electorate office complaining of some of the conditions in the nursing home. I believe those complaints were justified as, upon investigation, I found them to be correct. The major problem was that these people were taken from their familiar surroundings and, after having overcome the initial enjoyment of moving into another area, they began looking around for familiar faces and after a time started to fret for those friends with whom they could not communicate on a regular basis. These needs are important to the aged throughout not only South Australia but the whole country.

On the question of granny flats, I sought some information from my Ministerial colleague. Under the old Planning and Development Act regulations, granny flats were prohibited in residential 1 zones which constitute about 50 per cent of all residential areas. Consequently, the State Planning

Authority and Office devised an amendment to the regulations which would, if adopted by councils, allow them to consent to granny flats. The proposal was called 'dual occupancy' and had a wider objective than simply accommodating granny.

It was also intended as a means of providing a wider choice of housing and making better use of housing stock, particularly in low density inner-city residential areas such as Burnside, Mitcham, West Torrens, Woodville, etc. To assist councils, some design guidelines were also produced. The idea was not popular. Only a few councils allowed granny flats by considering them under the Building Act only and treating them simply as additions, and not as self-contained living units.

However, this was not something which councils promoted and I believe that that was unfortunate. Given what I said previously in my contribution, I believe that this attitude is changing among a considerable number of councils in South Australia. In considering these early amendments to regulations, the majority of the councils were opposed to any form of flats in residential areas which primarily had detached dwellings only. These councils, which were more sympathetic generally, insisted that only an elderly relative should be allowed to live there. In practice, this is quite impracticable, and it raised the question, 'What happens when granny dies?'

Since 1982, under the new Planning Act and development plan, the system is more flexible. It is now possible for councils to consider applications for granny flats in any residential area. Consent by the relevant planning authority would generally be required, and any proposals would require sufficient land and would have to demonstrate that they could comply with the basic principles—that they were not overshadowing or reducing a neighbour's amenity or daylight, had open space available and an extra car park, for example.

However, and unfortunately, many councils are still quite prejudiced against and opposed to the idea of self-contained flats as additions to existing houses. Other councils still do not let it be known generally that people can apply for such additions. I find that regrettable when we hear, for example, people expressing their concern about the housing of the aged in this community, where their families would seek to have them closer so they could look after and care for their every need but at the same time provide them with a degree of independence. It is regrettable that there are councils not prepared to let it be known that these additions can be and are available to be built for members or in-laws of the immediate family.

I understand that the Housing Advisory Council, which reports to the Minister of Housing and Construction, has recently taken up this matter again and will be seeking to establish quite clearly what the guidelines for granny flats will be. In the meantime, the ability to add well designed and carefully located additions to existing housing as self-contained flats is an important social and economic objective. Not only does it help the family unit but it is one small way of assisting a more compact form of urban development, saving expensive public works, but with no danger to our overall amenity. Clearly, in terms of saving on expensive public works and in terms of the contribution made by the member for Fisher about the cost of land and indeed the servicing of blocks of land, this fact is very important. If it can be made available—and I strongly believe it should be, as I have indicated in this Parliament over many years—this facility should be provided for more and more of the aged population in South Australia.

Other areas that should be looked at are overseas developments and these include service flats, where there is provision for meals, domestic aid, communal facilities, and social and recreation activities. There are also residential

homes comprising one or two person apartments with communal facilities, providing meals and recreation, a sick bay and an intensive care unit for short-term illnesses. I understand that this is one aspect that is being looked at very closely by the Woodville council and, indeed, by the administration of Acacia Court at Hendon, in my electorate. There is also sheltered housing, comprising groups of flats designed to incorporate facilities for handicapped people under the care of a warden who organises social, medical and economic support and is available for emergencies. Further, there is restricted mobility housing, which is specially designed and sited to allow for easy movement within and around the house and which is convenient to services.

I applaud the Government's initiatives in this area of housing. We are all well aware of the large demands that have been made on the Housing Trust. I suggest that not a week goes by when each and every one of us as members do not have representations made to us from our constituents seeking accommodation for their immediate family. I remind members that it is not just 32 000 applications that the Housing Trust has before it—it is 32 000 applications for families in the South Australian community. I believe that, given the undertaking and the commitment by the Federal and State Labor Governments, this Bill will go a long way towards reducing the waiting list for those people in South Australia looking for accommodation provided by the State.

Mr BAKER (Mitcham): I would like to deal briefly with a number of areas encompassed by this Bill. In some ways, I am quite pleased that there is a recognition of some of the intrinsic problems facing the housing markets in Australia, and of the difficulties being faced by low income earners and, in some cases, middle income earners, in obtaining suitable shelter. I find, however, that many of the arguments advanced by the Minister in his second reading explanation are somewhat simplistic. He fails to grasp that money has to come from somewhere, that it has to be put to the best use possible and that the ultimate benefit to Australians is if the funds are used in the most efficient fashion to meet the needs of the people concerned. I am not criticising the Minister for the speech he made, because he obviously has a commitment to assisting those people in poorer circumstances.

I have on several occasions written to the South Australian Housing Trust when constituents have come to me in need-sitous circumstances, and I have received a good hearing on each occasion. In half of the cases that I have dealt with there has been either some relief or some sign of relief. For that I am quite grateful, because those people have not had any options available to them. There are other people who have had the benefit of assistance through the public purse, who remain in the system and whose needs I believe need to be reassessed. I will not deal with that issue until later in my summation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, except to signify that it is an area which really does need attention. The Minister pointed out that it is quite unfair that there should be a market base rental, irrespective of the income of the people renting those premises.

First, I note with interest the targets that have been laid down in the agreement, and we talk about the addition of some 300 000 or 350 000 dwellings to the total stock of public dwellings in Australia. While I might disagree with some of the premises upon which this has been based and can think of different mechanisms by which we can achieve greater equity in the housing market, at least there has been a great deal of thought put into this matter. It is really a matter of ideology as to how we can best approach the difficulties that are faced by significant proportions of people. There are some bonuses in the agreement and I refer to the

total package, including not only the ability to provide public rental housing but also the other mechanisms available such as the rent rebate system.

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

Mr BECKER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

A quorum having been formed:

Mr BAKER: I must commend the people who negotiated the agreement in that they now have obtained a fully fledged and wide ranging agreement which takes in the various elements of housing assistance, whether it be for providing rental assistance, accommodation, assistance with home buying, or other forms which are part of the market mechanisms.

I must also pay a tribute to the work of the Housing Trust. Ever since it has been established in this State it has been a very efficient and well run organisation. I know that much of the credit goes back to Sir Thomas Playford and Alec Ramsay, who put together what I believe is a State housing authority of which we can all be proud.

The other thing we can point to as far as this housing agreement is concerned is that South Australia has done extremely well under the new arrangement. I note, for example, that of the funds available South Australia has received well in excess of its population share and that the State has managed to negotiate in a number of areas to get the Federal Government to fund various parts of the housing assistance programme which were not available before, so congratulations must be accorded to those people who were involved behind the scenes in bringing the housing agreement to fruition.

Having said that, I now wish to turn my attention to the question of the philosophy of public funding. As I mentioned at the very beginning, one can argue about the worth of particular projects, but eventually someone has to pay the bill. For example, we have a proposed investment, if we can call it that, of \$1 500 million by the Commonwealth over the next three years, of which \$623 million is to be spent in 1984-85. That certainly represents some increase in the funds previously available. I understand they were at a level of some \$500 million.

However, it begs the question, and I know the member for Light has also raised this question, as to further funding in the three-year programme. For example, I am unsure as to whether that \$1 500 million is going to be a fixed amount over the period, or whether there will be continual negotiation during that period so that the new year will bring a new funding arrangement. If it is left standing at \$1 500 million, one does not have to be a mathematical genius to understand that there will be only some \$877 million left for the two financial years, 1985-86 and 1986-87. Although it is not quite explicit in the Minister's speech, I presume that there will in fact be a rolling programme, but I would ask the Minister to clarify this issue.

Going back to the philosophy of funding, I ask myself at what level should housing and public funds be made available in Australia for public housing. We can all think of a figure. We can all suggest that whatever is spent will be inadequate, but somewhere we have to trade off our priorities with all the other areas that require Federal Government funding, whether they be public health, water supply systems, defence, or whatever. There is a finite amount of money that can be available unless the ever-suffering taxpayer is asked to continue to top up the till.

It has been the habit of Governments to continue to expand the public sector programmes. It is very rare for Governments to cut back on those programmes. It is even rarer for them to adjust their suit accordingly when economic

circumstances change. The theory I want to express is that during times of economic recovery there is a time to set aside funds or resources which can be used further down the track when economic circumstances are not quite as propitious. I know that I have listened to the former Federal Treasurer, John Howard, talking on this subject. When he spoke he said that it was important that during the 1984-85 year the deficits were minimised, because, if economic circumstances should deteriorate in the forthcoming financial year (which we are hoping will not happen), then we should have sufficient reserves set aside to cover that contingency, and that means that those people who are going to be in less than healthy circumstances can be covered without adding to the burden felt by the taxpayers.

I ask myself the same question in the housing arena. Honourable members will have noted that, when I gave a speech on the subject of housing some weeks ago, I spent some time explaining to the House all the forces that have come together to create the so called boom conditions in South Australia. I said at the time that it was disappointing that the housing industry had over extended itself, because there is inevitably a bust on the end of a boom. We would all like a planned economy that adjusts in a ratchet fashion upwards where booms and busts do not occur. That is why I say that perhaps the funding for housing during 1984-85 may be a little in excess of what the economy can provide, given that there will be an expectation that that relative level of funding will continue during some of the less propitious periods that may well occur during 1985-86 and 1986-87. I am here talking about long term planning and about what is affordable.

In doing so I recognise that we are talking about people, about the necessity to have affordable shelter available for people. During my speech previously I spent some time developing that topic. But somewhere the public purse must be able to cater for the various needs of the total Australian community, whether those needs are in regard to housing, pensions, better roads, or whatever—there must be a balance. I would have preferred that the funding schedule for 1984-85 show an increase, rather than a prospective decrease in funding for the rest of the three-year programme. That may well occur, and in doing that there may be a difficulty with affordability, which is one of the questions that must be addressed.

Quite simply, it is not good enough to say that we are going to have a good year this year at times when everything is going a little better than it has in the past, but we may be unable to maintain programmes undertaken in the future. I think there is some value to having programmes that are projected 10 years in advance. In his explanation the Minister referred to some 350 000 houses being built or being available for purchase under the scheme that has been proposed and agreed to by the States and the Commonwealth. That is all very well. I think it is good to have some proper planning in this process, but the system should be so flexible that planning priorities change according to economic circumstances.

As we are all aware, the greatest need occurs in times of economic down-turn and that is the time when it becomes harder to fund programmes. It is a time when taxes must be somehow modified, because it is the taxation process which further stifles development, initiative and investment. It is the vicious circle of economics. It is unfortunate that most members opposite do not understand the simple economic principles of governing our economy. During times of economic up-lift we can afford to pay for programmes, whereas during times of economic down-turn we cannot. The very process of trying to place more funds in the public purse stifles the investment and employment opportunities.

One of the things that really disturbed me about the Minister's speech was reference to the aim to provide an increased proportionate share of public housing, as though this was the end of the stream. Taking that argument to its logical conclusion, the Minister is implying that everything should be in public ownership. However, one must understand that the market must be developed with a balance between private ownership, private rental, and public ownership, together with various schemes which top up funds for those people somewhere on the periphery. If one does not understand that those agencies must work together, one will never get the right product mix. Money may be put into public housing where it may well be better utilised in other areas. That is what I am talking about in regard to flexibility. The Minister referred to the grand plan of creating 350 000 houses across Australia, that the Government would lift the proportion of houses to be made available for those in need. I say that we must have flexibility on that approach. My contention is that we must act in partnership with various parts of the housing market and that that should never be forgotten.

For example, we know that in South Australia we have the highest per capita proportion of properties under private ownership of any State. We also have the lowest proportion of dwellings privately rented. Yet the Minister talks about lifting the public profile in the market. I could understand the Minister's saying that the Government will facilitate home ownership; I could understand his saying that we will help those in need; but I cannot understand the Minister's blatantly saying that one of the Government's aims is to ensure an increased proportion of public housing on the market. That is not necessarily the right solution.

I bring that matter to the Minister's attention, because in his explanation he also talked about the wider basket of goodies that will now be available. I think it is a credit to the Minister and to the people involved that they have recognised that a number of other mechanisms in the market are available to meet the needs of the community rather than simply building houses for people who might be in necessitous circumstances during one period and who, when circumstances change, might remain in those houses forever. I do not believe that we should set up a scheme that continues to rely on the public sector to meet the housing needs of South Australians. The public sector is there to facilitate and make affordable shelter and home ownership possible.

During my speech some weeks ago I mentioned the deleterious effects on the market due to all these factors coming together. Had there been sufficient flexibility in the market at that stage I would have preferred that the first home owner scheme did not get under way in September or that somehow the amount of funds available from the agencies involved was limited in order to slow down the growth rate and the enormous pressures on the market, and to elongate the benefits that can come from a healthy housing market. It was not possible, but I think Governments must pay attention to such a proposition. Governments must really think about the market mechanisms and about all the things which, when they work together, create boom conditions. However, when they fall apart we face the difficulties that occurred between 1977 and 1983, when there was a very depressed housing market in South Australia. That had a number of side effects that have led to the situation that exists today.

Another area of concern is that in his explanation the Minister referred to State responsibility to provide public housing and to provide for the public sector needs of the South Australian community. The member for Light has raised this issue on a number of occasions and certainly I have signalled it as well. The extraordinary rise in the cost

of housing in South Australia is not all the fault of the Minister. The Minister knows of course that if \$50 million is devoted to housing and if the price of housing increases by 50 per cent, then one-third fewer houses will be built. That is the situation we have been facing in South Australia in past years. Costs have gone out of control, which means that our ability to service the market in need has been reduced. It is up to the Minister to make every special effort possible to ensure that the housing market and everyone in it can be serviced in a most efficient manner.

It is not sufficient simply to say that more money will be put into housing. If more people are accommodated and more options are provided for people then one will have done one's job very well. However, one will not have done one's job if one subjugates oneself to union pressure and continues on the path of trying to unionise all those involved in the Housing Trust's schemes. That does not help anyone. It does not help if one's options are closed and if one has not made an effort to use a little bit of entrepreneurial talent rather than dogma in putting together housing packages. From Questions on Notice that have been submitted and from answers that the Minister has provided to the member for Light, the Minister knows that a significant increase in the cost of housing has occurred. As I have said, it is not all the fault of the Minister, of course.

One of the things I was pleased about was the reference to the national working party to review the private rental market. The Minister showed quite an understanding of some of the forces that come together in this rental market to produce the market price, as we call it. Much as I dislike committees, it would be rather marvellous if Ministers of the Crown understood how the market worked. A great deal of benefit would be derived from that. Some of the issues contained therein include such things as capital gains tax, rates and charges, investment returns, ease of management and a whole range of issues that interrelate in the market. Of course, the ultimate determinant of price in the market is the level of supply and demand. To a certain extent, the private rental market has eased off because there is a 5 per cent vacancy rate, as I understand it. Therefore, we can look forward to a period of stability. Again, that is not due to the Minister or anyone else: it is due to the movement of people between markets.

I was interested in the Minister's comments about the cost rental scheme. I have some difficulties with that concept. The Minister's proposition is that, instead of going to a market based scheme, the Government is going to a cost rental scheme. I do not know how far along the track the Minister is with that proposition.

The argument in the document is something like this: people buy their own homes at the ruling rate; there is a capital appreciation over the life of that asset until it is sold or a person departs this world, so that they have some benefit from the asset—a greater asset is created. That is called capital gain. The argument then put forward by the Minister is that we will use the principle for rental accommodation; we will base it on cost, which will take in a number of factors, of course, so that people in the system can benefit from it.

One issue that I raised during the Estimates Committee on housing was the Minister's ability to continue to service the needs of the community. Obviously, one of the major means of doing so is through the accumulation or generation of funds from the rental that one gets from properties under one's control. If one continues to base those on costs, the ability of the South Australian Housing Trust to be able to service the increasing list of customers will be limited.

The other thing that the Minister forgets with that principle, of course, is that there are certain advantages in rental which are not enjoyed by home owners. As the Minister

would realise, things such as rates and taxes and all the costs of maintenance, and so on, are not borne by a person renting a property. If one wants to take that argument further, there is a very large percentage of people who never get the benefit of their capital gains in the market; in fact most people do not get the benefit of their capital gains in the market. They do not suddenly convert them into yachts or anything else because they always require some form of accommodation.

To say that they will use the same principle I believe is wrong, because the greatest role that the Minister can play is to say that we must have a fair market system by which we can create the greatest amount of opportunity for people in need. That means that people who improve their situation—those people who were once in necessitous circumstances but who are now able to afford a greater proportion of their income—should do so. I see nothing wrong with that concept. They have an ability to pay more. That does not necessarily mean that they cannot accumulate wealth or invest; it means that they have to pay a fair and equitable market rental. In that way we can use the South Australian Housing Trust and its enormous resources to provide a greater flexibility in the market.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: Are they going to apply that concept?

Mr BAKER: Yes, indeed; that is in the Minister's speech. He has approached the Federal Government to have the cost rental basis introduced into the South Australian Housing Trust, which I believe is not in the best interests of anyone. Some people certainly do deserve assistance, which should continue for as long as the person is in necessitous circumstances. As soon as they are no longer in that situation, there must be an adjustment; otherwise, every other taxpayer subsidises that person. It is totally unfair that those people should have to do so. I suggest that the Minister rethink the cost-based rental scheme proposition. It is up to him to maximise the resources that are available.

The other issue that I wish to briefly canvass is the use of loan funds for housing. During 1984-85 we had a very large influx of funds on grant. We have also used all our loan funds. That is at a subsidised interest rate of 4.5 per cent. Again, that is important, because we have a vast number of priorities: on the one hand we say people need roads. However, they will have to be paid for at 11.5 per cent, 12 per cent, or whatever, and public housing will be on the basis of a grant or at 4.5 per cent.

We have to rethink that whole process and say whether what we are doing is throwing money at the problem, because I note that in South Australia we have the highest private home ownership yet we have 32 000 people on the waiting list. However, in the whole of Australia we have 150 000 people on the waiting list, so South Australia's figure is one-fifth of the national total. Something is wrong. It suggests to me that, because of historical reasons, it is generating its own demand rather than people looking after themselves.

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

Mrs APPLEBY (Brighton): In addressing the subject tonight, I would first wish to express my congratulations to the Minister in relation to the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, which can only benefit South Australia in a positive way. The principles and objectives of the agreement are aimed at alleviating poverty of persons living in different forms of housing. South Australia has played a significant role in renegotiating the existing agreement and achieving fundamental change in its objectives.

South Australia now has the opportunity to spend an even greater amount for housing over the next three years.

These moneys will allow the South Australian Housing Trust to expand its rental housing stock and the State Bank to assist its low interest loans programme; and other funds under the agreement will ensure better provisions for mortgage and rent relief, crisis accommodation, local community housing; pensioner and aboriginal housing; and public housing will significantly benefit from the increase in Federal funding.

I wish to now turn my attention to the varying groups of people who seek accommodation and usually need to look for that accommodation in the private market place. These same groups of people face many difficulties in acquiring private rental accommodation and in many instances are discriminated against and even worse, being desperate for a roof over their heads, are exploited both financially and in the type of accommodation that a family or individual is expected to endure. Single supporting parents from my experience appear to come up against discrimination all too frequently. Being on a pension, because they have children, perhaps they will have people visiting them. Are excuses given? This never happens officially, but is made plain enough at the point of interview.

It has been put to me that if these people had a bird in a cage or a fish in a bowl they would have more hope for accommodation than if they had children. It would seem that a tenant with assistance from the Emergency Housing Office for bond and advance rent and rent relief would ensure an equally reliable occupancy in the majority of situations. The supporting parent who has independent means and utilises child care facilities for before and after school care would, I assume, make an ideal tenant. It is little wonder that supporting parents rely heavily on accommodation in the public housing sector for security and stability required by any tenant to lead a normal, healthy and involved life rather than a defensive and insecure existence.

The next group on which I wish to focus attention receives little attention; yet there is a great need for this section of the community to be addressed in regard to its requirements for accommodation. The group for which I seek attention comprises the parents of young couples establishing their family in the community. Through their parents separating or the divorce or death of one partner, it necessitates children making provision in their own family home for one or other of the parents. This situation can work in the long term, but many requests for help come to me for assistance to find accommodation quickly after there has been an argument because of a misunderstanding or interference in family matters by the resident parent. The majority of these situations involves a male parent, and my inquiries and discussions about this problem have led me to see the special needs directed to the ideal type of accommodation for such people.

Usually it would be preferable for this to be a boarding house as we once knew it, where cooking and washing went along with the rental of a room—a situation to which they have become accustomed when residing in their children's home. In no way do I relate this situation to denigrate the single male parent. However, I point out that this problem requires addressing and could probably be addressed by local government with joint venture schemes that would provide hostel type accommodation similar to that being addressed for aged care in a number of council areas. Other instances that create a situation of great emotional stress relate to the older aged group. On many occasions I have dealt with aged persons who have rented accommodation in the private sector and suddenly need to acquire alternative accommodation.

This situation comes about, for example, because of the sale of a property or the demolition of premises. The aged

persons with whom I have dealt have been long term tenants and in a number of instances they initially rented as a couple or a family, but, due to the death of a partner and the children making their own way in life, the aged person has assumed that he would be a tenant for as long as he could handle independent living. To face eviction on these grounds is a most traumatic experience for these persons. Many changes have taken place over the years in regard to landlord/tenant requirements.

They find that they are totally bewildered and to face the prospect of finding accommodation is quite daunting. Exploitation is another unsavoury problem affecting the low-income people in our community. There are individuals and families who have accommodation in the private sector in premises that are unsafe, have electrical faults, no hot water, and no running water at all in some cases. I know of instances of young families paying rent to the landlord and receiving a receipt for a lesser amount than is actually paid by them. In turn, this has created problems when they have sought to prove the amount of rent actually being paid.

Another form of exploitation occurs in the older age group. I have come across aged persons living in backyard premises with no heating or cooking facilities. Many of these persons have arthritis and nutritional deficiencies. I know that we have services to assist these people, such as the Emergency Housing Office and the Residential Tenancies Tribunal, but many people in the community do not know their rights or are afraid to complain because they may lose the roof they have over their head. So, they suffer in silence and continue to be exploited.

I now wish to comment on another aspect of housing. We have in our community an ever growing number of disabled persons wishing to live independently. The needs of the disabled in regard to design of housing require such things as wider doorways, inbuilt fixture heights, ramps at front and back entrances and bathrooms designed with rails, etc. Such requirements cover not only the disabled but also the aged and young families. Design for living reality can be as aesthetically pleasing as it is functional. I feel that home design has undergone many changes over the last several years and many safety aspects have been addressed, but there is still a long way to go. Better design to conserve heat in winter and provide effective cooling in summer is still only an idea when most people are planning the construction of their home. Those who construct effectively for our environment find it most cost effective.

I briefly raise these points to draw awareness to the many aspects that face people in their quest for the provision of their ideal home in the rental market place. I also believe that education regarding rights in rental should be communicated to both the tenant and the landlord. Effort in this direction would assist the private renter to realise the Australian dream: home sweet home. As my colleagues have spoken and will speak further about the public sector of housing, I would like to raise one aspect in regard to the South Australian Housing Trust that has been up to date most beneficial. The programme of which I speak is the tenant participation programme. This project has brought tenants in units together to discuss and plan ideas for individualising the units in the tenants' environment.

Many problems relating to vandalism and theft from cars in the parking areas of these units have so declined because of things such as the tenants being able to assist in suggestions relating to fencing of the parking areas. The tenants have had the opportunity to have fencing to give them individual access to their front entrances and to eliminate short cutters and trespassers. This has given tenants better security and safety from the main road access where young children are involved. Other aspects of tenant participation has been a

say in the garden lay-out and community facilities, such as joint use of barbecues, lawn mowers, etc.

This has given tenants an involvement that many have never experienced before. There will never be a total commitment by all tenants but, in general, the majority of tenants will benefit, short and long term, from commitment and involvement in the environment in which they live. I hope to see long and on-going benefits from such community projects as the Housing Trust's tenant participation scheme. In conclusion, I express again my support for the benefits that will be derived from this Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

Ms LENEHAN (Mawson): This Bill has my complete support and I commend the Minister of Housing and Construction for introducing it into the Parliament. As the Minister said in his opening remarks:

The new Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement heralds a new era in housing assistance for low-income groups in our community. It marks the beginning of a long term commitment on the part of the Federal Labor Government and the States to attack housing related poverty.

As many members on this side of the House are only too well aware, housing related poverty strikes at the very heart of our community.

The basic and fundamental need for shelter must be addressed so that all members of our community have access to a permanent and adequate standard of housing that meets their individual needs. The Minister spoke of the 32 000 applicants seeking public housing. I am personally in touch with a number of these applicants, almost on a daily basis, and I heartily concur with the Minister's sentiments that it is a tragic reflection on a nation so wealthy and well endowed with natural resources that many Australians are homeless or living in cramped, inadequate, overpriced and appalling conditions. These 32 000 applications represent a vast cross section of our community, from young single people, young married couples with children, single parents, single aged, and aged couples, as well as working families and children with unemployed parents. For these people the provision of suitable public housing is more than simply the provision of shelter: for many it is a new beginning, a new direction and it represents security and hope for their future and the future of their children.

Through the Federal and State funding commitments under the agreement, and the continuation of Loan Council allowance to nominate funds for housing, South Australia will now have the opportunity to spend at least \$600 million on housing over the next three years. This means that South Australia will have the opportunity of constructing approximately 9 000 Trust homes, of allocating 9 000 low income loans, and of providing housing benefits to another 40 000 households in the private rental market over the next three year period. For 1984-85 it is planned to provide a total of 3 100 rental homes in South Australia.

Particular South Australian initiatives such as the rental purchase scheme, which has now been supported by the Federal Government, will do much to enable many South Australians to purchase their own homes. As my colleague the member for Henley Beach outlined in great detail to the House earlier in this debate, the new rental purchase scheme applies to both the public and private sectors of the housing market. For a minimum deposit of as low as \$500 a family may purchase a home. The Trust will buy the home and the tenant will then make the repayments to the Trust for an agreed period of time. At the end of this period, the Trust transfers the ownership of the home to the tenant or, as they would then become, the purchasers. Tenants are responsible for maintenance and rates and can, at any time,

convert to a mortgage with sufficient deposit and loan approval.

Further, tenants who have difficulty in meeting their repayments may continue to rent their home from the Trust instead of buying it. The maximum purchase price depends on the amount of the deposit up to a total value of \$55 000. The demand for this scheme has been very great, with a total of 167 settlements during 1983-84. The obvious accessibility and flexibility of the rental purchase scheme, along with the fact that it enables an input by the private sector of the housing industry, exemplifies this State Labor Government's commitment to working in close co-operation with private enterprise.

As the scheme is proposed to operate for a 10 year period, there are obvious benefits in allowing for better planning and therefore creating greater stability within the industry. This is a most important aspect of the Commonwealth State Housing agreement because it provides urgently needed housing and contributes to the economic growth of South Australia through an increase in employment in the building industry. It is significant to note that, as well as providing for the expansion of rental and purchase stock by the South Australian Housing Trust and by providing an increase in moneys to the State Bank for low interest loans, the agreement also provides for Aboriginal and pensioner housing, mortgage and rent relief, local community housing and emergency accommodation.

As my colleagues who have already spoken in this debate have covered some of these areas, I now intend to speak about the vital role and function of the Emergency Housing Office. That office (the EHO as it is called) commenced operation in 1978. A review of the office was completed at the end of 1983. In January 1984 a new manager, Robyn Morisset, was appointed. Robyn's appointment to this extremely responsible and sensitive position has been widely welcomed in the community, and I congratulate the Minister on appointing such a competent and capable person. It is important to recognise the innovative and unique position of the EHO in its relationship with both the South Australian Housing Trust and the Minister of Housing.

The Emergency Housing Office has direct policy responsibility to the Minister and administrative responsibility to the South Australian Housing Trust. This separation helps to reinforce and maintain the role of the South Australian Housing Trust as a public housing authority rather than a welfare housing authority. As the Minister stated in his second reading speech, the removal of the misguided stigma of welfare housing is imperative if we are to develop better community awareness and acceptance of public housing. However, because of the widespread extent of housing problems and the consequent need for emergency accommodation, the EHO fulfils a vital and immediate role in providing a range of much needed services. These services include counselling, advocacy and assistance in locating and negotiating private sector finance, private sector tenancies, financial assistance in the form of bonds, rents in advance, and removal expenses. Also, short term emergency tenancies are located for low income families, individuals and youth.

The demand for EHO services has grown from 4 341 people in 1979-80 to 21 027 people in 1983-84. A record 10 152 household groups contacted the Office seeking assistance during 1983-84—an increase of 18 per cent over 1982-83. I seek leave to insert in *Hansard* a statistical table demonstrating a breakdown of these groups.

Leave granted.

Emergency Housing Office Applications

	1982/83		1983/84	
	No.	%	No.	%
Families	5 016	58	5 522	55
Youth	2 084	24	2 568	25
Aged	227	3	229	2
Other Single	1 266	15	1 833	18
	8 593	100	10 152	100

Ms LENEHAN: While these figures underline the extent of the housing problem, they also justify and, indeed, support the need for and commitment by the Bannon Government to provide sufficient resources to the Emergency Housing Office. The financial assistance provided by the Emergency Housing Office in the form of bonds, rent relief and rent in advance was provided to 5 570 households during 1983-84 at a total cost of \$916 000. This compares with \$511 000 provided to assist 3 724 households in 1982-83—an increase of some 80 per cent in financial assistance.

It needs to be noted that presently the EHO provides financial assistance to people in the metropolitan region only. It can therefore be reasonably expected that, when the Emergency Housing Office extends its services to the country, these figures will expand significantly and matching resources will need to be provided. It is appropriate to note that funds have been allocated to the Emergency Housing Office in the 1984-85 Budget for a pilot project to be run in country regions. However, one potential problem in respect of the extension of Emergency Housing Office services into the country areas is that landlords outside the metropolitan boundaries are presently not required to lodge bonds with the Residential Tenancies Tribunal. Quite obviously, we must seriously look at extending the role of the Residential Tenancies Tribunal to cover this anomalous situation.

The development of specialist services by the Emergency Housing Office for particular groups in the community must be commended. Specialist youth housing officers are currently employed in the area of helping young people with housing problems. The Emergency Housing Office is currently developing an Indo-Chinese service at Woodville, and it is currently examining the possibility of providing a special women's housing officer based in Currie Street. The Emergency Housing Office through its community development function is involved in supporting community based housing groups and has assisted groups throughout the metropolitan region and as far away as Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln. This role is crucial and should be encouraged, particularly when Government resources are limited and when the community at large is expected to do as much for itself as it can. However, the Government cannot expect community groups to provide resources and work the welfare system without expert assistance from Government departments.

A significant problem at present is the wholesale decrease in boarding house accommodation, and this has been referred to by some of my colleagues. This is happening particularly throughout the inner city. This is an area with which I strongly believe that the South Australian Housing Trust should become more involved. At present, the Trust has more of a reactive role, that is, it may rescue a boarding house which is going to close, but unfortunately this is not always the case. There is both a need and a role for the Trust in promoting this type of accommodation for single men and women. An addendum to this issue is the fact that other Government departments, such as mental health and the Department of Community Welfare, have adopted policies of institutionalisation which in some cases has been done without consultation with housing authorities or proper

regard for the housing needs of their clients. Many of these people have ended up in boarding houses which have proved neither suitable nor secure.

Financial assistance of up to \$200 per single person or \$300 for groups or families is currently provided. While these sums are indeed generous, they unfortunately do not cover the expense of a family moving into a middle priced three bedroom house at, for example, \$100 per week. Such costs would involve \$400 in bond, \$200 rent in advance, plus removal costs, and then there are things like lease and stamp duty costs and deposits for gas and electricity. These costs in some cases may amount to somewhere in the vicinity of \$600, and this of course is just to move house. In the light of these costs, I believe that the level of assistance must be reassessed so that the assistance provided to these families in need must reflect the true cost of the amount that is required to move.

While the Emergency Housing Office operates regional offices at Salisbury, Woodville and Noarlunga, I must point out to the House that the office at Noarlunga is in need of separate accommodation. While discussing the valuable and necessary role which the Emergency Housing Office fulfils in the southern area, I wish to pay a tribute to the work of the staff of the Emergency Housing Office in the Noarlunga area during the period in which I have been involved in the area, both as a candidate and indeed as the member. Ron Campion, Tricia Brand and the present emergency housing officer, Aidis Kubilius, have all been professional, totally dedicated and compassionate in carrying out what at times must be described as an almost impossible task. It is staff such as these people who have given the Emergency Housing Office the reputation and high standing within the southern community which it presently enjoys.

Another important contribution which the Emergency Housing Office makes is the provision of 'Whereabouts'. In the 18 months since funding, the value of 'Whereabouts' has grown astronomically as a provider of information on rental houses, flats and share situations to the public of South Australia. In the six months from April to September, 'Whereabouts' received 6 837 calls from people looking for accommodation and in that time it turned over 1 824 vacancies. It has proved an invaluable adjunct to the services offered by the Emergency Housing Office, the Housing Trust and other organisations and individuals that are in the business of helping people find housing. 'Whereabouts' has achieved its initial goal of becoming an indispensable community service. If the funding which is currently being sought is achieved and maintained, 'Whereabouts' will continue to serve South Australia. I certainly support the continued funding of this valuable service.

Before concluding, I wish to commend the Housing Trust on its continued involvement in the promotion of joint ventures which attract community support and additional resources to help members of the community with housing needs. Specifically, I wish to refer to the Jubilee 150 homes project, which is outlined in the annual report of the South Australian Housing Trust for the year ended 30 June 1984. That report was tabled in the House by the Minister today.

The Jubilee 150 aged housing programme, which is a specific application of the joint venture concept, has enjoyed continued success. Many local government bodies and community service groups have taken the opportunity to celebrate the State's sesquicentenary in 1986 in a tangible way by contributing cash, land and practical assistance in the establishment of gardens and maintenance and in the erection of things such as carports.

This assistance has been significant and gratefully accepted by the Trust. During 1983-84, preparation for the Jubilee 150 activity continued at a high level throughout the country areas. Almost every local government area is now represented

in the Jubilee 150 programme. In addition to the other joint ventures to which I have already referred, a total of 187 units are under construction or are committed. The report goes on to list the country areas and the partners involved in projects, and also the metropolitan areas and the partners involved in those projects.

Before concluding, I wish to comment about two further aspects which I believe are extremely important. The first is the third National Labor Women's Conference called 'Towards 2000', which was held earlier this year. One of the topics addressed in this conference was that on women and housing, and it was titled 'Toward equity. Understanding the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement'. In the discussion and papers presented at this conference, Margaret Barry proposed that the most significant method for women in improving and upgrading their access, choices and equity in their housing is to ensure the implementation of the Federal Labor Government's pre-election commitment to double the proportion of housing, publicly owned, over the next 10 years. I put to this House that that is exactly what the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is aiming to do in the 10-year period.

In conclusion, I wish to draw members' attention and pay a tribute to the South Australian Women's Action Housing Group. This group, which was formed about 18 months ago, is responsible for promoting and putting on the first national women's housing conference, which will be held in Adelaide from 1 to 3 March 1985. The group has met on several occasions and, through discussions, has identified not only the problems faced by women in gaining access to home ownership, but also the difficulties experienced, particularly by women, in other areas of housing, including the private rental market and public housing.

It has become minimally apparent how little involved women are in the decision making process concerning housing issues at Government, industry and community level. The Women's Housing Action Group has been convened as a non-partisan group to work towards encouraging policies and practices which address the needs of women across the whole housing spectrum. I believe it is significant to note that, with the backing of the South Australian Minister of Housing and Construction, the Women's Housing Action Group successfully applied for Community Employment Programme funds in early 1984 to undertake research and consultation at State and national levels aimed at further identifying the current housing situation facing women with a view to proposing a range of housing options which meet more effectively than at present the needs and preferences of particular groups of women. The project is being sponsored by the South Australian Office of Housing, which is a housing policy and advisory unit within the South Australian Public Service.

A major focus of the Women's Housing Action Group's programme is to convene the first national conference of women's housing, as I said earlier, in March 1985. It is proposed that this conference will commence with an analysis of why women in particular face constraints in the housing sector by examining the social, economic and legal status of Australian women. The needs of women in four housing tenures, home ownership, private rental market, public housing and crisis accommodation—and the needs of particular groups of women will then be examined by means of papers and other presentations in a series of workshops and national forums. I believe that this conference, which is the first of its kind in Australia, will have tremendous significance in not only identifying the problems facing women in housing, but in achieving solutions to those problems.

In conclusion I wish to once again congratulate the Minister of Housing and Construction on bringing this Bill before the Parliament and I pledge my support for it.

Mr LEWIS (Mallee): It always distresses me when on any matter whatsoever before the House an honourable member chooses to read a speech word for word, in that it destroys the real meaning of debates of this kind. On no occasion in the speech did the member for Mawson refer to remarks that had been made by previous speakers in relation to their views, or for that matter rebut any of the arguments that had been put by such capable speakers as, for instance, the member for Mitcham, whom I did hear. I presume from that that the Government accepts the premise, logic and reasoning that supported the views and therefore the views expressed by the member for Mitcham, so I join this debate literally to provide the House with my views about this matter as they relate to my constituency and not to put on the record, as it were, in the process of any filibuster (read or otherwise) things which are peripherally relevant and may make good copy in local newspapers.

I do not wish to canvass the areas covered by previous speakers in the debate, nor will I add respectability to what the member for Mawson has said by inferring that any of what she said needed rebuttal, with the sole exception that the underlying philosophical view she is advocating is that members of the general public have to be housed, regardless of the cost to their fellow citizens. It appalls me that, these days to an increasing degree, individual citizens are prepared to take advantage of the more compassionate natures of the decreasing majority of their fellow citizens. They simply sit down and expect somebody else to solve their problems, for which their fellow citizens are in no way responsible.

In expressing that view I in no way imply that there should not be a safety net, a welfare mechanism to which those who fall on hard times, who suffer misadventure or who are otherwise unable through no fault of their own to find adequate accommodation can turn. I merely direct that remark at the considerable number of freeloaders who could make a more substantial contribution to their own housing than they presently do, and have done in increasing numbers over the last few decades. I think the trend towards expecting others to pay for the benefits of the individual is regrettably increasing and is being encouraged for political purposes.

It results in what I regard as the worst form of citizenship, because it is grossly irresponsible. It is not proper, reasonable, or for that matter capable of being sustained in any enduring way, for a society to expect some of its members to carry the burden for the majority. The literal economic consequences of following that course are to ensure that we continue down that slippery slope to the status of a Third World country, in that the greater the number of people who expect somebody else to simply solve their subjectively perceived problems, whether it be in housing or anything else, then the greater will be the burden of taxation on the remainder of the population.

Where the remainder of the population cannot derive sufficient reward as an incentive for its efforts as a consequence of higher and higher levels of taxation, that portion of the population will simply neglect any inspiring opportunity that might otherwise have elicited their response and, accordingly, the size of the cake from which we can obtain the funds for housing and any other kind of welfare programme will diminish. Therefore, the standard of housing and other welfare services will diminish. That is not only because there will be fewer people producing the wealth that is being redistributed, but also because there are more people demanding a slice of that wealth as though it were a birthright.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ferguson): I take it that these are preliminary remarks that will bring us back to the Bill.

Mr LEWIS: In my judgment they are central to the Bill, in that if I take what has been said by some of the backbenchers from the Government they regard as a birthright that, regardless of what effort any individual citizen may make towards housing himself, someone else will pick up the tab.

Whether it is housing or anything else, that is unfortunate. In this instance it is housing: that is what we are talking about. For us, as members of Parliament, to encourage a further disincentive to responsibility, whereby the individual is capable of being responsible for himself, is to detract from the capacity of all of us to achieve and to enjoy a level of civilisation, a quality of life, a standard of living—whatever term one may wish to use to describe it—compared to what otherwise might have been the case.

I do not deny that the measure goes some way to ensuring that, given that there is no increase in demand made on the public purse by a bigger and bigger percentage of people for welfare housing, this addresses the problem, but we should remember that, if we reward laxity and indifference, we can expect more and more people to adopt it as their basic value and their attitude. So much for my view of the remarks of the Government members. Contained within that attitude is my view of the absolute necessity for public housing instrumentalities to provide housing for those who, by some misadventure or misfortune, cannot provide it for themselves.

I turn now to those matters to which I referred at the outset concerning the way in which public housing is affecting and can affect in policy terms the communities that I represent. When the former Liberal Government came to office, as a result of discussion between myself and other members and the Minister responsible for these matters, it invoked a proposal to provide older people in the community with cottage flats of one kind or another, which thereby freed up housing stock which comprised houses that were more substantial than elderly people need during their later years of life. That housing stock was built to provide accommodation for families of a larger number than one or two: it was wasteful to have such accommodation occupied by only one or two people, and was probably inappropriate to the needs of elderly people at that time of their life. I believe that the policy instituted has resulted in a more realistic utilisation of the total housing stock available to the community.

Communities in the area that I represent, at places such as Lameroo, or Keith, for instance, were quick to realise the benefit that could be derived by a community by freeing up housing stock for more appropriate use by families and shifting the elderly occupiers of the houses to those types of cottages to which I have referred. The Housing Trust joined in that programme, which was not only inspired by the State Government but also acknowledged as being desirable by the Federal Government. Names do not mean anything; it is the reasons that count, and that is why I describe it in simple terms.

I want to point out where I consider greater benefit can be obtained from the housing dollar that we invest at present. It has to be acknowledged that some of the components of the costs incurred in providing public housing fall into differing categories. There is the cost of land as well as the cost of infra-structure associated with that land in a direct sense, such as payments for vehicles and pedestrian traffic together with rainwater or stormwater run-off controls, the provision of what are regarded as essential communication services such as the telephone, and energy supplies, be it gas or electricity, to the allotments—and this is even before

we begin to construct anything on that land. That land has a market value which varies according to its location.

In the towns that I represent land is substantially cheaper than it is in metropolitan Adelaide. If people seeking welfare housing want to find a desirable sociological environment in which to live and to raise their children they could do worse than to live in the kinds of communities to be found in the Mallee electorate as well as throughout rural South Australia. Indeed, many people have sought public housing accommodation in those communities, and the reasons are obvious. For instance, the shops are within walking distance from the houses. The pace of life is more comfortable. The recreation facilities are readily at hand. Crime levels in those communities are way below those in urban situations—that varies from location to location, of course. Moreover, the children living in those dwellings provided at public expense are more likely to have a normal view of themselves if they are interacting with a greater number of children who do not come from what might be described as less fortunate material circumstances.

In the country towns to which I have referred all children are readily accepted as individuals on school campuses and in regard to sporting activities of the district, and they therefore develop more normal social attitudes. The example that such children see of the way in which people live is much better than it is in those substantial Housing Trust ghettos that have been developed in the past as an *en masse* construction approach to solve the housing problem. I think that all of us would regret the consequences of that in terms of behavioural breakdown, sociological disfunction and criminal aberrational behaviour which seems to be more prevalent in some of those Housing Trust areas where the concentration of Trust homes is far and away greater than elsewhere in the community.

In those circumstances there are people with problems relating to people with problems and they think of the world as normally being stricken with problems. They think of all people as being normally being stricken with problems: there seems to be no escape. On speaking with them at their doors whenever I have done that it is apparent that there is an increasing level of despair in the minds of caring parents in those situations. It is regrettable that greater numbers of single parents with children of school-going age are finding themselves in such circumstances in those, if you like, Trust home ghettos.

I am emphasising then that there is a difference in the social, behavioural and the value norms in the north and the south from those that one would find in the communities to which I have referred. Now I want to make the connection between the remarks about those costs and those unfortunate disbenefits and the communities that I represent. Not only is there a cost advantage in terms of the raw land (it is cheaper there) but also the services needed in those communities already exist. One does not have to lay on the essential services to any dwelling; they are already there, and any extension of them is done at a minimal cost compared to the massive expense involved in laying out complete new suburbs,

Thirdly, the benefits to the children and their parents of living in those communities are very great indeed. They will grow up having higher levels of self esteem and a greater understanding of the prospects in life for them with fewer of them getting chips on their shoulders—and for no other reason than that they are interacting with a broader spectrum of people, the majority of whom do not have to suffer from the same misadventures from which they may have suffered. So, it would make sense to me if more dollars were invested in the development of a significant number of Trust homes—public housing stock if one likes—in those communities.

Some people may argue. Indeed, some honourable members may say that we only put, and would only advocate putting, public housing stock at public expense in those localities where people want to go to live. If that is their argument, I put it to them straight out that, whenever a citizen applies for a Trust home in a place like Meningie, Tailem Bend, Lamerook, Coonalpyn, or anywhere else of a similar nature, they are told, 'Well, there is no housing available there and there will not be for as long as we can foresee—certainly three years or more. You might as well put yourself on the list to go to Murray Bridge, Strathalbyn, somewhere near Noarlunga, Elizabeth or at Smithfield.'

So, people's expectations of being able to obtain housing from the public stock in the communities to which I have referred have been completely dampened to the point where they are almost non-existent. Nonetheless, I am continually asked, 'Why can we not get a Housing Trust home in Lamerook, Tintinara or Karoonda?' So, I put to the Minister that serious consideration ought to be given forthwith to the establishment of public stock housing in those communities, given that there are no disbenefits and also that there are immediate takers.

That has been so for as long as I have been the member for Mallee, and it is increasingly so now with escalating unemployment and crime rates in the less fortunate suburbs where the greater percentage of public housing stock is established. If we fail to do that, we pass over the opportunity to spread our dollars further in that the number of beds over which we can put roofs and the numbers of people that can therefore be happily, comfortably and less expensively accommodated will be reduced proportionate to our indifference to that possibility. That would be a real pity.

The other point in favour of doing what I have just suggested is that the children will obtain an understanding of a broader spectrum of options available to them as adults and in their respective smaller rural community environments they will derive the opportunity to develop a wider range of skills that would otherwise not be available to them. They would have a more realistic and broader understanding of how the real world lives.

In some of the suburbs that presently are substantially made up of public housing, the norm by a large measure (the vast majority) comprise either broken homes or, worse, single parent families. That is not to condemn the responsible parent looking after children—not a bit of it: it is just to make the valid observation that it is less fortunate for the child and the responsible parent to find themselves in those circumstances.

Paragraph (D) (b) of the schedule deserves some comment. It provides:

public housing should reflect general community housing standards and should be accessible to community and other services. Poor location of dwellings, an inadequate range of choice of dwellings, and stigmatisation of the status of public tenants should be avoided to the maximum extent practicable;

I support that utterly. I just wonder, however, how we interpret in our subjective way the meaning of terms like 'should reflect general community housing standards'. What does that mean? I wager that one would find, if one canvassed the views of members of this House each in isolation from the other as to what that meant, that we would come up with a fairly broad spectrum of opinion. I refer to this point because it must be considered in determining how far we can spread the funds, and that will determine how many people can enjoy the benefits. The more expensive we make each of the dwellings the fewer of them we can build for the same effort and the same money; therefore, fewer people will derive benefit from the provision of public housing.

Other parts of the Bill I think are commendable. For instance, I point out the more realistic way in which rents

are to be determined for each of the tenants. The general level of honesty with which those tenants have to report their circumstances will need to be carefully examined. I find it difficult to understand the way in which we bring that into account. On another point I am pleased to see comments, if one can call them that, in the same subparagraph in the schedule at the bottom of page 2, as follows:

the design, style and siting of public housing will, to the maximum extent practicable:

reflect the need for accessibility and suitability for habitation by disabled persons, Aborigines, youth, the elderly, or other identified groups; and

support the energy conservation policies of the Governments; I would have thought that it applied not only to Governments but equally to the community at large. All political Parties in this country at this time have a responsible view of the necessity to conserve energy where possible, surely. I know of no political Party that does not.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: Indeed, I would have. It is most important to have it as a stated part of the objectives in the schedule, and to presume that all wisdom comes from Governments is a little ridiculous. That is part of the mores of the broader Australian community at present. The other subjective thing about which I have some difficulty is the word 'need'. That appears in yet another part of the same subparagraph to which I referred, as follows:

programmes and funding arrangements under this agreement shall be developed so as to increase progressively the availability of public housing to a level commensurate with the need for it in the community;

It may just turn out that the need is for 100 per cent in the ultimate if it is attempted to provide public housing at less than its real cost. If one provides something in any market structure in any society which costs the occupier or user of that service or commodity less than it costs to provide, invariably and inevitably more and more people will want it. So, there has to be a measure of responsibility of determining the cut off point for need, and certainly those people who have had rental accommodation in the past have stayed on and occupied it way beyond the time that they have really needed it, and they have done that to the disadvantage of others who have needed it and at the cost of those who are paying the taxes and charges to provide the capital pool from which the additional stock had to be created.

Therefore, 'need' is a word that is open to subjective evaluation, and it is unfortunate that it should be seen as such an absolute criterion in the way in which it is included in this clause of the schedule. I support the proposition and refer honourable members to the very outstanding remarks that have been made by speakers from this side of the House. I will listen with interest to the contribution to be made by the member for Coles.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON (Coles): I support the Bill and commend the author of the Minister's speech, which was a wide ranging speech and which asserted a number of principles that I believe would be universally supported by both sides of this Parliament and the community at large. I would like to make particular reference to the speech in addressing myself to the Bill. I will refer also to the schedule, of course. I have listened to the speeches of other members and noted a strong and informed emphasis on the financial aspects of housing and an understandable reference to the electorate experience of many members in assisting their constituents to obtain access to State assisted housing.

It is this aspect that has drawn me into this debate, because I believe that my own experience as a local member over the past seven years reflects on an aspect of the social issues related to public housing which has not been touched

on at length. The Minister's speech in so far as it emphasises the need for a national agreement that seeks to tackle housing related poverty and improved access to resources is certainly supported by us all. I particularly support the points that refer to a new approach to ensure that first home buyers get the best form of assistance they require in our changing social and economic times. I think that that is an indication that both Governments—State and Federal—recognise the need for a flexible approach to public housing, and I also recognise that South Australia has always been and still is in the vanguard of that approach.

The other point that I think is particularly relevant is the recognition by the Commonwealth of its responsibility for the cost of rent rebates, since this is an income support programme. It is worth making reference to the South Australian Housing Trust's annual report for the year ended 30 June 1983 and the statements that the Trust makes about this aspect of its operations. Under the heading 'Rent reductions' on page 10 of the report appears the following:

The number of tenants qualifying for rent reductions has continued to increase steadily in recent times and for the year under review the rent for one through rent reduction was \$22.65 million. That is an enormous sum in anyone's language for a population of the size of South Australia. The report continues:

The scheme provides a tremendous sense of security to Trust tenants, who know their rent can never rise above what they can afford, no matter what financial misfortunes they may suffer.

That is tremendously important, particularly for the ageing and single supporting families. I should refer to the fact that the number of tenants receiving rent reductions as at 30 June 1983 was 25 844, an increase of 2 711 or 11.72 per cent above the number at the end of the previous year. We certainly cannot afford an annual increase of the order of 10 per cent in those tenants receiving rent reductions, and I certainly hope that that level plateaus out and diminishes over the years that are being dealt with under this Bill. The report further states:

Nevertheless, the Trust is not in a position to continue to carry the huge and increasing financial burden for much longer. It is in effect a form of social security being paid for by other Trust tenants and not by consolidated revenue as it should be, and, as such, the Trust believes it should be recompensed by the Commonwealth.

That is one issue that this Bill addresses, and I certainly welcome that. Reference has been made by almost all speakers to the fact that in South Australia more than 32 000 applicants are now seeking public housing. I can say without equivocation that in the seven years that I have been in this Parliament applications for my assistance for housing have without doubt involved the most serious, the most intractable and the most heart rending problems with which I have ever had to deal as a member of Parliament.

My heart literally sinks when appointments are made for people to come to my office to seek my help in obtaining Housing Trust accommodation because I know, as every other member of this House knows, that there are 32 000 people ahead of them on the list, unless their circumstances are absolutely desperate, and, if that is the case, they may qualify for priority housing. It is worth noting that in the year 1983 the Housing Trust dealt with 731 referrals by welfare agencies on behalf of applicants considered to be in such urgent need of housing assistance that they be given priority over others on the waiting list.

Of those, 459 were granted priority housing. Another group into which these desperate constituents could fall is that requiring emergency housing service, and the 1983-84 report states that during that year 8 593 households sought assistance from the Emergency Housing Office, and 7 292 households were assisted, which is a remarkable proportion of the total. Those applicants represented a 24.5 per cent increase in demand over 1982. I have already expressed alarm and concern over the 11 per cent increase in applications for rent reduction. We are talking about a 24 per cent increase in applications for emergency housing. That, of course, is a reflection of very serious ills in the community evidenced by this demand for housing assistance.

To go back to the experience in my own electorate—over the seven years, by far the greater proportion of constituents who have sought help have been not the aged, not so much the unemployed, but supporting mothers. In addressing this whole question of public housing and accommodation support for individuals and families, it is absolutely essential that we in this House go back and examine the root causes to try to find solutions and reasons as to why this is occurring. Examples have been given of the aged or disabled seeking help, but the overwhelming proportion seeking such help have been supporting mothers mainly in the late 20 to mid 30 age group, usually with two or three children, always distraught with it invariably having an adverse effect on their health and appearance because of the worrying and strain of trying to bring up a family single handed and obtain accommodation. The cost to the country in human terms of these individual tragedies is incalculable. The cost to the taxpayer, unfortunately, can probably be calculated.

It is relevant to include in this debate reference to the cost to the community, through the public housing system, of marriage breakdown in Australia. I seek to have inserted in *Hansard* a statistical table from the *South Australian Yearbook* of 1983 identifying 'Commonwealth Government expenditure on social welfare, selected items for South Australia' from the years 1977-78 to 1981-82.

Leave granted.

Commonwealth Government Expenditure on Social Welfare, Selected Items South Australia (a)

Type of Benefit	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Social Security Act:					
Age and invalid pensions	333 579	374 344	418 769	472 416	544 874
Widows pensions	38 613	45 456	55 006	63 647	72 136
Family allowances	90 483	84 100	97 481	88 861	96 856
Unemployment benefits (b)	84 166	116 028	119 484	133 184	166 430
Sickness benefits (b)	9 864	9 810	11 126	17 043	20 466
Supporting parent's benefits (b)	23 874	27 943	31 040	48 097	69 571
Delivered Meals Subsidy Act	260	254	259	361	406
Aged or Disabled Persons Homes					
Act (c)	4 467	2 646	3 373	2 600	4 213
Aged Persons Hostels Act	2 189	11 660	2 306	3 733	422
States Grants (Home Care) Act	1 820	1 403	1 579	1 293	1 754
States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act	3 203	3 143	2 981	1 552	—

Type of Benefit	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
National Health Service (d)	204 412	230 840	253 694	262 041	290 967
Disability pensions (b)	34 784	34 266	35 634	40 832	41 780
Service pensions (b)	37 234	43 953	53 439	71 258	84 948

(a) Where applicable the amounts shown include payments for supplementary assistance, allowances and additional pensions for children.

(b) Includes Northern Territory.

(c) Includes Personal Care Subsidy.

(d) Includes Northern Territory for some items.

I make particular reference to two items in that table: first, the value of unemployment benefits from 1977-78 to 1981-82. In this State in 1977-78, \$84.1 million was paid to individuals receiving unemployment benefits. In 1981-82, \$166.4 million was paid to those people. In 1977-78, \$23.8 million was paid in supporting parents benefits. In 1981-82, \$69.5 million (almost threefold the 1977-78 figure) was paid. If a graph were laid out in terms of demand for public housing and the increase in family breakdown, we would see a close relationship.

This close relationship obviously concerned the Trust, which in 1976 commissioned a study 'Housing Single Parent Families—A Problem on the Increase'. It was undertaken by Phillipa Milne and was published in July 1976. Whilst the statistics are out of date, the conclusions, as detailed in the overview on page 3, are still valid. The report states: The 1973 income survey indicated that 10 per cent of families in Australia were in the care of one parent only. During the decade that figure has increased considerably. It further states:

Statistics indicate that this percentage is likely to increase due to a number of factors—

- (a) Increased rate of marital breakdown.
- (b) Increased accessibility of divorce, particularly with the introduction of the Family Law Act in January 1976.
- (c) Availability of Government support for fatherless families (of women receiving class A widows pensions in 1975, 45 percent were deserted wives, compared with 31 per cent in 1965).

In the meantime even that classification has been banned by the Commonwealth because it is no longer relevant to the social situation today. It further states:

- (d) Increased public sanction of ex-nuptial pregnancy and the availability of supporting mothers benefits have resulted in more unmarried mothers keeping their babies. The percentage of ex-nuptial babies available for adoption in South Australia has declined from 42.15 percent in 1970-71 to 24 percent in 1973-74.

Of course, in the past decade since then it has declined still further. If we were to visualise an ideal situation in which husbands and wives remained happily married and families stayed together, we could envisage a dramatic decrease in the demand for public housing. I know that the question of marital status is not relevant to people seeking public housing, and that criterion is specifically excluded from the Housing Agreement, which states on page 2:

Housing assistance provided under this agreement will be available to all sections of the community irrespective of age, sex, marital status, religion, disability or life situation. However, priority in granting assistance shall be determined by the need for assistance. I do not quarrel with that criterion, but I do express concern that the whole question of society's approach to marriage has, in my opinion, been extremely influential and continues to be so in the kind of support we give or fail to give to married couples and families and in the consequent support we are absolutely bound and required to give to those people when those marriages break down.

It seems that, instead of concentrating on pouring massive resources into a rescue operation after the marriage has broken down and after there is a clear need for two separate housing arrangements instead of one, we should be concentrating on much more support to those who are vulnerable to family breakup. Whilst this is a problem of the most enormous and difficult proportions, we could be doing much more as a community by way of better preparation for

marriage and more economic and social support for families, notably in respect of child care, because many strains imposed on marriage in the early years are imposed because the mother has little or no relief from the demands of child rearing and is consequently not able to take that balanced approach to life which would enable her to be less tense in her marriage situation.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: I will refer to that in a moment. There are efforts being made—and I commend particularly the work being done at the Alberton Junior Primary School—in terms of school related services to support families to ease that burden which in former times was eased by the extended family and by close knit local communities of the kind the member for Mallee referred to when he was recognising the need for more recognition of the value of public housing being placed in country towns.

Mr Lewis: Integrated.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Integrated into housing stock in country towns. Over seven years, by far the greater proportion of constituents who have come to my office for help with public housing would have been single supporting mothers. I cannot speak too highly of the assistance that the Trust gives to the officers of members of Parliament or of the work of Mrs Betty Eddy, the Parliamentary liaison officer who can always be relied upon to lend a sympathetic ear, and her very efficient efforts to assist us to help our constituents.

However, in the past year or so I have noticed a greater proportion of young women coming to me, sometimes with their partners, saying, 'I'm pregnant. We would like you to help us get Housing Trust accommodation.' In questioning them about their plans for the future, one can often find that there is some distantly expressed intention to get married after the baby is born. It is not unusual to find young women saying, 'I want to wait until I'm slim again and can wear a white dress and have photos taken.' This is an interview seeking public housing accommodation. It is simply no use judging those young women for what seems, to a member of the older generation, to be a breathtaking attitude. They have been conditioned in their approach to marriage, child bearing and child rearing by a whole lot of influences in society or one might say by the lack of a strong and loving family influence, and the situation is one that we have just inherited. My concern is that we should attempt to do something about it.

In terms of the support that society should give to marriage and the family, I commend absolutely the announcements made today by the Federal Liberal Party about taxation relief for married couples and for families. I believe that the measures announced in that taxation policy, when implemented, will help turn the tide in Australia towards support of the kind that has been sadly lacking for Australian families.

Mr Groom: You had 32 years to do something about it.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: I think that we may have stirred a raw nerve across the Chamber. I imagine that members of the Labor Party are very jealous of that policy and are rather wishing that they themselves had announced something similar.

The Hon. Peter Duncan interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: We, the Parliamentary Liberal Party.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Ferguson): Interjections are out of order and I would ask the member for Coles not to reply to interjections but to address the Chair.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: At times it is irresistible, Mr Acting Speaker. Returning to the question of housing assistance for supporting mothers, I seek leave to have inserted in *Hansard* a table which identifies the rate of marriage breakdown in this State by comparison with the other States and which, somewhat to my surprise, indicates that South Australia has a higher crude divorce rate

per 1 000 of mean estimated resident population than any other State in the Commonwealth. It certainly is not high enough to cause the effect that was referred to by the member for Mitcham, namely, that whereas South Australia would normally be expected on a proportionate basis to have approximately 10 per cent—

The Hon. Peter Duncan interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Is the honourable member seeking leave to have the table inserted?

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: I had not actually sought the leave. I do so now, Sir.

Leave granted.

TABLE 16. MARRIAGES, STATES AND TERRITORIES

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
NUMBER									
Year ended 30 June—									
1978	35 716	26 862	15 423	9 675	9 517	2 954	574	1 517	102 238
1979	36 644	26 955	15 580	9 849	9 394	3 359	560	1 551	103 892
1980	37 842	27 418	16 499	9 860	9 395	3 346	622	1 579	106 561
1981	39 303	28 068	17 504	10 245	10 012	3 438	654	1 623	110 847
1982	41 212	29 008	18 761	10 617	10 370	3 526	839	1 722	116 055
1983 p	41 004	28 943	19 029	10 607	10 484	3 604	719	1 758	116 148
Year ended 31 December—									
1978	35 904	27 178	15 431	9 800	9 404	3 148	576	1 517	102 958
1979	36 906	27 019	16 082	9 778	9 239	3 254	553	1 565	104 396
1980	38 965	27 724	17 157	10 064	9 594	3 433	661	1 642	109 240
1981	40 679	28 648	18 305	10 252	10 111	3 515	719	1 676	113 905
1982	41 955	28 851	18 928	10 936	10 455	3 576	818	1 756	117 275
1983 p	39 995	28 941	18 607	10 549	10 520	3 644	745	1 757	114 758
1981—									
December qtr	11 224	8 173	4 928	2 765	2 663	803	200	545	31 301
1982—									
March qtr	10 982	8 545	4 326	3 297	3 251	1 224	155	468	32 248
June qtr	10 515	6 761	4 943	2 547	2 498	795	264	380	28 703
September qtr	8 304	5 236	4 499	2 015	1 930	701	202	328	23 215
December qtr	12 154	8 309	5 160	3 077	2 776	856	197	580	33 109
1983—									
March qtr p	10 750	8 868	4 418	3 039	3 373	1 283	146	478	32 355
June qtr p	9 796	6 530	4 952	2 476	2 405	764	174	372	27 469
September qtr p	8 203	5 168	4 375	1 926	1 737	714	224	316	22 663
December qtr p	11 246	8 375	4 862	3 108	3 005	883	201	591	32 271
CRUDE MARRIAGE RATES (PER 1 000 OF MEAN ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION)									
Year ended 31 December—									
1978	7.1	7.0	7.1	7.6	7.7	7.5	5.3	7.0	7.2
1979	7.2	7.0	7.3	7.5	7.4	7.7	4.8	7.1	7.2
1980	7.5	7.1	7.6	7.7	7.6	8.1	5.6	7.3	7.4
1981	7.8	7.3	7.8	7.8	7.8	8.2	5.8	7.4	7.6
1982	7.9	7.2	7.8	8.2	7.8	8.3	6.3	7.6	7.7
1983 p	7.5	7.2	7.5	7.9	7.7	8.4	5.6	7.4	7.5

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: We would expect, on a normal proportionate basis, the number of applications for public housing in South Australia to be of the order of 15 000, but as the member for Mitcham pointed out it is more than double that amount. One of the reasons could be the one that he postulated, namely, that the efficiency—the high profile, the community respect for and recognition of the work—of the Housing Trust has given it a place in the minds of those who are seeking help that could have a much higher profile than the equivalent authorities in other States.

It is interesting, as other members may have found, to have people walking into one's office, for many of whom their first port of call has been the Housing Trust. It is an assumption on their part that if they are not able to own their own home—this is on the part of many, not all—then Housing Trust assistance will be available to them. That is why a rigorous selection process has to be undertaken for

emergency and priority housing but that does nothing to reduce the total waiting list, which is getting bigger by the year. The Minister stated:

If nominated funding continues, South Australia will now have the opportunity to mount a vital three year programme of around 9 000 Trust homes, 9 000 low income loans and housing benefits to another 40 000 households in the private rental market, requiring resources of more than \$600 million.

The speech goes on to say that public housing will be diverse in style, location, management forms, tenant involvement and community integration, all of which I support. The diversity is as important in public housing as it is in private housing, and that is one area where the South Australian Housing Trust has an enviable record. I also commend the intention for public housing to increasingly change, with small-scale co-operatives running their own housing joint ventures with other organisations such as local government, increased use of community resources for different house

design, density and amenity. All those things are worthy of support, and I am pleased to see them included in the Bill.

The supplementary rent allowance increase of 50 per cent by the Commonwealth is, as I said earlier, a very welcome initiative, as are the two new programmes, one dealing with local government and community housing, and the other with crisis accommodation, because that is one of the problems that causes the heart to sink when people come into the office and one recognises how desperate they are and realises that it will be extremely difficult to help them.

To summarise, I commend the Bill, but I urge Governments, both State and Federal, of either political persuasion, in examining the public housing question to look much wider than public housing, as indeed General Managers of the Housing Trust have traditionally done—Alec Ramsay being the most notable amongst them—to look at society as a whole and to do what we can to support individuals and families so they do not need to depend upon the State for relief. The greatest freedom comes from economic independence and the greatest capacity for security and self-fulfilment comes from the knowledge that one is not dependent. None of us wish to be dependent and all of us feel stronger and better from being independent. If we can encourage that independence, particularly when it comes to housing, which goes to the very root of family life, personal life, security, health and fulfilment, then we will be doing a service that goes beyond the immediate needs of housing and takes account of the needs of people as a whole.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Minister of Housing and Construction): I move:

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

Motion carried.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN (Elizabeth): I rise to enter the debate this evening to make one or two points which I think are worth putting on the record. In particular, I would like to congratulate the Minister and the Federal Minister for the work that has gone into the creation of this new Housing Agreement. I would particularly like to congratulate all parties associated with the preparation and development of the policy which lies behind the idea of creating a Housing Agreement which will last for a 10-year period, because what we have had in the past, regrettably, although we have had Housing Agreements over a period of time, has been a situation where Governments of varying complexions have changed the amount of money available under these agreements, in some cases quite drastically, and of course the effect is what we see today, after seven years of Fraserism, probably the most disastrous housing shortage in this country since immediately after the Second World War. I think that is a rather dismal situation.

I want to say something about the agreement in a couple of moments. I support the agreement and I support the Bill. I want to make the point that I think it could have specified the need to decentralise housing more than has occurred in the past. I have noted that the agreement does not make reference to the specific need to cater for people who desire to obtain public housing in rural areas. I take the point of the member for Mallee, when he was referring to I think it was Lameroo, Pinaroo, or one of those towns in his electorate—it does not matter which it is for the purposes of the point. I believe that we could in fact, and I have made this point in the House on numerous occasions, obtain very cost efficient housing in certain country areas if we were to plan public housing developments in some country areas.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: Restore those old cottages in Burra, you said.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: On previous occasions I certainly pointed out the possibilities of restoring cottages in Burra. On a previous occasion I have also referred to the need to provide much more aged cottage stock in places such as Wallaroo, Kadina, Moonta, Victor Harbor and the like. I have made the point, and I am quite prepared to make it again, and I suppose it is against my electorate in some respects, but I am not afraid to say what I think about such things; I have found examples in the past where people who were seeking aged cottage accommodation, and of course we all know the waiting lists are quite horrendous for aged cottage accommodation, were in effect offered a choice by the Housing Trust of going, for example, to Elizabeth West from wherever they might live in the metropolitan area, or waiting another 18 months to two years until something became available closer to the so-called old metropolitan areas. I think that is an unfortunate choice, if it is a choice, that is offered to people.

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson: Remote from their friends.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Of course. If they are to be put in those circumstances, most of those people who have come into my office and raise these sorts of questions, when I have questioned them about whether they would have preferred to obtain aged accommodation at places such as Victor Harbor and Moonta, somewhere like that near the sea, they almost unanimously have said they would have preferred that. Even though it might have been further away from the friends the member for Coles refers to, nonetheless, they would have felt they were going to a place where there were a lot of support services for elderly people and the like.

I believe that is a matter the Government should pay more attention to. I cannot remember how many years ago now, but I am sure my friend the Minister was making similar points at the time, that there was a chronic shortage of aged cottage accommodation in the Elizabeth area at one time, and we have now reached the stage where there is enough to provide accommodation for aged people in the Elizabeth area, although they still have to wait the time, the same as everybody else. I think we are now getting to the stage where there is more accommodation possibly in the Elizabeth area than is needed for the local people and therefore we are, in effect, channelling people in from outside.

To just broaden that point for a moment, I also think that we should be using the public housing stock, if not to encourage people to live in country areas, at least to provide them with the option of doing so, because there is no doubt, on two grounds at least, that many people would be—and I know this is a judgement that I am making—better off if they were to live in smaller rural communities.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: It is losing its incentive because of the loss of transport.

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: That is true, but the first reason I want to refer to is the fact that there is no doubt that it is cheaper to live in country areas, and people who are living on the poverty line can find that they live at a better standard of living in country areas. The second reason is that in many country areas there are far better social support systems than are available in the metropolitan area at large. I am not saying that if you ferret around the place you will not find much better social support systems within the metropolitan area generally, but in terms of an individual relating to the services that are available, I have no doubt that pensioners, for example in Murray Bridge, all know where the local social security and community welfare office is. All know where the Meals on Wheels operates from, whereas in larger urban communities those facilities seem far more remote and are not so readily available. I think that is one point that I would have preferred to see referred to in the agreement, but I just simply make the point that

the agreement is not mutually exclusive of doing anything along those lines that I have been talking about. I just simply raise it, because I hope that the Minister and the Government, in due season, will take the opportunity of moving towards policies that enable people to live in rural areas in country towns if they want to.

Having said that and supported the point made by the member for Mallee, I want to deal with some of the incredible arguments put by the member for Coles, which really simply ran through an ideological perspective that she has to the whole question of public housing. There were two aspects she took in her ideological outlook. In the first place she believes, as a matter of faith, that people should, ought to, and should almost be forced to purchase homes. She wants a situation where people will be almost forced into some sort of ownership, home purchase, etc.

I can tell the honourable member that many people in my electorate have no intention or desire to own a house at any time in their lives. On the contrary: recently some people in my electorate have come to see me and have indicated that they would prefer to sell the house that they are well on the way to purchasing and move into Housing Trust accommodation. Unfortunately, they are unable to do that at present. Under the guidelines they must sell their houses and then obtain private accommodation for some years until they are able to qualify under the waiting list guidelines. Many people want to live in rented accommodation and they should be given the opportunity to do so.

The second incredible point of ideological debate that the member for Coles raised was this absurd proposition which seems to underline her whole philosophy on the problem of housing at the moment, namely, that the reason why we have this current housing crisis is because people are splitting up, that the divorce rate is somehow higher than would suit her, and that that is the basic reason why we have 32 000 people on the Housing Trust waiting list. Nothing could be further from the truth, of course. The fact of the matter is (and the statistics well show this) that had the Fraser Government provided adequate funding during its seven years of tyranny in this country there is no doubt that the present housing crisis would not have occurred. If one wants to pursue the reasons why there have been so many divorces, marriage break-ups, and the like, in recent times one has only to look at the economic mess that the Fraser Government caused which, inevitably, put enormous pressures on families and led to the situation of those families collapsing under the economic and other social pressures created by unemployment, and the like. That has been the root cause for the increased rate of family break-ups and divorces in the past three or four years, and is why an increased number of single people are seeking housing funded by the public purse.

But that does not in any way account for the fact that 32 000 people are on the South Australian Housing Trust waiting list. The reason for that is because the Federal Government has not provided enough funding over the last Housing Agreement periods to enable sufficient houses to be built. Because of the Fraser led recession, the private sector did not build enough houses in recent years. Further, we have many more people on the list in South Australia because the Housing Trust in this State as an organisation has been relatively humane and has had reasonably short waiting lists until recent times, and accordingly the people of this State have had a fair bit of faith in the Housing Trust to be able to house them. That is unlike the situation in other States, where people just throw up their hands in horror and realise that it is no use approaching the public housing authorities there because the waiting lists are of the order of eight or 10 years—and who wants to be on a waiting list for eight or 10 years? The reason why so many

people are on the Housing Trust waiting list in South Australia is simply because people have had some faith in our public housing institution and have been prepared to put their trust in that organisation. Accordingly, we do not have to the same extent the amount of hidden homelessness in this State that exists in other States.

There are a couple of things that we could be doing to reduce the Housing Trust waiting times, and I want to place these ideas on record. I have no doubt that there are some people on the Housing Trust waiting list who could afford to pay what might be described as private market rental for housing accommodation. I believe that the State Government would be well advised to borrow funds through the Loan Council to construct housing that could be rented at significantly higher rentals than the Trust normally charges people who have obtained Trust accommodation. I am thinking about rentals of the order of \$100 or \$110 a week.

There are people in my electorate who do not want to buy houses, who would be quite satisfied to rent houses for the rest of their lifetime, and who would be more than happy to rent from the Housing Trust at that sort of level simply because they believe that with the Housing Trust they would have a secure lease which would last for their lifetime, a landlord who would do the right thing by them in the way of undertaking appropriate and necessary maintenance and ensure that they could live in their houses comfortably over a period of time without being caused any worry, fear or concern, and that they would be able to move into aged cottage accommodation when it suits them later in life. People in those circumstances could be drawn off the Housing Trust waiting list and placed in accommodation attracting private market rentals. I think that is one thing worth looking at. Maybe that is the sort of scheme that could be undertaken in conjunction with local government and/or other authorities.

I want to conclude my brief remarks this evening by saying that I hope that under this Housing Agreement, which will last for 10 years, we will see in South Australia a return to the situation where the Housing Trust waiting list is something like 12 or 18 months. I am confident that under this scheme we will be able to achieve that. I am hopeful that it will occur, but it means that the situation ought to be very carefully monitored by the Government, because the situation at the moment is a total and utter disgrace. There is no getting away from the fact (and every member of this House should be ashamed of it) that we are governing this State in which exists a situation where individuals are having to double up, are having to sleep in caravans, under bridges—in shocking conditions. In this wealthy State that should not be allowed to happen.

These days we are not spending as much money per capita on public housing as was the case in the early 1950s. The Government needs to monitor the situation very carefully. If we are unable to make progress on the housing waiting lists under the new scheme, it will need to be revised in the next year or so to ensure that we are able to make effective progress to reduce that waiting list very dramatically so that we can get away from the situation where, when people come into our offices in desperate housing need, we are simply not able to meet those needs unless those people are in absolutely and utterly desperate circumstances. About the only instance when one can get someone housed fairly quickly these days is if they come and camp on your doorstep with seven or eight children. In those circumstances the Housing Trust sometimes is able to assist at short notice. By and large, the emergency housing scheme does not operate nearly as effectively as it did when the Housing Trust lists were very much shorter.

I have spoken for long enough in this debate. Again, I congratulate both Ministers on bringing this agreement to

fruition. It is a giant leap forward in housing policy in this country and I think that in 10 years time the two South Australian Ministers (State and Federal) will be able to look back with considerable pride on the achievement and the landmark that this represents.

I think that it will lead to a resolution of the disastrous situation that has been allowed to develop over the Fraser years. Given proper and effective monitoring and a tremendous effort to ensure that house costs are kept down, and if we keep building a large number of units, we will be able to make progress on the quite disastrous situation that this Government inherited. I do not blame the Tonkin Government for it, I might say. It was quite clearly a result of Fraser's policy of cutting back on the amount of housing moneys available for public housing in this regard.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Are you going to keep Hawke honest in the future?

The Hon. PETER DUNCAN: Sir, there would be no need to keep—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Minister of Housing and Construction): First, I thank all members who took part in the debate. I think that all the speeches were of a very high standard. Although certain members who spoke perhaps pursued their line of philosophy, with which I cannot reconcile myself, that is what this Parliament is all about. We speak as we feel about a particular Bill, and that reflected their points of view.

I will be very brief in responding to the very many comments that were made during the debate, but I think one thing needs to be said: the member for Light (who was very honest and, as he said, cynical) thought that if the Federal Government was to be returned in the coming election the Treasury could say that, despite the agreement that we have before us now for a three year static level of funding, that it would not be continued. The honourable member made the point that that was his view. Perhaps he has been in politics longer than I have and is a little more cynical than I. However, I would like to think that if a Federal Minister says to all the State Ministers, 'This is the funding programme that you have for the next three years,' I tend to believe him, bearing in mind the back-ups that we have got in the agreement. The reason for the base funding and the three year commitment is to provide a basis for planning.

Many things have been said in this place over the past five or six weeks about this Government's role in public sector housing and about whether we can avoid a boom/bust situation. The member for Mitcham believes that whatever follows a boom must be a bust. He gave us records going back over the years for this State. The whole idea of this three year level of funding and three year commitment involves an honest attempt by both State and Federal Governments, the industry and (surprisingly for members opposite) the unions concerned, because they say, 'What is the point of drawing your \$600 when the boom times are here and, because of high rates of pay, you may contribute to a bust situation?'

I have received in my office some very reassuring reports that the trade union movement recognises that. I would like to see the trade union movement getting together with some of those building associations, in particular, the Housing Industry Association, which has been very vocal recently in saying that because the Building Workers Industrial Union and others are causing prices of land to skyrocket, it forces young people out of the housing market. There is a move within the State and the country to avoid that boom/bust situation that has been with us for all the year. It is not necessarily the case that it has to be continued. We have

the Indicative Planning Council and our own Urban Development Consultative Council (convened by my colleague, the Minister for Environment and Planning) which are putting forward a programme to the State and Federal Governments. That is why we had this base funding and a three year commitment.

I think that the member for Mitcham said we would be fast running out of money. The whole concept of the agreement is that each year Ministers will meet and look at the housing programme and analyse where we are all going to see whether it is necessary to top up the programme. Even during the Fraser years, when there was a base level funding of \$200 million per year, a part was built into the agreement that would provide for top-up.

I am convinced (along with my Ministerial colleagues in Victoria and New South Wales) that, as a result of those yearly meetings, when we analyse where we have gone over the past year, that top-up programme will be there to give further funding to the States to avoid a boom/bust situation.

It is very important: everyone should understand that. We are dealing with an agreement that gives guaranteed funding of \$500 million per year over the next three years. This State, in particular, has pushed for a three year rolling programme. Not only do we provide for an analysis and then a top-up, but also we are continuing to go for a three year rolling programme, which will avoid the boom/bust situation.

I am not saying that there would not be circumstances in either this State or another in which there was a slight shortfall, but it is very pleasing to me that our own projected public sector (and this involves commencements, completions and acquisitions) and the private sector have reached agreement that there should be between 10 500 and 11 000 commencements per year. We are all working together to achieve that aim. If we can still work together to achieve that aim—not to say that this Government has built more houses than any other Government over the past 10 years or not that this private sector is doing better than any other area—we can try to provide accommodation for those people who want to purchase their own homes and for those who need to go into public sector housing.

That point should be made: there is a move towards conciliation with all sections of the industry. I hope that that will continue not only this year and not only if there is a change of Government: the ground rules have been set. As I said in my second reading explanation, 'This is a framework for the next decade.' If all people understand that, despite the nitpicking that has gone on in relation to certain aspects of the agreement, they will realise that this is a framework which sets the guidelines for the next 10 years.

I would like to think that, whether or not I am in this Parliament in the next 10 years, in 1994 perhaps people can look back and say that what we have renegotiated over the past 18 months has been achieved. If it has been achieved, it is a credit not only to this State Government and to the Federal Government but to all the Governments in Australia and all the interest groups—the community groups and the private sector—that put submissions to the Federal Minister, because that is what this negotiation has been all about.

The member for Light made the point that when the Prime Minister came to Adelaide he paid a tribute to the Housing Industry Association. He said, 'All sections got together and set about rejuvenating the building industry.' The rejuvenation has definitely taken place beyond all our wildest dreams.

Despite what the member for Mallee has said about the Government's responsibility in regard to those people who turn up at our electorate offices and say, 'Supply me with a house because I feel that I should enjoy the wealth of this

nation and I want my share,' I hold dear a philosophy that perhaps unfortunately does not play an active part in today's national life: we are all our brother's keeper. We all have a responsibility to provide decent affordable housing for those people who, through no fault of their own, cannot purchase their own home. That is what the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is all about. Recital (D) of the Schedule clearly sets out the agreement of all the States, despite their political differences and their different political philosophies.

They were the people who set out the objectives of this agreement and who have said that we all have a moral obligation to provide decent affordable housing for those people who, through no fault of their own, cannot provide it themselves. We are also providing incentives for those people who want to get into home purchase, and I am pleased to say, as I said in my second reading explanation, that most of the incentives in this agreement are based on what is happening in South Australia at present, and I think that that is a great tribute to South Australia, not to this South Australian Government but to South Australia.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—'Interpretation.'

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I notice that clause 2 states:

'the Agreement' means an agreement between the Commonwealth, the States and the Northern Territory in the form, or substantially in the form, set out in the Schedule to this Act.

It is the words 'or substantially' about which I want specific information. Fairly obviously there is the possibility that, after the three year evaluation and indeed subsequent to consultation by the Federal Minister and State Ministers, some variation can be made to the provisions. I would like to know whether the words 'or substantially' can be affected by veto by either the Federal Minister or any of the State Ministers.

I believe that the initiation is probably in the hands of the Federal Minister, but I would like to know whether, in the event that collectively State Ministers decided that they wanted to see change and they were at variance with the Federal Minister, the Federal Minister would be able to veto what the six States plus the Territory wanted to incorporate by way of change but substantially in the form of the existing document. Further, the Minister may be able to indicate whether in discussions at a conference of Ministers responsible for housing there is required to be unanimous approval of any contemplated change or whether it is a simple majority or two-thirds of all that may vote. What is the power associated with this change that can be affected within the terms of the Bill we are discussing and the Schedule?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The terminology in clause 2 has been in all Commonwealth-State Housing Agreements to my knowledge. I have just checked with my officer, and he assures me that this is the case. The member for Mallee made a point in his contribution when dealing with the rather lengthy schedule—in effect setting out to take in all areas that money in relation to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement legislation should possibly cover. There were areas where we were breaking new ground, and perhaps the example I will give the member for Light might explain part of his question. I refer to local government and community housing, where a certain section dealt with it, where different States had different views, not on how that money should be spent or whether it was sufficient but an interpretation of how that clause would affect programmes in their own States.

I think that the consensus at the Ministers' meeting (and perhaps the Hon. Murray Hill would agree with me) was that the whole idea of housing, the different forms of housing,

the different ways that housing can be used and the different objectives in relation to the way in which this money should be spent on housing had to be a fairly broad ranging document. The words 'in the form, or substantially in the form' are to cover those States that perhaps might see something that would be relevant to their State but not relevant to other States of the Commonwealth and they would be able to act on that. Usually the States do it by communicating with the Federal Minister and agreement is usually forthcoming. So, it is not a question of consensus, majority rule, majority vote or a power of veto: it is the way in which the individual States would perceive that particular Schedule and work within it for the benefit of their own State.

Clause passed.

Clause 3 passed.

Clause 4—'Loans made under the Agreement.'

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Clause 4(1) states:

Subject to the Agreement, any loan or grant made by the Treasurer in pursuance of the Agreement shall be made upon terms and conditions determined by the Treasurer and approved by the Minister.

What criteria has the Treasurer laid down in relation to the terms and conditions? Is it a blanket approval? Is it an approval that is required to be made on each individual project, or just how is this duplication of authority to be exercised? I fully appreciate that the Treasurer is involved because of the size of the sum and the manner in which it is made available to a State by way of agreement. However, it would appear that, unless there are some well defined criteria, it will become a fairly laborious activity waiting on the Treasurer on every occasion to get his approval so that the Minister can say that he agreed with the opinion of the Treasurer. What is the fundamental mechanism to be undertaken in relation to this subclause?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Apart from the agreement with the Treasurer, the decision that he makes relates to the handling of the funds that go to the State Bank or the South Australian Housing Trust over the period of a financial year. It is, in effect, under the building programme and all programmes that I administer as Minister of Housing and Construction, whether it directly involve the Housing Trust or any other bodies listed in the agreement concerning the provision of relief. I administer the Act and the Treasurer makes the funds available to me or, in the case of the Housing Trust, direct to the Trust. That is what that provision means. Under the actual agreement, Commonwealth money is allocated via the Federal Treasurer to the State Treasurer.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I do not want to labour the point, but I imagine there would be some in-house criteria laid down by way of terms of reference or details of that nature. I would appreciate in due course (I realise it would not be before the passage of this measure) some indication from the Minister as to the criteria and as to when he expects them to be implemented from the brief that exists between the Treasurer and himself.

The Hon. T. H. HEMMINGS: I can add nothing more except to say that, in the case of a particular housing programme that I approve as Minister, I seek funding from the Treasurer, and that money will be made available. It is then available upon the terms and conditions determined by the Treasurer and approved by the Minister. Does the member for Light see some hidden criteria in that? I make an approach to the Treasurer, usually by way of a Cabinet submission, stating that I need a certain allocation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money and not State money. The terms and conditions laid down by the Treasurer would involve normal book-keeping. What I am asking for is quite in order—I am not asking too much. I clearly state the reasons why that funding is necessary and

give a detailed programme of how that money will be spent, the details being provided to me by the body seeking Commonwealth-State housing money from the Government. They are the terms and conditions, and are a protection for the Federal Government against the States abusing their responsibility in using that funding provided for housing and to ensure that, in fact, it goes to housing.

Clause passed.

Schedules.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I notice that in relation to clause 9 under 'Financial Assistance' the sum of money allocated is \$50 million more than that indicated in the Minister's second reading explanation. The fact has been referred to several times that for the first year the amount is \$530 million and \$510 million in each of the subsequent two years, and therefore the total that we are guaranteed for the first three years is \$1 550 million. I point out that, in fact, additional funds have been made available by the Commonwealth this year under various other programmes which have been superimposed.

Will the Minister indicate whether the additional sum made available this year (we are not talking about this State alone but the Commonwealth disposition) involving \$623 million has any bearing on the \$530 million guaranteed? Granted there have been special reasons for that addition, and the money has been allocated to certain programmes. I am not averse to that course of action. What guarantee does the Minister have that, in fact, the Commonwealth will make available in 1985-86 and in 1987-88 a greater total than the \$510 million allocated for each of these years: in other words, that for the next two succeeding financial years the total sum available for all the programmes embraced by this agreement will be the maximum of \$510 million and not \$623 million plus a factor to cover inflation and any other initiatives which might be introduced or suggested by the Commonwealth?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: To state here and now that I could guarantee that there would be an increase over the \$623 million, which is the total figure allocated to all States this year, that is, \$123 million—

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: It would be \$100 million less, because its \$530 million this year.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: If the member for Light is asking whether I can guarantee that the figure for 1985-86 or 1986-87 will be significantly higher, taking inflation into account, I cannot. The honourable member has been in politics for as long as I have. I am not necessarily being facetious, but there could even be a change of Government on 1 December, so I cannot tell the Committee that there will be a significant increase. In the spirit of the renegotiation when we dealt with these aspects, as I stated in my second reading explanation:

Ministers will continue to meet annually and assess Australia's housing needs and the housing programme's performance, which will be published as a part of the annual housing statement, including the annual housing budget showing where the benefits of housing flow, who benefits and what the costs are.

There has been a commitment from the Federal Minister that, with the \$500 million base level funding for the next two financial years, there will be a top-up programme reflecting the additional housing needs as established by the States through the Ministers' conference. There has also been a commitment from the Federal Government that, whereas in line with what the States put forward on the renegotiations there was a claim for \$750 million, it could not meet that figure, but it would give us a three-year funding programme, which I have explained.

However, there is also a commitment that if the States can produce evidence, and the Federal Government itself is carrying out an analysis throughout this financial year,

there will be an increase. If the member for Light is asking me to guarantee that there will be an increase, I just cannot do that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The point has been well made that the Minister, who has been publicly proclaiming all manner of benefits to come in future from the Federal Government, is unable to speak for it. Therefore, we cannot accept that the Federal Government, if it remains of the same persuasion, will necessarily fulfil its obligations beyond its \$510 million commitment. There have been many other examples of where it has made promises it has not kept. So, we are no better off than the \$510 million, although the Minister, and certainly members on this side, would welcome the better scenario that he has painted. However, there is no guarantee, which is the important point to be recognised.

Under Part XI 'Specific Housing Assistance', clause 35 states:

The Minister may, in writing under his hand authorise, subject to guidelines made consistently with this agreement and agreed between the Minister and State Minister relating to the following programmes including guidelines as to the provision of any funds by the State in relation to each programme, grants to the State for expenditure on—

This has a series of subclauses as follows:

- (i) rental housing assistance for pensioners;
- (ii) rental housing assistance for Aborigines;
- (iii) mortgage and rent relief;
- (iv) crisis accommodation;
- (v) local government and community housing;

There can be no argument or question about those five initiatives, but subclause (vi) states:

- (vi) any other programmes determined by the Minister following consultation with the States.

What is the Minister's interpretation or knowledge relating to the insertion of that particular subclause into this new agreement? I am led to believe it is not a feature of previous agreements. It could be suggested that the Federal Ministry could determine a priority for some housing initiative which is in advance of a priority that a State might wish to give that initiative. It could mean that there is to be a directive that part of the funds made available will be expended in a new project area. I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that although there is provision for the Minister to consult with the States, there is no clear indication that following that consultation the Federal Minister will necessarily accept the advice given by the States.

The Minister has already indicated that there is no such thing as a veto property associated with the agreement: we established that earlier on. I would like to believe that the Federal Ministry will be so attuned to the requirements of the individual States or of the housing industry that there will be no intrusion by the Commonwealth. However, we experienced an intrusion from the Federal scene into State affairs, as the Minister will recall, when public statements were made by Mr Uren in this State in respect of the western suburbs about 15 months ago. The whip hand appears to be very firmly with the Commonwealth in relation to this new provision. Therefore, I would like a full exposition of the reason for the inclusion of this new subclause, and its likely consequences as seen by the Minister and his State colleagues when this agreement was thrashed out.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I do not share the member for Light's fear—

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: The member for Light's cynicism.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I would not say cynicism in this case: I would say fear.

The Hon. B.C. Eastick: Fear of the unknown.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: Fear of the unknown, yes—fear that a Federal Minister, following consultation with the States, would suddenly foist a particular programme on to them that they would be forced to carry out. It was

a very important part of the agreement. South Australia fully supported the inclusion of subclause (vi) because we had dealt with all the other relevant subclauses, the ones which have been in train and which have been added to over the years. Subclause (vi) is to cover any additional new programmes that will be of benefit to the community. An idea might not come from the Federal Minister; it could come from the South Australian Minister, who would put it to the Federal Minister, who would, in turn, put it to all of the States. By this method new initiatives would be developed over time.

A national working party has been set up within the agreement to look at problems of the private rental market. The member for Mitcham canvassed that matter at length in his speech. It is quite possible that builders would need to be given incentives such as tax incentives to move more into the private rental market. Perhaps untied grants could be given to those people prepared to build private rental accommodation. It is more likely that the member for Light would have \$400 000 to invest than I would have: I am still paying off my mortgage. One only has to read the pecuniary interests register to see how much I have—I am in the lower 2 per cent of the Parliament—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: I always like to let the House know my true financial situation. These grants to cover new incentives would be in the form of untied grants, so they would not be a burden on the individual States. South Australia supported this subclause quite strongly.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: There is a fear in relation to this matter because of problems we have witnessed in the past in relation to intrusions by Ministers of the present Federal Government, and of previous Federal Governments of the same political persuasion. Indeed, I referred earlier this afternoon to the Prime Minister's comments at the opening of the 19th convention of the Housing Industries Association, and it is interesting to note that the Prime Minister said:

There must be an ongoing process of consultation and discussion between all parties involved in the housing industry. Only if we continue to work together can we expect to consolidate these achievements.

They are very interesting words, but the position does exist—we have a new brand of water I see; it has bubbles in it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That has nothing to do with the Bill.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The position is that consultation has quite frequently taken place, as the Minister would agree. The consultation has created a public appearance of unanimity of opinion about a particular matter, but the end result has been in line with a decision of the Ministry in another place and has not always been directly in line with the consultation.

It is on that basis that I raised the question which I did. The Minister has given me an adequate explanation of his part in the acceptance of para (vi) into clause 35, but let it be on the record that we have previously experienced some transgressions and that we would not want there to be a similar transgression in the future. We will have plenty to say about it if it comes to our attention.

The last question I would like to ask of the honourable Minister relates to the second schedule on page 13 of the Bill as presented and it has to do with the cost rent formula. It sets out a series of factors which will be considered in relation to the determination of a rental formula from this point on. The Minister made reference in his second reading explanation to the fact that the State of South Australia accepted this formula, but it was not particularly happy with it, nor did it necessarily believe that it was in the best interests of South Australia or of people who were supplied

with housing by the State Government. Can the Minister explain to the House what are the features of the cost rental formula as presented in the second schedule, which is at variance with what this State Government would want to see apply in the future? Could he also indicate what action he has taken as Minister to put this particular item on the agenda of the next Housing Ministers Conference, or indeed to bring forward a paper arguing for the changes that he believes are necessary for the annual evaluation which he has already indicated will be undertaken in due course, I would believe, from reading the document, on or before 15 October 1985?

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: The history of rent setting as a result of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is fairly well known. Even whilst I mention it, I am not in any way trying to educate the member for Light. The previous Federal Government insisted that rents within the public sector should reflect market rentals. I think that, with the exception of Queensland, it was the view of most States that this was considered to be iniquitous, completely unfair and completely unworkable. In fact, most States just pay lip service to it. I think it was in the last Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement negotiation that the Federal Government at that time realised it was under pressure, but it was not prepared to change the system and inserted in the clause 'work towards market rent'.

As a result of the change of Federal Government and the change in the majority of States to Labor Governments, it was then decided to abolish market rents. Two propositions were put forward. One was cost rents, which was advocated by the State of Victoria, and one was equity rents, which was advocated by the State of South Australia. I make the point that cost rents are a lot cheaper than the old rent setting system, but South Australia maintains that there is a certain amount of unfairness if we use the cost rent formula. A paper has been prepared by South Australia and was presented at the Commonwealth-State Housing Ministers Conference. My officers argued strongly for it at their sessions, and I argued strongly for it at the Ministers meeting. The agreement was that the cost rent formula should be adopted. It would be reviewed, and South Australia will have it on the next agenda at our conference next year. If the member for Light wishes to have a briefing at any time, I would gladly make that time available for one of my officers to explain the South Australian case for equity rent setting.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I will certainly take up that offer. I notice that the Minister has some additional information that he might like to impart at this particular time. I would like to have his assurance that, notwithstanding the differences that he sees between the rest of the States of Australia and Queensland, Queensland is still able to continue with its form of rent control or rent charging.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: They have brought in the cost rental formula now.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: But it is the delivery of the cost rent formula and the manner in which they require, for example, that people in their State have to regularly outline the income which is coming into the house. The rental in Queensland is based on the total income to that property, whereas that does not apply in the other States. As to whether it is a method which would be acceptable in other States is not something which we are canvassing at the present time, but notwithstanding the different approach that Queensland has taken in regard to these issues I am led to believe that in actual fact they are permitted under the terms of the agreement and, therefore, any of the other States would be permitted to follow the course of action that Queensland follows if the evidence which Queensland is able to provide was assessed and agreed by any one of

the States as being a reasonable method of approach for the future.

Schedules and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

COUNTRY FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 5)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 October. Page 1267.)

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Murray): The Opposition opposes this Bill, and during the course of this debate I will explain in detail the reason for that. The Opposition also opposed strongly the legislation that was debated in this House in April of this year. As a result of a compromise reached in the Upper House a suspension provision was included in that legislation, and of course the time for that runs out on 1 November, which is why the present legislation is before the House. I do not want to go into a lot of detail about what happened in April, but I think it is beneficial to refer to a couple of matters.

The debate at that time on the issue of the repealing of section 56 (1) (a) was very emotive. Claims were made by the Government and by the Minister that, if the legislation failed, we would see uncontrolled expansion of industrial and shopping centres in residential areas and towns. We were told that it was likely that we would see three-storey brick monstrosities being built in the hills face zone. We were told that corner shops in residential areas were likely to be developed into major supermarkets. All in all, a considerable amount of what was referred to by a number of people as scaremongering occurred. In fact, I believed, and this was pointed out at the time, that many of the comments made by the Government were quite misleading. We were told that we were about to experience a crisis as far as vegetation was concerned in relation to the control of vegetation clearance in South Australia. We were told that if the Full Court made a decision that did not back up the regulations that favoured Dorrestijn we could see a situation that resulted in wholesale clearance of native vegetation in South Australia.

I do not want to repeat everything that was said in that debate, but I want to put on record again the fact that the Opposition then and now does not want to see that happen. There is no way that we would stand by and allow it to happen. There was not at that time, and there is not now a situation that could be referred to as being critical as far as urban development is concerned, and specifically in regard to native vegetation. I would suggest that, if the Government considers that there is a real problem regarding vegetation clearance, as I suggested previously, I believe that the most appropriate action for the Government to take would be, first, to define very clearly in legislation the way that we should handle vegetation clearance and, secondly, if the Government is not happy with the operation of section 56 (1) (a) the extension of existing use that can occur should be clearly defined in legislation rather than totally repealing section 56 (1) (a). That opinion was indicated at the time of the previous debate and the Opposition reaffirms its position on that matter. The repeal of section 56 (1) (a) would have serious effects and would make considerable

inroads to existing use rights which exist under planning legislation in every other State in Australia. That point was continually made during the previous debate and as far as I am aware that situation still pertains in regard to legislation in other States.

As I have said, the debate previously became very emotional. Correspondence from various people was flying in all directions. Some indicated that if legislation were not repealed a crisis situation would develop. Other correspondents urged us not to support the legislation or the repeal of section 56 (1) (a). Conservation bodies were particularly concerned, principally with the clearance of vegetation matter and the issues surrounding that. In fact the matter of existing use rights in urban development in relation to building development almost became a non-issue towards the latter stage of the debate. I do not want to go into details of what happened when the legislation was debated in another place. But we are aware that, as the legislation came into Committee, meetings were going on in back rooms; secret meetings were taking place between members of the Government, Ministers and the Australian Democrats. An offer by the Opposition to have discussions on a tripartite basis was refused. The situation with that legislation became very heated. Finally, a compromise was reached and the provision to suspend the operation of section 56 (1) (a) was introduced to apply until 1 November 1984.

The Government made an undertaking that the suspension provision would be proclaimed only if the Supreme Court confirmed the previous court judgments. Since then of course we have seen in May this year the Supreme Court overturn the previous judgment of the lower court, and then in August of this year we saw the matter go before the Australian High Court, where the matter is currently being considered on appeal, and that judgment is now pending. I can understand why the Minister is concerned. Obviously for practical reasons the matter will not be cleared up by 1 November. I doubt whether it will be cleared up for some time, because of the activities that surround a prominent person who has an important part to play in that judgment.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: Do you think that Justice Murphy will be under pressure for some time?

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I doubt very much whether Justice Murphy will be considering this matter with the other problems that he is experiencing at present. I think it will be a fair while before a decision is handed down from the High Court. Certainly, it would not be practical to expect anything to happen before 1 November. Other things have happened since the previous debate as well. During the debate in April the Liberal Party made very clear its policy regarding vegetation clearance. That policy is very clear, fair and sensible. We recognise the need to preserve remaining vegetation as much as possible for the benefit of present and future generations. We also recognise that it is far less expensive to conserve native vegetation than it is to revegetate an area. We believe, however, that if society makes a judgment that land bought for a specific development purpose cannot be cleared, the landowner involved should be duly compensated for his losses.

We are also aware of the immense problems that have been, and are still being, experienced by land owners—people who are totally frustrated as a result of lengthy delays regarding applications put before the Department relating to clearance proposals. Time and time again we have had the opportunity in this place to refer to some of those problem areas. I know that individual members from this side—I do not know about members from the Government benches—have had the opportunity to go before the Minister to indicate our concern and to seek information relating to specific applications that are being held up.

It seems that the Minister and the Government are not prepared to accept that considerable problems are being caused and considerable frustrations experienced by land owners as a result of the vegetation clearance regulations. I guess that we could have sat back and continued to criticise the Government for its handling of this matter. For example, I refer to the Government's dogmatic attitude towards compensation. Time and time again the Government has indicated that it refused seriously to consider compensation. A number of calls have come from this place and from outside organisations, such as the United Farmer's and Stockowners and so on, requesting the Government to consider compensation. So, one could go on about the problems that have arisen. I guess that some of my colleagues may wish during this debate to refer to some of those problems.

However, we did not sit back; we did not just say that we were quite happy to criticise, because we had a strong policy. That policy, which is supported by many people in the community, is a positive remedy to the situation that is now causing so many problems, particularly in rural areas. As I said, if the Minister is not aware of those problems now, he never will be. The Liberal Party believes that responsibility for vegetation clearance controls should be removed from the regulations under the Planning Act and that it should stand by itself as a separate piece of legislation. We believe that it is important enough for that to happen. It is not just a matter that relates to planning regulations or development. Many organisations and individuals are vitally involved and interested in this issue. We also saw the necessity to bring the subject under one Act rather than have it referred to in 20 different pieces of legislation, as is currently the case. The Minister would be aware, as I was while I handled that portfolio, of the reference made in so many pieces of legislation to vegetation clearance.

So, what has the Opposition done? What has the Liberal Party done about this policy? In another place we introduced a private member's Bill that can be easily understood and interpreted. We are sure that that legislation will go a long way towards alleviating many problems that have arisen, particularly as they relate to the ill feeling that has been developing between land owners, environmentalists and local and State Government authorities. It is vitally important that officers of the Departments of Environment and Planning, Agriculture and Lands, the farming community and genuine conservationists work together. That is not happening at present, and it has not happened since the vegetation clearance regulations were introduced by this Government.

The principal aims of this Bill in another place are to recognise the right of land owners to compensate in cases where their property rights are unfairly eroded and to establish improved mechanisms for processing applications for the clearance of native vegetation. The clauses of the Bill which will provide for implementation of our policy on this subject are, briefly, that an application for clearance of native vegetation will, in the first instance, be forwarded to an advisory committee to be known as the Native Vegetation Advisory Committee. The committee shall consist of six members appointed by the Governor, of whom one shall be a person nominated by the Minister for Environment; one shall be a person nominated by the Minister of Lands; and one shall be an officer of the Soils Division of the Department of Agriculture, nominated by the Minister of Agriculture. That takes into account those three major departments. Also, one member shall be nominated by United Farmers and Stockowners of South Australia Incorporated; and one shall be a person nominated by the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia. In recognising those two organisations, of course, we recognise that the United Farmers and Stockowners has a very broad interest in regard to the welfare of land owners in this State and that it has

been considerably involved in the vegetation clearance regulations that have been brought down.

In respect of the person nominated by the Nature Conservation Society, we recognise that society as being one of the first and better known conservation societies. Further, we recognise the work that it has done and is continuing to do in regard to native vegetation in this State particularly.

As to the person to be nominated by the Local Government Association, we recognise the involvement of local government in determining applications. When the committee receives an application it will forward a copy to the Soils Division of the Department of Agriculture and to the Department of Environment and Planning. Both will prepare reports relating to the suitability of the clearance application, and then return the same to the committee. Before the committee makes an assessment of the application, an opportunity will be provided for the applicant to make representations to the committee. In other words, the applicant can either be called in or can arrange to come forward and make a submission to the committee, either in a written or verbal form. The committee will then determine how much vegetation the applicant will be required to preserve from clearance of the land to be developed in each separate location. When the committee determines that less than 10 per cent of the arable land under application should be retained, the Chairman of the committee will advise the applicant directly.

On the other hand, should the committee determine that more than 10 per cent of the arable land under application be retained, a report and recommendation will be forwarded by the Chairman of the committee to the responsible Minister for determination. In the event that the Minister should support the recommendation of the committee that more than 10 per cent of that arable land under application be retained, the applicant will be subject to compensation and a heritage agreement drawn up to cover the area of land that is subject to compensation.

Alternatively, that area (with the concurrence of the Minister) could be acquired by the Government. The compensable area could, if requested, be fenced at Government expense. Compensation, acquisition and fencing will only apply to land that is deemed by the Soils Division of the Department of Agriculture to be suitable for agricultural development. That is clear enough. We go further than that. Once a final determination has been made by the committee—unlike the present regulations in regard to the actual area to be retained—the opportunity will be provided for the applicant to appeal to the Land and Valuation Tribunal.

An honourable member: All in all, it is an embracing Bill that covers everybody's interests.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: It is. As I said before, it brings all those interest groups together and, whether or not the Minister is prepared to admit it, at present a considerable number of people and different organisations are unhappy about the regulations. It is important that the community, the departments involved and particularly the land owners are brought together around a table to discuss a number of these issues. That is exactly what this legislation does. That Bill is currently before Parliament, and I suggest that, if the Government is really serious about the difficulties that it might face as a result of the decision being handed down by the High Court, it has a very simple solution—and this is the reason why we are opposing this legislation—that is, to support the Bill to which I have referred.

It is as simple as that. I repeat: I do not believe that the existing use provision relating to urban development is a problem. We have said that all along and nothing has changed to suggest that it is the problem that the—

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: We won the case.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: That is all very well, but when one looks back over what the Minister had to say during that debate and the scare tactics that were used—

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood: You won the case.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: But you won in here, too, because you had the numbers, but that didn't make it right.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: And, if the Government is really concerned about native vegetation clearance, it has a very easy solution, and that is to support the Bill, which provides a sensible and very fair response to the problems of controlling the clearance of native vegetation in this State. As I said before, in this Bill we seek to bring together all interested parties in this matter in avoiding the antagonism and ill feeling that has been evident with the Government's application of the current regulations. The Bill has strong support in the community.

The Government has had plenty of opportunity to consider that legislation, which was introduced in August and which has been sitting on the table for plenty of time. I would hope that, rather than the Minister continuing to press with the legislation, the Government recognises its importance. On this side of the House we certainly oppose the Bill and urge the Government, if it is really serious about the matter of vegetation clearance, to accept and support what is a genuine attempt on the part of the Opposition to alleviate many problems which we are presently experiencing and which we will have in the future relating to vegetation clearance in this State. The Opposition opposes the Bill and urges the Government to support the Bill that is before the Parliament in another place.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): For a long time, indeed too long, Parties in Opposition in this place have been branded with opposing legislation that has been presented by the Government for the sake of doing so. It is true that in the community at large Oppositions wear that brand sometimes fairly and sometimes quite unfairly. I think that our opposition to the Government's Bill that is before the House on this occasion is fairly justified, and the member for Murray, our Party's shadow Minister for Environment and Planning, has outlined the alternative measure, which is in the form of a Bill that is currently before Parliament and which we hope the Government will consider. I say 'alternative' just in case the Minister might suggest that it is an ultimatum as far as our Party is concerned. Clearly, our Bill picks up all the sensitive and responsible elements by way of objectives that the Government sought to incorporate in its own legislation initially; the only real difference between them and us in this instance is that we have a clause in our legislation that caters for compensation where landowners are denied access to their own land in the cause of protecting the natural vegetation about which the Bill concerns itself.

The member for Murray has explained to this House the content of the Liberal Party's Bill tabled on his behalf in the Legislative Council by the Hon. Martin Cameron in August this year, and I do not believe that it is necessary to recanvass the objectives of that Bill. However, I do believe that some attention needs to be drawn to that difference between the Labor Party and the Liberal Party on this subject, the difference being the right of a land owner to claim some compensation for losses incurred as a result of a Government setting out to retain certain of his land in its natural state for the purposes of future community use and enjoyment, and in so doing denying that land owner the development of his or her own land for the purposes of production. Whether it be primary production, secondary industry activities or both is irrelevant.

Under the present regulations or at least under the administration thereof, primary producers in particular are being

denied access to the development of land that is clearly suitable for the purposes for which they are engaged—primary production—and in that context it is our view that those land holders should be compensated. The subject is not new, nor has it just come upon us, the legislation having been introduced in this House by the current Minister in April this year. In fact, some 13 years ago sections of the community in South Australia were approached by the then Environment Department with a view to having portions of their communities preserved—at least those parts that were considered to have native vegetation desirable for preservation in the interests of the State overall.

I was a member of the District Council of Kingscote in 1971, when such an approach was made to that community by the then Department of Environment and indeed by the Minister himself in an effort to sensitise those people to the needs for greater retention of their native vegetation. The subject was considered responsibly and reasonably by those councillors of the day and the community at large, and some concern was expressed even in those days about the possibility of the land being acquired and/or required to be retained in its native state, and in turn the subject of compensation was raised.

I place on the record of this House the contents of correspondence that was directed to the Hon. G.R. Broomhill, the then Minister for Conservation, by the District Council of Kingscote on behalf of that community, which states:

My council is concerned that the proposed planning regulations for this island might impose a restriction on the clearing of land with the consequent restriction of potential income for the land owner. If such is the case, then in the interests of the ratepayers, my council would like to be assured that adequate compensation for this loss would be paid to the land holder. Your confirmation would set the minds of my members at rest.

The signatory is the District Clerk, Ian Hall. In response to that letter, correspondence from the Minister, dated 4 October 1971 was received by the District Clerk of the District Council of Kingscote. It was as follows:

Dear Mr Hall,

I refer again to your letter of 23 August 1971 regarding the restriction that will be placed on the clearing of land under the proposed planning regulations for Kangaroo Island. I have discussed this matter with the Director of Planning, who has informed me that, under section 69 of the Planning and Development Act, any person having an interest in land which suffers damage as a result of a decision under planning regulations to preserve trees shall be entitled to receive compensation from the State Planning Authority.

The environment protection planning regulations now under consideration for Kangaroo Island envisage the amount of compensation as being the difference between:

- (a) the value of the interest in the land at the date of the claim for compensation with consent granted unconditionally; and
- (b) the value of the interest in the land at that date with consent refused, or with consent granted subject to conditions whether by way of decision of the Authority or of a decision on appeal under the provisions of the Act.

This information should provide the assurance sought by your council which will very shortly be consulted on the draft planning regulations which were foreshadowed during my visit to Kangaroo Island earlier in the year.

Quite clearly, 13 years ago in 1971, concern existed that the Government of the day might seek to preserve native vegetation on private land and, accordingly, the landholders were concerned that, where that proposal was exercised, they may be entitled to compensation. Quite clearly also, the Minister of the day, in a quite unqualified way, declared on behalf of his Government that compensation would be paid to such landholders.

Indeed, as I have read from the correspondence copy made available to me on my request from Department of Environment and Planning officers, it outlines a formula for fixing such compensation, given the need and circum-

stances required to do so. Irrespective of whether or not the then Planning Act is in vogue now, the principle of compensation payment was recognised as necessary and appropriate, and indeed it was confirmed as being available by the Government of the day—a Labor Government—yet here in the early stages of this decade we find that the Government of the day has declared that compensation is unreasonable, unfeasible and impractical, and so on, and therefore unable to be implemented.

This argument about land clearance settles down to be one of difference of opinion on the compensation factor. There is not a lot of distance between the Government and the Opposition in relation to the need to preserve a balance of native vegetation in the community. I have been associated with primary producers all my life and am indeed a fifth generation of primary producers in this country. As far as I am concerned, the primary producers are not far away from the Government or the Opposition in their attitude or desire to preserve a balance of native vegetation in the community. The public appreciation of this subject, given its wide discussion in recent months, is also in tune generally speaking with the need for a fair balance.

We have some environmental eccentrics in the community who demonstrate their desire in a much more imbalanced and overboard direction on this subject, but in general the community agrees that we are on the right track. It is an ideal opportunity, not as an ultimatum but as a fair, reasonable and appropriate alternative, for this Parliament to accept the motives and objectives of the Bill introduced in the Upper House which picks up all the factors required.

It sickens me to think that we can be burdened with a schedule of regulations and with administrators of such regulations who are clearly insensitive to the social, economic and practical aspects of responsible land development in South Australia. We have had the Minister and his colleagues, including the Premier, in recent days acknowledging that primary production and the income derived from the export of produce from that sector of the community is indeed the backbone of the State's economy. That fact is certainly appreciated on this side of the House and is progressively becoming more widely appreciated by the community at large. Yet we have an inhibiting and restrictive piece of legislation churned out of this Parliament which is an encumbrance to that rural sector. Whether it relates to the development of new land (virgin land) or to the further cultivation and increased productivity of partially developed land, these regulations are inflicted upon the community and are not reasonable in the absence of a form of compensation where it is fairly identified that a need exists to retain such native growth.

I really have no argument with the principles and objectives in either piece of legislation, that which embraces the regulations of the day or that which is proposed to embrace those regulations and its objectives plus, of course, the matter of compensation. Generally speaking, if some rationale and balance were introduced into this subject, our primary producers would co-operate with the Government rather than become embittered and eccentric in their attitude to this whole matter. We would accordingly eliminate the current and potential litigation which must result from this antagonistic 'them and us' situation that exists between not all the officers or all the primary producers but, indeed, between too many of them for the subject to be properly dealt with.

I have had personal experience, quite apart from the experiences of my constituents that have been drawn to my attention. I know the sort of frustration associated with lodging applications and trying to negotiate with the officers, trying to arrive at some sensible solution, and suffering the embarrassment and frustration that accompanies any expla-

nation of what are ordinary and everyday aspects of the practical world of primary production with officers who have no idea of that side of their role in the field. In some cases they are not prepared to listen reasonably, either. I was rather fortunate in my own case to finally ferret out officers in the Department who were prepared to have regard for some of the factors other than what the basic regulations require them to have and also to find officers who were prepared to exercise the patience and tolerance of receiving and ultimately accepting an explanation that was practical, sound, and had regard to the objectives of the Act.

From my viewpoint and that of my immediate family, I had not experienced the problems that many of my constituents have experienced. It may involve approach, attitude on personalities, etc., but the whole exercise would be accomplished if the Minister would pay just a little attention to the Bill sponsored by the Liberal Party. In such cases we should forget about Party politics and personalities associated with the subject and settle down to identifying the objectives and how they may best be achieved. Without bias or undue favour to what we have derived ourselves, the Liberal Party's policy is incorporated in the policies outlined tonight and previously, and it does have these favourable factors to reach the objective desired. This is one of those occasions when the Government should not leave it to its officers, but recognise that out of the Parliament we can pass legislation this time which embraces the interests and desires of all concerned.

There is not a great deal else to canvass in this instance. The shadow Minister for Environment and Planning, along with the Liberal member for Mallee, explained in detail the alternative that we propose in this instance—it has been well and truly canvassed. The proposal before the Minister in his office for some months. I have not heard a response from the Minister or his officers to our proposal in the interim months, and I am disappointed about that. However, between now and 1 November (the end of the sunset clause in the current legislation) is plenty of time for that to occur, even though it has not been attended to previously. With those remarks, I urge the Government's support. There are one or two others on our side of the House who share the view that I have expressed, and I would hope, albeit briefly in the time available to us this evening, that those members will also comment on this matter.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Minister for Environment and Planning): This has been a temperate debate and I have no desire to make it any way intemperate. I found it interesting, however, that what honourable members opposite did was to take the opportunity of this Bill before this Chamber to address their remarks largely to a measure which is before another place. I am not really quite sure whether I should proceed with some sort of response to some of the matters that they raised, but I think that probably I owe it to honourable members to give some indication of the Government's attitude to this piece of legislation which has now been canvassed by two members of the Opposition.

Frankly, as honourable members opposite would probably appreciate, I have some problems with that legislation. There are certain matters in relation to that legislation which have not been carefully addressed by its authors. The first point that I would raise is one that can be cleared up fairly easily, and I would be the first to admit that maybe there is a lack of examination on my part in relation to the matter. It relates to the 10 per cent which is envisaged by that legislation as being retained, or could be retained if the machinery which has been outlined is followed through, and no compensation is paid.

It is not clear to me whether that ends the matter so far as application is concerned or whether the residual 10 per cent retained could then be subject to a further application before that particular piece of machinery. I see the honourable member shaking his head in relation to that matter. I, therefore, assume there would be some annotation on the certificate of title which would secure that matter. Otherwise, it may well be that the courts could argue that in fact that residual 10 per cent could be subject to a further application which would then of course be open to the possibility that only 10 per cent of the original 10 per cent would be retained, and so on.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Well, if I have some reassurance from the honourable member—

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: I am quite happy to give you a briefing any time you like.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The honourable member is being generous, as usual. Let me then turn to matters of perhaps greater substance. It goes virtually without saying that a primary producer is a person who gets an income from a patch of land, and there are various ways a person can get an income from a patch of land.

Mr Rodda: How do you define 'patch'? What is a patch?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Some area, some tract defined on the drier portions of the surface of the planet. It seems to me what the honourable member and his colleagues in another place are envisaging is the possibility of some financial return—let us not dignify it with the term 'income'—that can be obtained by a novel method. This novel method is, of course, by making an application again to that interesting piece of machinery that he has outlined to us, having that application refused and, therefore, automatically being subject to the receipt of recompense, whether or not the applicant in the first instance seriously intended that that area should be cleared.

Mr Lewis: That's a bit cynical.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I think it is realistic. If in fact by Statute we allow this mechanism to occur, given human nature, it seems to me that people will take advantage of it and why should they not, irrespective of their real desires as to the residual native vegetation which is on the property they own? It does not seem to me that that piece of legislation really properly addresses that point. How does one, as it were, distinguish frivolous application from other sorts of application? Does one ask the person to sign a statutory declaration? Just exactly what does one do? It is not simply a matter of mechanism; it is fundamental to the legislation.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am not quite sure what criteria one provides to that committee.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: It is absolutely critical to the legislation. Let me go on to my second point. The honourable member has made mention of the frustrations experienced by the primary producing community in relation to applications that have yet to be considered. It is certainly true that something in excess of 1 200 applications have come forward, and it takes some time to assess an application. I cannot see, in the mechanism which has been outlined, any streamlining of the procedure which is currently before us.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: You must agree that it is a much fairer system.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I reject entirely the notion the honourable member is putting. However, let me for the moment concentrate on the matter of the ease with which it is possible to get an answer in relation to a particular

application. The honourable member is growling about the fact that it relies largely on one person.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: It does, doesn't it?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: It does not because there is always the option of placing the matter before the Planning Commission and when it is placed before that Commission, then more minds come to bear on the matter. However, if the honourable member is concerned with expedition in the handling of applications, let me to say to him as kindly as I can that on first blush it would appear that his mechanism is more cumbersome than mine. Let the honourable member not think that at some remote stage in the future, when possibly he may again be Minister for Environment and Planning, in 1997 or something, there will be no problem because all the hard ones would have been handled under Hopgood, and that there will be very few applications coming forward. Let the honourable member realise that the sort of Bill that he is envisaging is inviting applications. Let him not think that there will only be 600 or 200 applications, or something like that. I would assume in the time span that apparently we have had in relation to the present regulations which has spawned 1 200 applications, he is likely to get 5 400, or something like that. So, there will be an increase in the rate of application because of the greater attractiveness, by some people's ways of looking at things, of the scheme, and on top of it these additional applications will be subject to a far more time consuming and cumbersome process than the one we currently have before us.

One other point I make in passing is in relation to the delays that people have experienced and the concern that people have in being able to get a decision on these matters. The member for Alexandra touched on the impact that this might have on primary production in this State, and so on. As I understand it, the argument has gone like this: I have in defending the Government's position in these matters often made statements like this 'Aha, this is what they are really up to and this is what we have uncovered'. Prior to the introduction of the regulation, we really had very little idea of the rate at which scrub was being cleared, but now we have unearthed an alarming situation—1 200 applications in 12 months. That is the rate at which there was a desire in the community to knock it down.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: You know why there has been 1 200 and you know why half of Victoria has been cleared, too.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: What the honourable member is wanting to say by interjection is 'Oh, it is really not like that at all.' People just want to know where they stand. They do not want to clear. They really just want to clear up the position in relation to their own particular property, so a lot of those people, when they receive their application to clear, will not clear at all, or at least not immediately. They just wanted to clear the situation. If that is the case, I can easily say, by way of rebuttal, that therefore it is really not pertinent to the present condition of agriculture in this State and that indeed, on the honourable member's and UF&S's own confession, it is not having an impact on people's desire to do immediately what they want to do with their own land.

The honourable member cannot have it both ways. Either people are gung-ho to clear land and they are being frustrated by the regulation and therefore are exhibiting their frustrations, or else they are not gung-ho to clear the land and it is simply and sincerely a matter of knowing where they stand, and it really does not matter very much if it takes four months or four years to clarify that point. Let the honourable member handle that at some stage in the future if he wants to do so.

It is subsidiary to that basic point that I have just made that the member for Alexandra I thought in part gave the

show away in the remarks he made, because he was being very temperate and reasonable and saying, 'We believe there should be proper protection of scrub areas, and all this sort of thing, and there is not very much between the Government and the Liberal Party in relation to these matters if only the Government would pay ample compensation,' but then he went on to say that the Premier had talked about the importance of primary production to the State and in some way the regulation was jeopardising the importance of primary production to the State.

I think the Liberal Party really has to come to grips with what it really accepts as a reasonable position in relation to retention of vegetation in this State. Does it take the position which says that agriculture has really reached its natural frontiers and that the future of increased productivity from primary production in this State lies with the more intensive cultivation of the land already cleared and that, in effect, as a logical consequence of that viewpoint, there should really be no further clearance in this State except for things like building fence lines, burning off to limit the impact of wildfire and all that sort of thing? If they took that position that would really be a position more extreme than that occupied by this Government, because of course there has been a good deal of approval for clearance under this particular regulation.

Do they take the position that indeed the rate of clearance which has been allowed under the present regulation is a reasonable scheme of clearance which would be simply to say the Government in effect is doing the right thing in relation to the impact of the regulation on primary production, or are they going back to a situation that really envisages that eventually we will have 10 per cent of the vegetation in an off park situation retained, or are they really saying there ought to be open slather and what we are trying to do by way of legislation in another place is to resolve a bit of a political problem we have in some areas?

It seems to me again that the Opposition is trying to have its cake and eat it too. Is the Opposition really arguing that these regulations are having an impact on the level of primary production in this State? If they are, what they are really envisaging is that there should be more clearance for productive purposes. That is the logical consequence of what the member for Alexandra was saying at one point in his speech, but it seems to me that the logical consequence of what the member for Murray is saying is that really the Liberal Party agrees with the Government; it would be nice if there was no more clearance at all and in fact it is not all that necessary for the future of the productivity of the agricultural lands in our State.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: That is not what I said and you know it.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I am not arguing with the honourable member in that respect. What I am saying is that I cannot work out what the Liberal Party is on about in relation to its estimate of the importance of scrub lands in this State. I am not trying to distort the honourable member's Bill. What I am saying to him is that his Bill does not arise as a result of a set of logical consequences from a set of suppositions which have been set out and which we can examine like a set of fish on a slab. We just do not know what those basic presumptions are as to the balance of scrub and cleared area in this State in the mind of the honourable member or any of his colleagues. I suspect that the honourable member has different views from those of the member for Alexandra, but it would be nice to have some sort of policy statement from the Liberal Party as to a desirable position.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: The Liberal Party's position is clear as to where we stand.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The Liberal Party has never come out and said that it believes that further clearance of land for agriculture is a good thing or a bad thing.

An honourable member: A good thing.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Here we are. Now we have it. Where in fact does that leave the legislation in another Chamber? The legislation in another Chamber does envisage the possibility, if a future Government could find the money, of there being no further clearance of vegetation in this State. What you get instead is compensation. That mechanism is one possible outcome of that particular legislation. I have indicated some of the problems that I am having in relation to the lack of spelling out of the mechanisms under that legislation, and in any event I do not think the Liberal Party has properly addressed itself to the question of what compensation in terms of what they think it would cost to some future Government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: Let the Liberal Party tell us what the cost would be to the taxpayer if in fact it has done that calculation.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: As the member for Alexandra reminds me, he gave us an excursion into ancient history on this matter and of course I assisted the honourable member in this particular matter, as he would well know. All that happened on that occasion was that the Minister of the day pointed to a particular clause in the legislation that then existed. That legislation no longer exists. In fact, if that legislation existed there would be no regulation such as we have it now, because it would not have been possible to extend the ambit of development, the definition of development, to encompass scrub clearance.

The Hon. Ted Chapman: That is what the subject was all about.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I reject that, and this Government rejects that. I believe that most people who are concerned for the future and the preservation of our remnant areas of native vegetation in this State would do likewise. I think I have allowed myself to range further and wider than I intended when I got to my feet. I ask the House to reject the arguments of honourable members opposite. This is a simple Bill. In effect, what it does is this: when this matter was before us previously and the member for Murray indicated that he did not understand the legislation he himself introduced in this Chamber a couple of years ago, one of the arguments put forward is why is the Government amending legislation when the matter is before the courts.

Of course, what eventually happened was that the Government accepted an amendment in the Upper House which provided that section 56 (1) (a) would be applied only in the case where we lost the case in the Supreme Court and, in any event, it was sunsetted to a date. As honourable members opposite have indicated, we are going to overrun that date, it would appear, in terms of the end decision out of the High Court, and I simply ask that that principle that was embodied in that legislation, in that amendment which was previously passed, should be extended here. Of course, what was not envisaged on that occasion was, first, that the matter would be further appealed and, secondly, we would have no decision from that appeal at this time or at the time of the elapsing of the sunset provision. I commend the Bill to the House.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Minister for Environment and Planning): I move:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

The House divided on the third reading:

Ayes (21)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, M.J. Brown, Crafter, Duncan, Ferguson, Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood (teller), Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne, Plunkett, Slater, Whitten, and Wright.

Noes (16)—Mrs Adamson, Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold, Baker, Becker, D.C. Brown, Chapman, Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Ingerson, Lewis, Rodda, Wilson, and Wotton (teller).

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Bannon, Peterson and Trainer. Noes—Messrs Blacker, Meier and Olsen.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Third reading thus carried.

ELECTION OF SENATORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER (Minister of Community Welfare): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

Late last year the Commonwealth Electoral Act was amended and now provides that the writ for a Federal election must fix the date for the close of the rolls and sets out a revised time table for the conduct of Senate and House of Representatives elections. Under the Commonwealth Constitution the issue of the writ for a Senate election and the setting of the time table for Senate elections is a matter for State laws:

Section 9 of the Commonwealth Constitution provides that 'the Parliament of a State may make laws for determining the times and places of elections of Senators for the State': Section 12 of the Commonwealth Constitution provides that 'the Governor of any State may cause writs to be issued for elections of Senators for the State'.

In the light of those provisions of the Commonwealth Constitution, this State and the other States have maintained Acts dealing with the issue of writs and the times and places for Senate elections.

However, the amendments made to the Commonwealth Electoral Act have created the need for the provisions of that Act and the Election of Senators Act to be harmonised. The amendments proposed not only do that but also mean that the South Australian Act is uniform with the corresponding legislation in each of the other States and mirrors the provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act relating to the times and places for Senate elections. Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 amends section 2 of the principal Act which presently provides as follows:

(1) For the purpose of the election of Senators for this State to the Senate of the Commonwealth, the Governor may, by proclamation—

- (a) fix the date for the issue of the writ;
- (b) appoint a place for the nomination of candidates and fix a date (referred to in this Act as 'the day of nomination') on or before which candidates must be nominated;
- (c) fix the date for the polling;
- (d) fix a date on or before which the writ must be returned.

(2) Nomination must be made after the issue of the writ and before 12 o'clock noon on the day of nomination.

(3) The polling shall take place at all polling places within the State appointed under the law of the Commonwealth for the time being in force for the regulation of Parliamentary elections.

The clause amends this section by substituting for paragraph (b) of subsection (1) provision for the proclamation to fix the date for the close of electoral rolls (see s. 152 (1) (a)

Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 52 of that Act)) and the date for the nomination of candidates. The place for the nomination of candidates is provided for under proposed new subsection (2a) as being the office of the Australian Electoral Officer in the State (see s. 167 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 72)). The clause also inserts new subsections providing for the other matters relating to the times and places for Senate elections that are provided for under the Commonwealth Electoral Act and the legislation of the other States.

Proposed new subsection (1a) provides that the writ shall be deemed to have been issued at 6 p.m. of the day on which the writ was issued (see s. 152 (2) Commonwealth Electoral Act). Proposed new subsection (1b) provides that the writ shall be dated as of the day of its issue and that the dates fixed by the proclamation under subsection (1) shall be specified in the writ (see s. 152 Commonwealth Electoral Act). Proposed new subsection (1c) provides that the date fixed for the close of the electoral rolls shall be seven days after the date of the writ (see s. 155 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 61A)).

Proposed new subsection (1d) provides that, subject to subsection (1e), the date fixed for the nomination of the candidates shall not be less than 11 days nor more than 28 days after the date of the writ (see s. 156 (1) Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 62)). Proposed new subsection (1e) provides that, where a candidate for an election dies after being nominated and before 12 noon on the day fixed by the writ as the date of nomination, the date of nomination shall, except for the purposes of subsection (1f), be taken to be the day next succeeding the day so fixed (see s. 156 (2) Commonwealth Electoral Act).

Proposed new subsection (1f) provides that the date fixed for the polling shall not be less than 22 days nor more than 30 days after the date of nomination (see s. 157 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 63)). Proposed new subsection (1g) provides that the day fixed for the polling shall be a Saturday (see s. 158 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 64)). Proposed new subsection (1b) provides that the date fixed for the return of the writ shall not be more than 90 days after the issue of the writ (see s. 159 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 65)). Proposed new subsection (2a) has been described above. Proposed new subsection (2b) provides that the poll shall be open at 8 a.m. and shall not close until all electors present in the polling booth at 6 p.m. and desiring to vote have voted (see s. 220 Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 111)).

Clause 3 amends section 3 of the principal Act which presently provides as follows:

Within 20 days before or after the date fixed for the polling, the Governor may, by proclamation—

- (a) extend the time for holding the election;
- (b) extend the time for returning the writ;
- (c) provide for meeting any difficulty that might otherwise interfere with the due course of the election.

The clause amends this section by inserting two new subsections dealing with the other matters provided for by section 286 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act (formerly s. 144 of that Act). Proposed new subsection (2) provides that any provisions made under subsection (1) be valid and sufficient and any date provided for under that subsection in lieu of a date fixed and specified in the writ under section 2 shall be deemed to be the date so fixed and specified. Proposed new subsection (3) provides that no polling day shall be postponed under the section at any time later than seven days before the time originally appointed.

The Hon. H. ALLISON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday 24 October at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 23 October 1984

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

CLEAN AIR ACT

Mr BAKER (on notice) asked the Minister for Environment and Planning: With respect to the Clean Air Act, what professional qualifications have been determined for the position of 'sniffer'?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: In order to assess an odour's intensity in terms of being unpleasant, officers involved need to have an intimate knowledge of processes which create such odours, technical training and wide industrial experience in these fields, and be capable of understanding any malfunction within those processes.

COOPER BASIN

54. **The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY** (on notice) asked the Minister of Mines and Energy: Who is conducting negotiations for gas supplies from the Queensland section of the Cooper Basin to South Australia on behalf of the South Australian Government, how many meetings have been held since 1 January 1984 in these negotiations, when were they held and what progress has been made?

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: The replies are as follows:

1. All Government negotiations for future gas supply to South Australia are the responsibility of the Natural Gas Steering Committee of the Future Energy Action Committee. The Chairperson of the Steering Committee is Mr R.D. Barnes, and he is assisted by representatives of PASA; Department of Mines and Energy; Crown Law and FEAC. In addition, discussions at Ministerial level have occurred.

2. The South Australian Cooper Basin Producers have also held a number of meetings with the Queensland parties, but information on these five meetings is not available to the Government.

3. Meetings have been held on:

- 26 March 1984, Queensland parties (in Adelaide)
- 15 May 1984, Queensland parties (in Adelaide)
- 5 July 1984, Queensland Minister (in Brisbane)
- 21 August 1984, Queensland parties (in Adelaide)
- 16 October 1984, Queensland parties (in Adelaide)

4. The opportunity for Queensland Cooper Basin gas to be a part of the future supply to South Australia has been, and continues to be, assessed in detail, for either direct sale to PASA or for sale to PASA via the South Australian unit. Details of these discussions and negotiations are commercially confidential.

TORRENS ISLAND POWER STATION

56. **The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY** (on notice) asked the Minister of Mines and Energy: When will a decision have to be made to convert 400 megawatts of Torrens Island power station generating capacity to burn black coal?

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: The option for converting part of the Torrens Island power station to burn black coal remains under detailed consideration, and evaluation has proceeded to the stage where tenders have closed for engineering design and EIS preparation. Engineering design and preparation of an EIS will place ETSA in a position where it can proceed rapidly with the conversion should a satisfactory supply and price situation for natural gas not be achieved. Such a conversion could be effected after the

commissioning of the first or second units of the Northern Power Station when there will be excess generating capacity available.

PUBLIC SERVICE

73. **Mr BAKER** (on notice) asked the Minister of Labour: When does the Minister intend to 'democratise' the Public Service by allowing subordinates to participate in the selection of more senior personnel as enunciated in his speech to the Probation and Parole Board on 30 October 1980, and is it intended to extend this principle to allow prisoners a similar input in relation to matters affecting them?

The Hon. J.D. WRIGHT: The participation of Public Service staff in the selection of senior personnel is under review. However, deliberations and the process of consultation have not reached a stage where an implementation timetable is available. The participation of prisoners in correctional institutions in matters affecting them is achieved through the Prisoner's Assessment and Prisoner's Needs Committees.

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

92. **The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON** (on notice) asked the Minister of Tourism:

1. What are the positions, classifications and salaries of the 10 additional jobs created in the Department of Tourism in 1984, as identified in the Auditor-General's Report?

2. Have any additional jobs been created since 1 July 1984 and, if so, what are the positions, classifications and salaries?

3. Have any existing positions been reclassified since 1 July 1983 and, if so, what are they?

4. Have any positions been abolished and, if so, what were they?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: The replies are as follows:

1. The Auditor-General's Report did not identify any additional jobs created in the Department of Tourism in 1984. The figures contained in the report refer to persons actually employed as at 30 June 1983 and 1984 and do not take into account any vacancies which might have existed at those times, nor to positions formally created in this intervening period.

2. There have been no additional jobs created since 1 July 1984.

3. The following existing positions have been reclassified since 1 July 1983:

Senior Travel Consultant to Travel Consultant, CO-3 to CO-1X

Photographer to Photographer, PV-2 to PV-1

Assistant Director, Marketing to Marketing Manager, Title only

Director, Marketing to Deputy Director (Marketing), Title only

Director, Development and Regional Liaison to Assistant

Director (Development and Regional Liaison), Title only

Chief Planning and Research Officer to Assistant Director

(Planning and Research), Title only

Chief Administrative Officer to Assistant Director (Adminis-

tration and Finance), Title only

Tourist Officer, Grade 1 to Manager, Visitor Assistance Section,

CO-1 to CO-6

Tourist Officer, Grade 1 to Senior Travel Consultant, CO-1 to

CO-3

Office Manager to Senior Travel Consultant, CO-4 to CO-3

Steno-Secretary to Travel Consultant CO-2 to CO-1X

Senior Tourist Officer to Supervisor, Traveller Assistance Sec-

tion, Title only

Tourist Officer, Grade 1 to Travel Consultant, CO-1 to CO-

1X

6 Clerical Officer positions to Travel Consultant, Title only,

CO-1 to CO-1X

21 Tourist Officers, Grade 1 to Travel Consultant, Title only

9 Tourist Officers, Grade 11 to Senior Travel Consultant, Title

only

4. There have been no positions abolished.

BOATING ACT

109. **The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD** (on notice) asked the Minister of Marine: In relation to the Boating Act, 1974:

- (a) how many reportable accidents were recorded State-wide during 1983-84;
- (b) how many accident reports were made direct to inspectors and how many direct to the Police Department;
- (c) how many reports of offences were made in 1983-84 and how many successful prosecutions resulted from them;
- (d) how many reports of offences were made in 1983-84 by police officers and how many successful prosecutions resulted from them;
- (e) what was the aggregate revenue raised by way of fines resulting from prosecution of offences in 1983-84;
- (f) what was the gross aggregate of wages, overtime, accommodation, travel expenses and other allowances paid to the Inspectorate during 1983-84;
- (g) how many inspectors were on the pay-roll at the beginning and at the end of the year 1983-84; and
- (h) what was the average cost per patrol boat in overall running expenses including all repairs, fuel and maintenance for boat, trailer and towing vehicle, but excluding capital depreciation during 1983-84?

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: The replies are as follows:

- (a) 33.
- (b) Three to inspectors, 30 to police.
- (c) 365—100 successfully prosecuted to date, 90 waiting results, 154 expiated by payment of prescribed amounts, eight cautions issued, and, in 13 cases no action was taken.
- (d) Five—one successful prosecution, three expiated and one no action.
- (e) Fines \$10 170, expiation fees \$8 010.
- (f) \$162 642.
- (g) Ten in each case.
- (h) \$11 146.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FUND
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

115. **Mr BECKER** (on notice) asked the Minister of Local Government:

1. What were the findings of the Local Government Assistance Fund Advisory Committee and the subsequent comments from councils and community development boards?
2. What are the new policy and criteria to be used by the Local Government Assistance Fund Advisory Committee?
3. What now is the Advisory Committee's policy on funding information centres?

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: The replies are as follows:

1. The following is a summary of the recommendations of the Local Government Assistance Fund Advisory Committee:

- (1) That the Local Government Assistance Fund continues to retain two distinct lines, whereby it can provide funding for both ongoing information services and once-off projects.
- (2) That a meeting be called prior to finalisation of the Department of Local Government's budget each year of the Annual Review Committee of the Once-off Project Fund and a sub-group, representing local information services, of the Advisory Committee on Information Services, to discuss

and recommend on the use of the Local Government Assistance Fund for the coming financial year.

- (3) That priority for funding from the Once-off Project Fund be given to those projects which are aimed at promoting citizen participation in local affairs, which increase people's awareness of local problems, and which encourage community co-operation in overcoming these, rather than projects aimed to produce a physical end-product, for example, construction of barbecues, playgrounds, etc.
- (4) That the present application review mechanism be retained whereby local councils, in consultation with appropriate local advisory bodies, including community development boards, prioritise applications as a basis for decisions concerning grant allocations made by the Department of Local Government.
- (5) That an Annual Review Committee of the Once-off Project Fund be established to review the actual use made of that fund and to recommend amendments to the guidelines, if necessary, and that the committee, chaired by a Department of Local Government officer, should consist of representatives from the Local Government Association, SACOSS and the community development boards.
- (6) That in exceptional cases, applicants may reapply for once-off project funding where projects are designed to achieve specified objectives within a specified time period. However, the availability of ongoing funding for a limited period does not imply that projects can depend on permanent funding from this grant source for the continuation of successful activities. Priority will be given to projects which have a plan of transition to alternative sources of funding.
- (7) That, until such time as the Advisory Committee on Information Services has made recommendations concerning funding of once-off information projects and new information services, these will continue to be funded from the Once-off Project Fund of the Local Government Assistance Fund.
- (8) That the current administrative procedures covering the Local Government Assistance Fund be retained. These procedures include:
 - the advertising of the availability of the fund
 - the use of councils as distribution points for fund guidelines and application forms
 - the encouragement of councils to locally publicise the fund
 - the use by councils of boards or other similarly constituted community-based advisory bodies to investigate and recommend priorities for locally received applications
 - the channelling of funds through the councils to the successful applicants.
- (9) That community development boards are to be encouraged to apply for funding from the Once-off Project Fund but will receive no preferential treatment based on their sponsorship.

Subsequent comments from councils and community development boards were:

- (a) 14 or 48 per cent gave full support to the recommendations contained in the report.
- (b) 8 or 27 per cent, rejected the new guidelines emphasis on community development/process applications. A return to the old guidelines which gave priority to physical facilities (community halls) and playground/recreation area development was called for. As expected, most of these comments came from country councils and community development boards.

- (c) 6 or 21 per cent of the respondents believed that there was too much emphasis on information services and that these services needed closer scrutiny.

Three additional areas of concern were raised:

- (a) The timing of the fund: if possible, the cycle of the fund should begin and conclude prior to the Christmas break and not run through this period.
- (b) Fund accountability: each council should get a list of all successful Local Government Assistance Fund applications.
- (c) The advertising of the fund: should be more extensive and should involve the use of posters.

2. Final recommendations are currently being prepared for my consideration. The only new policy so far implemented is that an independent committee will review the fund guidelines annually and recommended amendments, if any, to me.

3. No new policy has been enacted regarding the funding of information services. This issue is currently being considered by a subcommittee of the Information Services Advisory Committee.

MARKET

123. Mr BECKER (on notice) asked the Minister of Transport: Has the Highways Department vacant property at Mile End (formerly Horwood Bagshaw) been investigated as the site of a new central market and, if so, what decision has been made regarding the convenience of the location and, if it has not been inspected or considered for that purpose, why not?

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Mr E. T. Kime, consultant to the South Australian Government on East End Market relocation, has inspected the vacant Mile End property (formerly Horwood Bagshaw). However, the site is not considered suitable for a relocated market because it is too small (approximately five hectares).

GOVERNMENT CONCESSIONS

156. Mr BAKER (on notice) asked the Premier: Which of the recommendations contained in the 'Review of State Government Concessions—Final Report', will be implemented during 1984-85 or 1985-85, which require further consideration before a firm decision can be made and which have been rejected?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The report is currently under consideration. The honourable member is referred to the statement of the Minister of Community Welfare on 30 August 1984, a copy of which will be forwarded to him.

GOLD ROUTE

160. Mr LEWIS (on notice) asked the Premier: Will the Premier consider commemorating the contribution made by a former Commissioner of the South Australian Police Force in opening up the Adelaide to Ballarat gold route by changing the name of the Dukes Highway to Tolmer Highway?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: Yes.