HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 11 March 1987

The SPEAKER (Hon. J.P. Trainer) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION: BELAIR RECREATION PARK

A petition signed by 195 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to ensure that the proposed fencing of the Belair Recreation Park be of a construction sympathetic to the environment and provide minimal restriction of access was presented by Mr S.G. Evans.

Petition received.

QUESTION TIME

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

Mr OLSEN: Is the Premier satisfied with the way in which the Trotting Control Board handled the Batik Print positive swab, and does the board have his full confidence?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: First, I am not the Minister responsible for the Trotting Control Board: the matter of the board and its handling of specific issues is one that the Minister of Recreation and Sport is handling and, in my view, is handling very competently and adequately. I must say that the handling of that issue is something that is not being helped at all by the outrageous way in which the member for Bragg is performing. If some of the things that he has said had come from some other Opposition member they might have had a little more credibility. However, the honourable member has been prepared to stand up in this House and accuse a Minister of the Government of criminal fraud without checking the facts, putting in documents and carrying on, and then refusing to apologise after the event. I am afraid that I look sceptically at anything that such an individual would say. Unfortunately, I get the feeling that what is being done is not an attempt by the Opposition to help the Trotting Control Board to improve the state of trotting in South Australia, or to clean up any problems that there may have been in the industry: it is simply an attempt to grab a headline.

It is really extraordinary that a series of allegations is made in such an irresponsible and flagrant way. The honourable member feels a bit discomfited, so he renews the attack here in the House where he can make even more outrageous claims without the need to justify them outside—and he has consistently refused to do so—and finally, with the opportunity of sheltering behind parliamentary privilege, at the same time talking about death threats, and so on. All of us know the risks and problems that there are in public life when issues such as this arise. I believe that questions such as threats to members must be dealt with at the highest level, with the full cooperation of members, and with police attention. It does nothing for the security or safety of members of Parliament to have these things raised as they are being raised by the member for Bragg. It is clear, as advice in security circles shows, that, when such things are raised in that way, they simply produce a reaction.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition chortles away on this matter and tries to interject in such a puerile way, because the security of members of Parliament and their families, which is threatened on occasion as members try to carry out their duties without fear or favour, is a serious matter and not one to be played around with as the member for Bragg is doing. I suggest that the honourable member stop trying to be some sort of poor man's Wilson Tuckey, lift his game and try to behave responsibly. I have full confidence in my Minister to handle the affairs of the Trotting Control Board as appropriate.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

NATIVE PLANTS

Mr ROBERTSON: In view of the 3 200 species of vascular plants known to be native to South Australia and the need to protect some of those species at short notice, will the Minister for Environment and Planning consider introducing legislation to guarantee the survival of rare or threatened species of native flora and fauna?

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: On the State statute books currently there are three Acts which address this problem. The first is the National Parks and Wildlife Act, under section 47 of which various species are listed. Of course, there are the general controls against the taking of any native plants from a national park. That legislation in relation to certain species that are enumerated in the schedules seeks to protect those species over the whole range of vegetation in the State. In addition, various areas of the State are set aside under the legislation from where no species can be taken.

The second fairly minor piece of legislation is the Sandalwood Act, which protects that particular species, and the third measure is the Native Vegetation Management Act, which was brought in as recently as 1985 and under which there are very strict controls for the clearance of native vegetation within the agricultural regions of the State, irrespective of whether or not there is a declared national park in that area. I believe that by and large that complex of legislation gives us an adequate framework for dealing with the problem.

There is perhaps one gap in the legislation that we must consider closing in some way, and that relates to vandalism to trees and shrubs on both public and private lands that occurs from time to time in some of the areas of the State that are favoured by tourists, and I refer to the thoughtless pulling of boughs from trees along the banks of the Murray River, and so on. It may be that we should consider whether the existing legislation must be extended or whether new legislation needs to be introduced to address part of the problem. I can give the honourable member, in writing, a more detailed list of the threatened species, but at this stage I am reasonably happy with our schedule of legislation, although one or two gaps still need to be plugged.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

Mr INGERSON: I direct a question to the Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr INGERSON: Will the Minister table, if they exist, the minutes of the meeting of the Trotting Control Board on 1 July last year which decided to take no further action on the positive swabbing of Batik Print and Columbia Wealth and, if there are no such minutes, will he explain

why? Many serious and unresolved questions remain over the conduct of this meeting, including:

the deliberate exclusion of the Chief Steward from the meeting;

the rule of trotting under which the board decided to take no action over the positive swab;

the calling of the meeting at very short notice so that the full board could not be present; and

the specific evidence considered by the board.

While the Acting Minister of Recreation and Sport (Mr Payne) said in a statement on 8 July that the board had considered evidence then made a decision, the Appeals Committee, in its judgment on this case on 24 February this year, suggested that the Acting Minister's statement was untrue, that there was no evidence before the board and that there might also have been no minutes of the meeting, which would be in clear breach of the Racing Act. The likelihood that there were no minutes is increased, because in correspondence that I have obtained—

The SPEAKER: Order! I must caution the honourable member that he is supposed to be asking a question and giving a brief explanation on a factual basis and not contributing to debate.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: On a point of order, Sir, the honourable member is seeking to put before the House information that is relevant to the question, and he has most recently mentioned that he received a letter about this matter. I would like you, Sir, to explain how that is not relevant to the explanation of the question, because that is not a matter of debate; it is a matter of fact.

The SPEAKER: The main point at which the Chair began to be of the impression that the honourable member was straying into debate was when he started to draw inferences. Where you say that a particular thing infers that something else exists, that is clearly putting forward a proposition that is as much a matter of opinion as it is of fact.

Mr INGERSON: I have been informed and I have obtained correspondence which reveals four specific written requests for the minutes and a refusal by the board to provide them. The requests were made on behalf of Mr Lou Ward, who has appealed against the board's decision to take no action on the swab, and were refused despite trotting rule 410 which requires the board to provide such information to an appellant. These documents were forwarded to the Minister's office last September, so I assume that he is able to inform the House whether these minutes exist; if they do, why they were not provided, as required, to Mr Ward and, if they do not, why he condones a clear breach of the Racing Act by the board.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Obviously, the honourable member did not listen to my response yesterday relating to this incident. I made it quite clear then that when the Acting Minister, the Minister of Mines and Energy, was Acting Minister of Recreation and Sport, he obviously had direct contact with the board, and the board has addressed this issue in regard to its rules. That was a clear correction of a situation that occurred in relation to this incident.

It is obvious after listening to the media today that the member for Bragg is endeavouring to thrash around and find something to support his broad sweeping statements and his broad general accusations which have obviously damaged the industry. I say that because of comments that have already been put to me by members of the industry.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister is endeavouring to reply to a question on a serious matter. The deliberations of the House are not helped by interjections coming from the honourable member for Murray-Mallee.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: It is clear that we have called for the evidence which the honourable member suggested exists. The police are aware of the suggestions made by the honourable member and they are waiting eagerly for his evidence, if he has it. Also, they are waiting to find out whether he wants to make a formal complaint against the two individuals whom he so unwisely and harshly criticised yesterday in this House. He has not presented the evidence which he suggests supports his sweeping statements to the appropriate authorities. We wait and, as I said yesterday—

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy: Are there any minutes or aren't there? Answer the question.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I ask for your protection, Mr Speaker.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Murray-Mallee.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Sir. Is it not true that Ministers are members and that the remarks they make in response to questions must be as relevant to the question as the explanation to the question must be within the parameters of Standing Orders?

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Murray-Mallee is aware that the Chair has tried to be as bipartisan on this issue as is reasonably possible. However, a certain amount of latitude has always been extended to Ministers in that regard.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The member for Bragg ought to provide this evidence to the police and he ought to appear before the Trotting Control Board Chief Steward, but there is some doubt that he will do that. He ought to provide all this evidence to support his very wide sweeping claims of corruption, of malpractice and of this so-called Mafia link within the industry. He ought to do that straight away, because the longer he lets this go the more damaging it is to the industry and the more damaging it is to the community involved with racing in this State. So, I call upon him again to provide this evidence and not to make these wide sweeping statements. This morning on radio he made it quite clear that he was not able to support the view that the proposal which he put forward can be supported by evidence—because he backed off when the radio announcer asked him where was his evidence to support his wide sweeping accusations against the industry.

The SPEAKER: Order! I said to the honourable member for Murray-Mallee that a fair amount of latitude is granted to a Minister: that latitude has now expired.

Mr Lewis: He hasn't answered the question yet.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Semaphore.

MARINE AND HARBORS DEPARTMENT

Mr PETERSON: Will the Minister of Marine report to the House on the future of the Deepening Section of the Department of Marine and Harbors? I have been informed that the bucket dredge was put on the slip to carry out a $400 000 refit. This has now been cut short and the dredge is to be placed back into service with the bulk of the restoration work not done. It is planned to carry out emergency piecemeal maintenance as required while No. 7 berth at Outer Harbor is dredged. Further, I have been informed that, unless the Government decides to proceed with the upgrading of the oil berths at Port Adelaide—work that

must be done—within four months the dredge crew will be given shore jobs and the dredge will be laid up, which indicates that future dredging will be carried out by private contractors, with necessary reductions in the dockyard employment numbers and future prospects.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: The Department of Marine and Harbors is presently carrying out maintenance and repair work on the dredge AD *Victoria*. It is expected that dredging at Outer Harbor will recommence in late April and continue until completion of the current program in July/August. A new oil tanker berth in the inner harbor is under consideration by the Government. If this project proceeds, there will be sufficient known dredging work to take dredging activity through to mid 1988 and, if does not, then obviously dredging operations would cease.

With regard to the current refit program, when Cabinet approved a proposal to spend $407 000 on slipping and repairs to the dredge it was not known just how long tender calls and production of castings would take and the extent of the bucket band deterioration. The influence of those factors could not be fully assessed until mid February, when a tender was let to a local foundry for supply of pins and the bucket band components were stripped, examined and measured.

Consideration of those factors, particularly with regard to the availability of parts, meant that for a consolidated refit the start would have to be delayed and the duration lengthened. This would place a heavy reliance on outside resources for the machining of bucket pins if further dredging could take place at Outer Harbor this financial year. Influenced by the department's cash flow considerations and the availability of funding for dredging, the department's engineers decided to reschedule the refit work to maximise actual dredging whilst still complying with the mandatory Lloyds survey requirements and adopting a reasonably commonsense attitude to other maintenance requirements.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: My question is directed to the Minister of Mines and Energy. When as Acting Minister of Recreation and Sport he made a statement on 8 July last year saying that he was satisfied with the validity and propriety of a decision by the Trotting Control Board not to take any further action in the Batik Print affair, was that statement based on a verbal briefing from the board or on a written report? If it was a written report, will the Minister arrange to have it tabled, as the Minister of Recreation and Sport has already said to the House today that the Acting Minister had direct contact with the board?

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: It was based on discussions that I held with the Chairman of the board and the Secretary on more than one occasion.

O-BAHN BUSWAY

Ms GAYLER: Will the Minister of Transport report on the operation of the north-east busway, which completed its first year of service last Sunday? I understand that, to mark the first year of operation of the guided busway, the Minister arranged a small celebration for last Monday morning at the Paradise interchange, where he commented on the success of its operation. I am advised that, as a result of Adelaide's experience, guided busway systems are now considered by the transport industry as a viable public transport option. I am also advised that our north-east busway team has the potential to undertake transport consultancy work in overseas cities considering the guided busway solution. Will the Minister expand on his comments made regarding the first year of operation?

Mr LEWIS: I rise on a point of order. Do I take it from the last sentence of the honourable member's explanation that she is in fact inviting the Minister to comment? As I understand it, expanding on a comment is no more or less than comment. If that is the case, I would like your ruling, Mr Speaker, as to whether or not the question is in order.

The SPEAKER: On previous occasions I have suggested to the House that, when members conclude their explanation to a question with an attempt to repeat the original question, that suggests that the explanation was unduly long. In this particular case, as I recall it, the question as unnecessarily reput by the member for Newland at the conclusion of her explanation was different in its wording from the original question. Had the original question been worded in exactly the same format as the final question it would have been out of order for the reason mentioned by the honourable member for Murray-Mallee. The honourable Minister.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will answer the original question: that is in order.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: Members will be pleased to know that I can recall the question and the explanation that went with it. I am delighted that the member for Newland has raised this very important matter in the House. We did have a very successful celebration of 12 months of operation of the O-Bahn.

Mr Becker: We saw it on television last night.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: And I was very good: I think that that is duly acknowledged!

Mr Becker interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I will get to the point that the honourable member has raised in a moment. First, I would like to publicly apologise to the member for Newland because while I was there pouring champagne and eating cake she was not there. As local member she ought to have been there: that was an oversight, and I publicly apologise for that. The member for Hanson has pointed out that we owe the O-Bahn to Michael Wilson. This Government has never claimed credit for the idea of the O-Bahn. We acknowledge that it has been successful, and all this Government has done is build it and make it work. Certainly the idea was that of the previous Government.

It is interesting to recall who has taken credit for the O-Bahn over a number of years. I have listed them here in case somebody interjected today: David Tonkin, Michael Wilson, Dean Brown, Scott Ashenden, and Brian Billard. One wonders why none of those former members are here today to make that interjection. For one reason or another, none of those members are with us—mostly for the one reason that we are all aware of. Nevertheless, it was a good idea. We have implemented that idea and are running a very successful rapid transport system. I intend to provide all members of Parliament with a brochure that we have had to prepare for overseas and Australian transit authorities who want to know more about the O-Bahn and its operation here in Adelaide.

I have one or two facts to give that will enlarge on the comments which I made at Paradise and which were included in reports by one or two of the television stations. The busway patronage has reached (and held at) a figure of

around 16 000 passengers a day, which is higher than predicted and represents new patronage, by people who did not previously use the bus system in Adelaide, of more than 20 per cent. Between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., that is, the major peak period, the busway carries around 3 200 passengers, and this is a higher load than the Glenelg tram or any STA rail line carries. Over the first 12 months total patronage on the O-Bahn exceeded 4 million people, indicative of the support that Adelaide commuters are giving to this rapid transit system.

Members ought to be aware that the concrete guide track has performed exactly as predicted by the proponents of the system. Other than some regrettable rock throwing incidents, there have been no accidents or breakdowns on the O-Bahn track—it has performed magnificently. On three occasions drivers of motor vehicles have tried to get onto the track, but they did sufficient damage to their vehicles to dissuade any other motorist in Adelaide from attempting the same thing. The traps set prior to entering the O-Bahn ensure that any foolhardy stunts meet with such failure.

The problem of scrubbing of the rear tyres on articulated buses we believe has been overcome. It is important to note that people have come to Adelaide from China, Japan, Canada, America, the United Kingdom, and more particularly from Germany, where the technology was born, to see the application of it here in Adelaide. The honourable member's suggestion that the busway team might be well placed to be involved in consultancies is a point well made.

Recently the director of the busway team, Mr Alan Waite, visited South America as part of a team including European and North American experts to advise on the O-Bahn as one of a number of rapid transit systems at which they were looking to introduce in South America. Our sister State and sister city in Texas have shown a particular interest in the O-Bahn. A point of considerable interest to the honourable member and other members is when we anticipate completion. Construction is progressing as planned, and will be completed before the end of 1988. Both technically and in budget terms it will come in as expected, so the busway team is performing very effectively.

All the engineering works prior to tracklaying will be completed this year. Track laying will be started early in 1988 and will be completed by the end of that year. It has been a successful rapid transit system that has given Adelaide a position throughout the world of considerable transport interest, and I believe that we will remain a focus for the northern hemisphere as well as Southern Hemisphere countries contemplating the introduction of a rapid transit system with the possibility of implementing the O-Bahn.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Does the Minister of Mines and Energy stand by the statement he made as Acting Minister of Recreation and Sport on 8 July last year that he was satisfied with the validity and propriety of the Trotting Control Board's decision not to take any further action over the taking of positive swabs from Batik Print and Columbia Wealth?

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: Yes.

HEXAGON ENGINEERING

Mr M.J. EVANS: Will the Minister for Environment and Planning take urgent action to ensure that the liquidator of Hexagon Engineering at Salisbury, Touche Ross and Company, complies strictly with the terms of his recent order for noise control purposes, and will he inform the House of any information he has on plans by that company to relocate to more suitable premises? As the Minister will be aware, the company has frequently breached the terms of noise control orders in the past and, as a consequence, cases are continuing before the courts. The Minister recently renewed a noise control exemption, only to receive frequent allegations from local residents, and I understand from noise control inspectors, that the company had, under the control of the liquidator, continued to breach the strict terms of that order.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: As the honourable member says, a prosecution is in progress. I am well aware of the concern that the honourable member has expressed on behalf of his constituents in this matter and I have taken the opportunity to keep myself up to date on it, virtually on a daily basis. So, I can confirm that my office is working closely with the company to try to ensure that there are no breaches, either minor or substantial, of the legislation and that the company is seriously looking for alternative premises. As I understand it, the plan is a temporary move to Burton and then a permanent move into a purpose built factory in a suitably zoned area, the idea being that the factory would be built by the South Australian Housing Trust on its lease-back arrangement.

Confirmation of this is likely soon and it is also possible that, as this has been recognised as a heavy industry by the Federal Government, Federal Government assistance would be possible to assist in this relocation. So, I would hope that for everyone's benefit, not the least that of the company itself, this relocation could proceed. The Government will do all that it possibly can within existing policies to ensure that such a move occurs without substantial dislocation to the company's operations, and in the meantime my office is keeping a close watch on the situation to ensure that the terms of the exemption are adhered to.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Has the Minister of Recreation and Sport received a report from the Trotting Control Board on the introduction of more stringent swabbing procedures and, if he has, will he make that report public? In a statement in the *Advertiser* on 8 August last year, the Minister said he had asked the board to investigate the need for more stringent testing procedures. The *Advertiser* report went on:

> Testing should be more thorough and he would act on the report immediately it was available, which he expected to be soon.

However, rather than introduce more stringent procedures, it appears the board has done the opposite with its decision to stop sending swabs to the Melbourne Institute of Drug Technology, which is recognised throughout the industry for its superior ability to detect drugging of horses.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Obviously, the member for Coles did not listen to the answer that I gave the House yesterday. The situation has been addressed by the board on a request from the Acting Minister. Consequently, the procedures are tighter and the rules have been adjusted accordingly. Regarding the movement of swabs from the laboratory in Victoria, I understand that they go to the same New South Wales laboratory as the South Australian Jockey Club uses. I further understand that it has a more comprehensive testing program. In addition, there seems to be great interest in etorphine (or elephant juice, as it is more com-

monly known) as the drug that has heightened anxiety and interest in the whole industry.

The tests undertaken by the laboratories, as established in Western Australia, came about by a certain scientist perfecting the efficiency of the testing program. That is now available. I am informed by SAJC officials and by my Manager of the Racing and Gaming Section that it is used and available in the New South Wales laboratories and is being used to test the swabs coming from the South Australian industry. I have answered the question clearly several times, and that is the answer.

RAILWAY HOUSING

Mr DUIGAN: Can the Minister of Transport inform the House of the reasons for no longer using resident stationmasters at a number of significant railway stations throughout Adelaide and whether or not any possibilities exist for putting tenants back into the residences on railway stations in order that they might provide some degree of protection and surveillance for the properties on those stations and act as a deterrent to vandalism? A number of railway stations throughout Adelaide have in the past had resident stationmasters cum caretakers who have provided a service to the public as well as maintaining the grounds surrounding the railway stations and at the same time acting as a deterrent by being an obvious presence at the station on a 24-hour basis.

Recently, there was a fire at the North Adelaide station, which has previously been manned 24 hours a day. This fire was brought about by vandals who were able to break into the existing house and, presumably, begin the fire. As yet, no-one has been apprehended for this offence. Some of the other stations which had resident stationmasters but which now do not are on the heritage list and include (in addition to North Adelaide) Belair, Mitcham and Smithfield. It has been put to me that one of the objectives of the STA in trying to maintain the quality of its facilities and the standard of its service would be enhanced by having people living in the residences previously occupied by resident stationmasters.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: I thank the honourable member for his question. A stationmaster being resident on the station property was common in the days of the South Australian Railways and the old Commonwealth Railways. That practice is certainly not so apparent today, because the role played by these railway stations has changed dramatically. The STA runs a metropolitan commuter system, and the need for resident stationmasters is not apparent: there is no need in most cases, because ticket selling can and does take place on trains. The resident stationmaster who was once commonplace is now very rare, if in fact he is seen at all.

But there are a number of old stationmaster residences on railway properties that are tenanted at present. The station to which the honourable member refers—North Adelaide—is a heritage building that unfortunately was destroyed and a lot of South Australian railway history was destroyed with it. That was a sad loss, but the building would not have been saved by that practice. I understand that there is on the property a railway cottage that is in bad condition.

Mr Duigan: Yes.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY: When Ministers answer questions they must know exactly what information is available to them. The point I wanted to clarify with my colleague (and he was kind enough to help me) was that there is a cottage or a stationmaster's residence at North Adelaide. My advice is that that residence is not in a condition that would have enabled residency. It is very costly to restore some of these old buildings. In any event, the move is towards fewer rather than more people on inner suburban railway stations. Having made those points in response to the honourable member's question, I believe that the matter is worthy of my attention. I will consider it and bring down a report for the honourable member and the House.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

Mr S.J. BAKER: I direct a question to the Minister of Recreation and Sport. Are there or are there not any minutes of the meeting that was convened to discuss the Batik Print issue?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The Batik Print case has been dealt with extensively by answers which I and the Minister of Mines and Energy have given. When I returned from overseas, I asked for a report from my officer on the issue of the minutes and the events surrounding the Batik Print decision. The report I received from my officer confirmed that the matter had been dealt with by the Trotting Control Board.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the House to order.

Mr Meier interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Goyder for continuing to interject after the House has been called to order. The Chair will not permit any member to be placed in the position of having to raise their voice to be heard in this Chamber.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: As a consequence of the allegations which were made yesterday by the member for Bragg, I have asked for a full report on all those issues raised, and that includes the issues that were raised today. I might say that the member for Bragg added nothing new today to support his argument that there is widespread fraud and corruption within the industry. When I receive that report I will be happy to make available to members any of the information in it.

PORT NOARLUNGA AQUATICS PROGRAM

Ms LENEHAN: Will the Minister of Education investigate the concerns of the Wirreanda High School Council regarding cutbacks to the Port Noarlunga Aquatics Program? Recently, I received a letter from the Chairperson of the school council and it states:

> Our concern is not only based on the principle of reducing instructor hours, but the timing of this action. Wirreanda High School has a history of commitment to providing aquatic instruction through its physical education and outdoor education program, a program which has been extremely successful and popular with our students, particularly in the senior years.

The letter further states:

> The timing of the announcement and its immediate implementation has caused much concern, disruption and loss of lesson time to our senior classes and shows little concern for the well being of our students.

Could the Minister provide a report to the Parliament about these concerns?

The SPEAKER: Order! I must caution the honourable member about introducing debate which she apparently did in her concluding remarks, and I again remind the honour-

able member that it is not necessary to repeat the question at the conclusion of the explanation.

The Hon. G.J. CRAFTER: I thank the honourable member for her question. I will obtain the precise information that she seeks about the conduct of those courses at the Wirreanda High School. I advise the House that, since the publication in the *Education Gazette* of the guidelines with respect to aquatic and swimming programs, a number of people have raised specific issues with me.

In 1976 guidelines were laid down with respect to the school swimming and aquatics programs. These guidelines have not changed, nor has the swimming budget been reduced, as was the implication in the representations made to the honourable member. In recent years there has been a lack of control in relation to the expansion of these programs, and that has resulted in overexpenditure of budgets for these programs. In the 1985-86 budget there was quite a significant overexpenditure, and in the 1987 school year that has resulted in schools being restricted to the guidelines that have been established over a long period of time so that this program can come in on the budget provided. I am sure that all members would agree that Government expenditure should be contained within the appropriate and established budgets.

The cutbacks are, as has been alleged, really an attempt by the Education Department to allow the expanded programs to continue at the Education Department's expense, if they are allowed to continue in that way. I think that is the case at the school to which the honourable member referred. For example, according to the guidelines, a specific class of school swimming instructor could be used to provide an hour of instruction per week, and in recent years some schools have increased the number of instructor hours to up to four hours per week of paid instruction.

In effect, the Education Department says that the school does not have to cut back in a program, but that the additional period of paid instruction will have to be managed from resources outside the voted Education Department's swimming budget; in other words, from resources that are available to the school within the school's existing budget or external to that. That is a matter of priorities within that school community. The swimming budget does however make some allowance for the training of instructors and parent volunteers, and those people could receive training through the existing budget line.

Organisations throughout this area of the education system, including swimming instructors and lifesaving groups, were widely canvassed before the *Gazette* announcement was published. I also advise members that I have initiated a review of the swimming and acquatic programs conducted by the Education Department. Government expenditure on these programs is now about $3 million per annum. It is the most comprehensive swimming and aquatic program conducted by any education authority in Australia, and it is appropriate that these important programs be reviewed so that they can be placed on a firm foundation in the interests of school communities and particularly the young people who benefit so much from them.

TROTTING CONTROL BOARD

Mr OSWALD: Will the Minister of Recreation and Sport say why no minutes were taken at the Trotting Control Board meeting on 1 July at which the Batik Print swab was first discussed, when the Act requires that, in fact, minutes be kept?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: As I indicated to the member for Mitcham and the member for Coles (and as I indicated yesterday to the member for Bragg), in relation to the matters raised by the honourable member yesterday I have asked for a full report, and that includes the very matter raised by the member for Morphett. I will have the information available and I am happy to provide it to members. As I say, I am waiting—

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: It seems that the member for Mitcham knows a lot about the racing industry now. I am waiting for the member for Bragg to validate his accusations and widespread attacks on the industry, and yet we still wait. Unfortunately, it is all very well for the member to sit in here with the privilege and protection of Parliament, but he has not yet said those things outside, in an environment where he is subject to the normal actions of law that all citizens face. So, finally, as I have the opportunity during this Question Time to do so, I call upon him to place before the police, the appropriate authority, that evidence—

Mr Olsen interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The Leader of the Opposition says, 'He has placed it there.' I am afraid that he has not done so. He has done nothing, and what he provided yesterday was absolutely nothing.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, following the direction that you gave to the House earlier this Question Time about the relevance of material provided by Ministers in response to questions from members, would you inform the House whether or not you consider the subject matter presently canvassed by the Minister to be relevant to the matter of minutes of the meeting of July last year.

The SPEAKER: In terms of the general principles of the point of order raised by the member for Murray-Mallee, I refer him again to the statement that I made on 7 August last year. Regarding the specific application of that point of order as to whether or not I considered the Minister's response out of order, the answer is 'No,' or I would have called the Minister to order. Does the Minister wish to conclude his reply?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I was going to conlude on another point: it is important that I reinforce my earlier statements that, in fact, the board did address this issue. The board did address the Batik Print case and it did so by altering the rules. I think that that has got to be recorded. We seem to lose sight of the very fact that the board acted as a responsible body in addressing that. Also it is noted in the press releases which the acting Minister made at that time that there was an error of judgment on the part of the board. No one is running away from that. I mentioned yesterday that I accepted that there had been, in my opinion, an error of judgment. In relation to that issue, I think it is very relevant as an answer. But again I repeat: I would like the member for Bragg to come out and provide his evidence, because if he has it then it is important that the industry has it so that we can address the issue—but we have not got it yet.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr GREGORY: Is the Minister of Labour aware of the continuing practice of members of the Opposition of misrepresenting the industrial relations record in South Australia? Can he outline to the House the effects that this continuing misrepresentation will have on potential investors in our State?

Members interjecting:

Mr GREGORY: You will cop a load, because you are the chief ratbag.

The SPEAKER: Order! The last remark from the honourable member for Florey was out of order.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I thank the honourable member for Florey for his question. As you would know, Mr Speaker, he has had many years in the industrial relations sphere and without exception they were constructive years, unlike those of the member for Mitcham.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister is receiving too much assistance from the Government back bench.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: You are very kind, Sir. The member for Florey is unlike the member for Mitcham, who seems for reasons best known to himself to have embarked on a course in this State and in his role as shadow Industrial Relations Minister of doing his level best to destroy South Australia's reputation throughout the State and throughout Australia.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The member for Mitcham says that I am doing that myself. The member for Mitcham has a short memory. I am glad that he raised this matter because, with regard to my role and the Government's role, in a news item on 5AA on 3 March the news reader said:

> The shadow Industrial Relations Minister, Stephen Baker, says figures show a massive 78 per cent increase in the number of days lost during last year.

Mr S.J. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I will come back to that in a moment. Stephen Baker is quoted as saying:

> All I can say is that this Government is currently doing all in its power to make sure that that does not continue.

I thank the member for Mitcham for those kind words, which are now on the record. That is the only positive statement that I have ever heard from him. I want to contrast that with the quite outrageous behaviour of the member for Mitcham in this area. I will also contrast his behaviour in this area with the behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition, who does not go around denigrating the industrial relations record of this State in the way in which the member for Mitcham does.

A report appeared in the *Advertiser* about a fortnight ago in which the member for Mitcham was reported as saying that South Australia's record of industrial disputation was 20 times worse than that of some overseas performers. What are the facts? I will give the House the facts. The member for Mitcham is grossly distorting the industrial relations record of South Australia in comparison with that of some of our major trading partners overseas. South Australia's record in this area is significant: the figures are kept by the International Labor Organisation, and are very detailed. The fact is that South Australia has a better industrial relations record than Canada, the United States of America, France, West Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom—very significant countries with comparable economies. So, the honourable member is misrepresenting the position.

He has also misrepresented labour costs in South Australia. In various quotes which have been quite properly recorded by the media he is reported as saying that we have very high labour costs and a high level of industrial disputation. The comparison figures on labour costs are there for everyone to see, so I do not know what the member for Mitcham's motives are in distorting those figures. In fact, when compared with our five major competitors—France, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Japan and West Germany—Australia has the lowest relative labour costs.

Those facts are freely available to anyone with an interest in the area. Again, on the subject of wage restraint, the latest OECD figures (which, again, are available to everyone) show that real wages in Australia are now a lot lower than most of our competitors, including Korea. The facts are available and the member for Mitcham chooses to distort them. I look in vain for the member for Mitcham's alternative proposals. What is the policy of the Liberal Party? As far as I can make out there seems to be a competition between their Leader, John Howard, and Joh Bjelke-Petersen to see who can bash the unions the most. The employers support neither. They do not support the statements emanating from the member for Mitcham. The employers (to their credit) in this State contradict his statements and put the member for Mitcham straight.

In fact, the member for Mitcham, purporting to represent the business community in this State, is an embarrassment to them. They wish that he would shut up. He does incalculable damage to the image of South Australia, and I make the plea to the Leader of the Opposition that, if the Liberal Party wants the support of employer organisations and employers in this State, he tell the member for Mitcham to desist from the stupid, nonsensical and damaging statements he makes against the industrial relations record in this State.

RURAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr GUNN: Will the Minister of Agriculture advise what representations he has made to the Commonwealth Government to improve the rural assistance program currently available to rural producers and small business people facing ruin in South Australia? The Minister would be well aware that many farming enterprises are currently on the verge of bankruptcy. He should also be aware of an independent survey, undertaken on the Upper Eyre Peninsula by the United Farmers and Stockowners Association, which showed that 92 per cent of the 60 families surveyed considered their viability threatened. Every respondent to the survey indicated the wish to keep on farming, and high interest and borrowing charges were identified as the greatest threat—despite the Premier's recent statement that interest rates were not a major problem for farmers. In view of the alarming nature of these statistics, I ask the Minister to specify what representations he has made to his Federal colleagues.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: I thank the honourable member for his question, because as he, as well as the member for Flinders, would appreciate the situation facing their constituents is a very grave one indeed. The member for Flinders was at a meeting at Tumby Bay recently when I made a tour of the West Coast, including the towns of Tumby Bay, Cleve and Ceduna. I met with a wide cross-section of the community in those areas. Details of the survey to which the honourable member refers were made available to me at one of the meetings I attended. It is quite evident that we have to introduce some flexibility into the rural assistance package to assist farmers under stress. The steps we have taken already in anticipation that 1987 would not be a good year have put us in a reasonable position to address the problems. More can be done and I hope that we can achieve some of our ambitions in assisting those farming families.

As members would be aware, we increased seven-fold our contribution to the rural assistance funds this financial year, and we now have some $50 million available. We have to improve our communications with the farming community in order to provide information as to the availability of funds to those communities. That must be improved, and we are seriously considering how we can do that. It means

working with some rural crisis committees, as well as with the United Farmers and Stockowners, churches, and local community groups in the various areas. In addition, at the recent meeting of the Agricultural Council held in New Zealand I, together with other Ministers, supported a call for a review of the rural assistance package. A series of meetings will discuss that matter, the first of these to be held in Melbourne next Friday. Tomorrow, officers will attend the meeting in Melbourne at which proposals will be put forward.

Basically, our thrust will be, in general terms, to improve the flexibility of the rural assistance package, to seek additional funding for rural assistance, and to provide a more flexible attitude to household support. The latter topic will take some time in negotiation because we will need to engage the Federal Government and the Minister for Primary Industry in some examples of the situation that is facing some of our rural communities. That is a broad brush description of the approach that our officers will make at tomorrow's meeting with officers from the Commonwealth and from other States. On Friday, we will meet as Ministers, and I hope that we will come from that meeting with additional funds and a greater flexibility in the package that will help our rural community, especially at present on the West Coast, although I acknowledge that there are other communities, such as those in the Mid North and the South-East, in respect of which we must address the problem.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: And Whyalla.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Yes. Regarding the surveys that are being undertaken, we have asked for additional information.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Labour) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the State Government Insurance Commission Act 1970. Read a first time.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Government recently announced that to enable the new Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986 to be brought into operation on 30 September 1987 it is necessary for the State Government Insurance Commission to undertake certain delegated functions on behalf of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Corporation.

Whilst the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act contains appropriate provisions to facilitate the delegation of the necessary powers and functions to the SGIC, the Crown Solicitor has advised that some technical amendment to the State Government Insurance Commission Act is desirable in order to clarify that the commission has power to exercise the delegated responsibilities.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides for the insertion of a new subsection (3a) in section 12 of the principal Act. This subsection states that the commission is a public instrumentality to which a delegation may be made under the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986, and that the commission has the necessary power to exercise any power or function that is delegated. The commission will, when acting as a delegate, be required to comply with the conditions of the delegation, policies enunciated by the corporation and directions given by the corporation. The commission will be able to subdelegate a delegated power or function.

Mr S.J. BAKER secured the adjournment of the debate.

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Labour) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Dangerous Substances Act 1979. Read a first time.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Dangerous Substances Act provides for the safe keeping, handling, conveyance and use of toxic, corrosive or flammable substances and has been in operation since July 1981. The Act places a high duty of care on persons who keep or convey large quantities of dangerous substances and authorises the making of regulations which, in the main, adopt various standards of the Standards Association of Australia to provide detailed safety requirements.

This duty of care is commensurate with the very high potential for injury to persons and damage to property associated with the storage and transport of large quantities of dangerous substances. A serious accident does occur from time to time, which serves as a reminder of the necessity for the observance of the comprehensive measures that are required by the Act to ensure the greatest degree of safety to persons and property from uncontrolled dangerous substances.

The present maximum penalty for breaches of the Act and regulations is $1 000 and, while that level of penalty was considered appropriate when the Act was assented to in 1979, it is now considered to be totally inadequate as a penalty for offences which could result in death or serious injury and destruction or pollution of property. The Bill amends the Dangerous Substances Act 1979 to increase the maximum penalty for the offence of failing to take proper precautions with respect to a dangerous substance in order to avoid endangering the safety of any person or property to $40 000 in the case of a body corporate and $8 000 or two years imprisonment or both in the case of a natural person. The maximum penalty for keeping or conveying a dangerous substance without a licence is increased to $30 000 in the case of a body corporate and $4 000 or one year's imprisonment in the case of a natural person.

It is the Government's view that the maximum penalty under the Act should reflect Parliament's resolve to ensure that all reasonable safety precautions are observed by those responsible for the control of dangerous substances. The introduction of imprisonment as a penalty will allow the courts to provide for cases where gross dereliction of duty is proven and serious injury or death results. The Bill increases from $1 000 to $4 000 the penalties in relation to other minor offences under the Act. I seek leave to have the detailed explanation of the clauses of the Bill inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 amends section 9 of the Act. The maximum penalty for the offences of hindering an inspector, failing to answer questions put by an inspector and failing to comply with a direction given by an inspector is increased from $1 000 to $4 000. Clause 3 amends section 10 of the Act. The maximum penalty for the offence of

divulging information obtained while engaged in the administration of the Act is increased from $1 000 to $4 000.

Clause 4 amends section 11 of the Act. The maximum penalty for the offence of falsely representing that one is engaged in the administration of the Act is increased from $1 000 to $4 000. Clause 5 amends section 12 of the Act. The maximum penalty for the offence of failing to take care in relation to a dangerous substance is increased from $1 000 to $40 000 in the case of a body corporate and $8 000 or imprisonment for two years or both in any other case.

Clause 6 amends section 14 of the Act. The penalty for the offence of keeping a dangerous substance without a licence is increased from $1 000 to $30 000 in the case of a body corporate and $4 000 or imprisonment for one year in any other case.

Clause 7 amends section 18 of the Act. The penalty for the offence of conveying a dangerous substance without a licence is increased from $1 000 to $30 000 in the case of a body corporate and $4 000 or imprisonment for one year in any other case.

Clause 8 amends section 26 of the Act which provides that where a body corporate is guilty of an offence against the Act the members of the governing body and the manager of the body corporate are also guilty of an offence. The amendment is consequential to the amendments to sections 12, 14 and 18 of the Act. It provides that the relevant penalty for such an offence is that applicable to the offence of which the body corporate is guilty when committed by a natural person. Clause 9 amends section 30 of the Act. The maximum penalty that may be prescribed for an offence against a regulation is increased from $1 000 to $4 000.

Mr S.J BAKER secured the adjournment of the debate.

ENFIELD GENERAL CEMETERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. G.F. KENEALLY (Minister of Transport): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Leave granted.

Explanation of Bill

This Bill amends the Enfield General Cemetery Act to empower the Enfield General Cemetery Trust to acquire or establish and operate cemeteries in addition to the Enfield General Cemetery. The Enfield General Cemetery Trust has entered into an agreement, subject to the enactment of enabling legislation, whereby the trust will acquire the Cheltenham Cemetery from the city of Port Adelaide. The Enfield General Cemetery Trust is endeavouring to establish a high level of expertise in cemetery and crematorium management and believes the opportunity to acquire and operate the Cheltenham Cemetery is consistent with and will enable it to further that objective while allowing the Cheltenham Cemetery to be redeveloped to meet the future needs of the community which it presently services.

The Government has been assured by the trust that any redevelopment and reuse will be undertaken with empathy for families whose relatives are interred in the Cheltenham Cemetery. The widening of the sphere of operations of the Enfield Cemetery Trust creates the opportunity in the future for the trust to be involved in the management and operation of other older metropolitan cemeteries, which because of their deterioration have become a cause of concern to local communities. The trust has already received approaches from other cemetery managements seeking to explore the possibility of the trust becoming involved in their operations. The Bill also makes a number of other amendments to the Act to bring it up to date.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 provides for an amendment to the long title of the principal Act by adding that the intention of the Act is to establish or acquire cemeteries in areas other than the Enfield General Cemetery. Clause 4 provides a consequential amendment to the arrangement of the Act by inserting a new heading to Part III of the principal Act.

Clause 5 is an amendment consequential on the additional power given to the Enfield General Cemetery Trust to establish, acquire or dispose of cemeteries. Clause 6 updates the name of the Anglican Church of Australia. Clause 7 makes a consequential amendment. Clause 8 provides for the repeal of the heading to Part III of the principal Act and the insertion of a new heading in line with the expanded scope of the Act.

Clause 9 firstly provides for the repeal of sections 20, 21 22a and 23 of the principal Act. These provisions relate to the prior establishment, use, management and the funding of operations relating to the Enfield General Cemetery and areas adjacent to the cemetery. Secondly, the clause provides for the insertion of two new sections of the principal Act—sections 20 and 21. Subsection (1) of section 20 provides for the continuation of the management of the Enfield General Cemetery by the Enfield General Cemetery Trust. Subsection (2) empowers the trust (subject to the written approval of the Minister) to establish, acquire or dispose of any other cemetery. Subsection (3) provides that the trust shall administer and maintain cemeteries as public cemeteries when such cemeteries are established or acquired by it pursuant to subsection (2).

Section 21 excludes the provisions of section 586 of the Local Government Act from applying to the Enfield General Cemetery or a cemetery established or acquired by the trust. The provisions so excluded relate to council control in relation to cemeteries.

Clauses 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 provide for amendments consequential on the expanded power of the trust to establish, acquire, or dispose of cemeteries other than the Enfield General Cemetery. They provide for powers, duties and responsibilities of the trust and the rights of persons or groups in relation to the Enfield General Cemetery to be expanded to apply to other cemeteries which may come under the management of the trust. Clauses 19, 20 and 21 provide respectively for consequential amendments to sections 40, 41 and 42 of the principal Act. These sections relate respectively to the keeping of a plan for a cemetery, the registration of burials and the registration of cremations.

Clause 22 provides for an amendment to the power of the trust to make regulations consequent on the expanded power of the trust and the expanded scope of the principal Act. Clause 23 provides a consequential amendment. Clause 24 repeals the first, second and third schedules of the principal Act. These schedules concerned the acquisition of land, including land which was established as for the Enfield General Cemetery.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK secured the adjournment of the debate.

WATERWORKS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from 10 March. Page 3292.)

Clauses 2 to 7 passed.

New clause 8—'Certain work may be carried out by owner.'

The Hon. P. B. ARNOLD: I move:

Page 2, after clause 7—Insert new clause as follows:

8. The following section is inserted in part VII of the principal Act after section 109:

109a. (1) Where a person, who has applied to the Minister for the extension of a main pipe, the connection of land to a main pipe or any other work for which the amount payable under this Act is the cost estimated by the Minister, is dissatisfied with the Minister's estimate, that person may, subject to this section, arrange for the work to be carried out by a competent person of his or her choice.

(2) The work must be carried out under the supervision, and to the satisfaction of the Minister.

(3) The Minister will, at the request of the applicant, provide the applicant with plans and specifications of the proposed work.

(4) The applicant will pay the Minister the prescribed fee for the supervision and inspection of the work but is not liable for any other charge or fee under this Act in respect of the work.

As I said in the second reading stage, if the Government is serious about containing costs, particularly in view of the Minister's statement about the Government's intention that the 'user pays' principle will come into force more under this legislation than in the past, it becomes all the more essential that, if the user is to pay, the work to be undertaken be carried out at the most economical price that can be achieved. I refer to a question I put to the previous Minister of Water Resources, the member for Gilles, on 6 December 1984:

Will the Minister of Water Resources allow private sector operators to install new sewer and water connections in the metropolitan area, where it can be demonstrated that this facility can be provided at a price much less than that requested by the E&WS Department? I have been advised by a pensioner couple, who have made application to subdivide portion of their property, that the E&WS Department has requested a contribution of $10 625 towards the cost of providing water and sewer services to the proposed new allotment. The $10 625 is to provide and lay approximately 30 metres of 20 millimetre, or less than one inch, water pipe, and 30 metres of 100 millimetre sewer extension which is equivalent to four inches.

When other mandatory E&WS Department fees of some $895 and other expenses of approximately $1 000 outlaid to date are taken into account, the total costs associated with the proposed subdivision aggregate some $12 520. As the contribution of $10 625 requested by the E&WS Department is 39 per cent of the contracted sale price for the land this can only act as a disincentive to other persons in a similar situation in freeing up suitable allotments at a time when land for dwelling purposes is in short supply.

The Minister in his response stated:

There still persists a general fallacy in the minds of members opposite that private enterprise can do it better.

I said:

For less?

And the Minister said:

Yes, and the member for Chafey has added, 'For less' The E&WS Department charges for the provision of services based on an estimated cost and on many occasions that charge does not meet the return from the service provided.

The Minister continued with a lengthy response to my question. The point is that, where a surcharge is applied to a ratepayer or a customer of the E&WS Department because of the cost of that connection, that surcharge or contribution by the ratepayer, quite obviously, will depend on the cost of the connection. In this instance, the Minister wrote back to me later and said that he was prepared to allow the couple concerned to seek a quote from the private sector. I do not have the details of the quote with me, but it came in well below half of the cost estimated by the Minister.

I believe that this in itself clearly explains what we are trying to achieve in this amendment. Obviously we have to have the work undertaken at the best price if we are serious about containing costs. No-one is suggesting that the quality of work being undertaken by the private sector is better than that being done by the E&WS Department. We are suggesting that, because of competition, in many instances the private sector can carry out exactly the same work to the same standard as required by the E&WS Department for far less than half the cost. When we are talking about thousands of dollars for an individual family, it becomes very significant.

I know of numerous instances, particularly in the irrigation area in the Riverland, where the recent policy of the Government and the department has provided for growers to be able to subdivide their dwelling from their irrigation undertaking. This has been done partly on humane grounds because of the state of the industry and because in many instances growers were finding at the end of their days of active horticulture that, by the time they sold their home and their property, they had barely sufficient funds to purchase a home within the town, leaving them with no capital whatsoever. The provision enables them to retain their house and sell the property. But the costs of reconnecting the property with a second service to the main were astronomical. I have examples in my office where the quote from the department is about $15 000 and the private irrigation contractor has given a quote to do exactly the same job for $5 000.

This amendment protects the interests of the Government and the department by clearly setting out that the work must be carried out under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the Minister. In other words, the specifications will be provided by the department, the contractor will carry out the work to the standards laid down and, before the work is backfilled, an appropriate engineer from the E&WS Department will have to specify that the work has been carried out to the satisfaction of the department. That is not a very big job. In fact, the provision of the specifications and the actual inspection prior to the backfilling would not involve the department in any great cost. In many instances much of this work could be done at an estimated 50 per cent of the present costs and, where those situations exist, the opportunity ought to be provided as a matter of course for ratepayers and water consumers generally in South Australia to benefit from that provision.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I support this amendment very strongly. I suggest that the member for Chaffey, as a previous Minister of Water Resources, would know the practicality of this solution. It is an extremely practical move and one that I think would bring benefit to a number of people. The Minister may be aware (although I do not expect him to be aware of all the correspondence that comes before him at different times) that in recent days I forwarded a letter on behalf of a constituent who is having major work carried out by the E&WS Department.

I have questioned the costings associated with that work. I am sorry that I do not have a copy of that letter with me, because I would be able to refer to it and be more specific, but the Minister does have it and I suggest that, if it is possible for his officers to read that letter, they would see the practicalities associated with the case that the member for Chaffey puts forward. As the honourable member has indicated, it is a very reasonable proposition with plenty of safeguards. To be frank, I do not know whether I would have gone quite as far as that in regard to safeguards. I

think that the majority of people have faith in the private sector and recognise that the work that it does in the majority of cases is first-class, but the member for Chaffey has suggested that that should be the case and I support his proposal.

I ask the Minister to look seriously at the matter. I can see nothing but good coming from this amendment. I can see many people being advantaged to a large extent as a result of being able to consult with and to bring in the private sector to carry out work and, as I have argued ever since I came into this place, if the private sector can do it more cheaply and as efficiently as the public sector, then it is only commonsense that it should be given the opportunity to do that work. I strongly support the amendment proposed by the member for Chaffey.

Mr LEWIS: I support the comments made by my colleagues the member for Chaffey and the member for Heysen. However, it has been my experience that quotes provided by departmental construction and installation facilities are not just one or two times greater than the cost of the alternative but, rather, 10 or 20 times greater. I cite a case where a pipe had to be installed across a sandhill at Meningie. There was no limestone, no trees, no roots, and it had to be installed in grey sand. The installation of a small dimension pipe was quoted to cost $1 000 per foot but, instead of it costing $30 000, it should have been about $2 300 and certainly no more than $3 000.

When I discover such examples I am appalled that there is no option other than to use the public installation authority. The workers who were to perform the actual digging of the trench and the installation of the pipes were not to be paid all that money but, rather, the engineer who made the estimate in Adelaide did not know the nature of the topography, the nature of the soil or the A and B horizons through which the trenches were to be dug. The engineer considered that there was such a high likelihood of limestone being present that the cost quoted was of the order that I have indicated rather than the lower sum. They were absolutely bloody-
minded in their inflexibility on this matter, and that made me very angry.

For that reason I believe that we need to allow any citizen to have the work performed in the most cost effective fashion rather than insisting upon the use of the single construction monopoly of the department before approval can be given for a subdivision, the installation of a main to connect water where previously it has not been connected and similarly the case of sewerage. They could do it themselves, with the help of friends, or by using another contractor under the supervision of an engineer from the department who could inspect the site, the depth and the bed on which the installation is to be made before backfilling is permitted.

There are many other examples of such problems occurring in towns such as Karoonda, Lameroo, Geranium, Coonalpyn and Keith and, when I was member for Mallee, Kingston. The legislation should provide that this kind of installation can be undertaken by other than a monopoly single authority construction facility within the very department which has the right to grant or refuse permission for the subdivision or development to go ahead. I commend the member for Chaffey for the commonsense that he has demonstrated in moving this amendment. I believe sincerely that the Minister, as an honourable man of goodwill and taking into account the public interest, which he has sworn to serve, will in all probability agree to the amendment—I sincerely hope so.

Mr MEIER: I support the amendment. In the four years that I have been in this House it goes without saying that on many occasions the Government has learnt from the Liberal Opposition. It has taken notice of policies and ideas put forward, and probably that is one of the benefits of the type of legislative process under which we operate, but often the Government does not do that publicly and it comes through the back door. I see it in this case as a natural extension of the direction in which the Government has shifted in the past 12 months; namely, allowing the private sector a greater influence in various areas. Members may recall that the Liberal Party used the term 'privatisation', but the Government did not like that word and during the last election campaign it spoke against it. It is nothing more than an extension—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member needs to link his remarks to the amendment before us. I think that he is drifting a little from the subject.

Mr MEIER: In my opinion, this amendment is a logical extension of privatisation which the Government can take up in order to allow greater efficiency in the operation of the E&WS Department and to allow residents, where they would prefer a private contractor to undertake the work at a reduced cost, to do so. It is quite clear and in fact commercially sensible that a move in this direction should occur. I hope that the Minister will accept this amendment and that he will not reject it now and then, in 12 months or two years time, introduce it as part of Government legislation, because there are people in my electorate who have wanted extensions and who, if there was an opportunity to have them undertaken privately, probably would have done that. Let us not delay any more.

Yesterday, in the second reading debate I mentioned that the rural sector particularly is being disadvantaged, and here is a classic example where the rural sector can be saved money by allowing private contractors to come in and undertake work which the E&WS Department may have undertaken under normal circumstances. It seems a logical extension of what the Government has done in the past 12 months in relation to the STA, the Housing Trust, ETSA and Amdel. I commend the amendment to the Minister.

Mr D.S. BAKER: I support totally the shadow Minister's amendment, which is a step in the right direction. This helps not only people in the rural areas, who are severely disadvantaged in relation to these types of extensions, as they are more extensive than those in the metropolitan area, but also those in the metropolitan area. At present when either the E&WS Department or ETSA provides a quote for a job, it is not a quote because there is always an escalation clause. A job is quoted on but there is no come back. It is very hard to get any of their cost estimate split up into a normal quoting situation, where one knows what is being spent on materials and on labour.

It is imperative that we allow people to obtain quotes from outside to have work done. Inefficient organisations or organisations that are in themselves a monopoly have inbuilt overhead costs which far exceed those in private enterprise. I would defend them by saying that it may not be the fault of the organisation concerned, but one of the reasons is that they are not subject to the scrutiny to which private organisations are subjected.

An example of this concerns quotes that were recently provided by ETSA to do some extensions for people in the country. When asked to split up its quote, ETSA quoted a figure of $500 per pole for transport from Adelaide to Mount Gambier. This is quite ludicrous and is totally uncommercial. Unfortunately, when questioned ETSA said, 'That is our overhead costs and that is the way we do it.' I

suspect that if the quotes given by ETSA were split up these unrealistic and uncommercial transport rates, as well as the labour rates, would come to light.

The other thing which is most unfortunate with both organisations and which one does not find in any other commercial organisation is that one is expected to pay the money up front, with then either ETSA or the E&WS Department doing the work at their behest. In both organisations some of the delays are up to 12 months. In rural areas, where the total cost is greater than probably the smaller city extensions, some people, having paid some $10 000 to $50 000, have waited 12 months for the extensions to be done. They object to this and, of course, a system must be instituted to improve this.

There is no reason why payment cannot be made just before commencement of the work. It would make no difference to the quoting. Any escalation in labour or material costs is covered in every quote. The problem is that in most cases the amount of money given to the user is not a quote: it is couched as an estimate and, of course, it can be varied at will. The shadow Minister pointed out that the Government is adequately covered in proposed new subsection (4) of the amendment, in that the Minister may charge a prescribed fee. However, as one other speaker said, a concern is that that may be used to recoup some of the overhead costs for the supervision of the service. As the Minister would well know, at present ETSA supervises all installations of underground cables, etc., and of course that is done free of charge. I totally support the amendment, and I hope that the Minister will consider it sympathetically.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I believe that this amendment brings a fresh ray of hope to the Parliament. This move was tried back in 1974 or 1975. If it was not done by an amendment, it was at least an attempt to try to get a Minister to commit himself at that time. However, that was an era when Federal Governments were throwing around money like there was no end to it and that the country could simply produce it without having the necessary resources. The idea was therefore rejected at that time. I put to the Minister now in all seriousness that this is a very important amendment that should be supported by the Government. The department is losing out on some revenue which it could obtain if it was prepared to accept this proposition. If the Minister's answer or that of his department is that if we do not have the installation work we will lose money, the inference from that is that the Government is trying to make a profit on installations and that it is not just charging what it thinks it costs it in overheads, material and manpower that are directly involved in supervision or installation.

A group of residents who live just off Sheoak Road, Belair, applied to have sewer mains connected to their homes. Admittedly, this is steep country and the work is expensive, but the department provided a quote (and I will not go into all the details) that I would say was outrageous. There is no doubt in my mind, coming from a background where earthmoving was part of my trade, that the work could be done more cheaply by private enterprise. The result was that some of the homeowners concerned said that they could not afford it, and it was true that they could not afford it. The department offered to allow them to pay it off over a period of time—they could have a percentage on their accounts each year. However, those people who felt that they could not be obligated to any greater extent than they were at the moment, considering the size of interest rates today on their mortgages, etc., and other commitments under the present form of government that we have in this State and country, decided that they could not do it and therefore they opted out of the scheme.

This meant that there would be a bigger burden on the other people who were left, and gradually more and more of them fell out, as happens under the domino theory. If they were able to get a quote and do the work themselves, their property would then be connected and the department would collect rates from all those properties each year. As it is now, a health hazard remains in the community and an environmental hazard, because the cost is out of their reach.

I shall give another example, which involved me when the Hon. Mr Corcoran was Minister of Water Resources. I bought a property that was already subdivided and changed it slightly to make the blocks bigger. I applied to have the mains extended, and I said to Mr Corcoran that for the time for which the department would charge I could dig it with a teaspoon. He agreed that it was a very high price, but he said that that was what the department said its costs were. I priced the pipe that was exactly the same as specified by the department. It had to be a loop line in the end, and I knew the exact distance. Had I gone to a private operator, the actual cost of doing it, even if I had to pay the department some exorbitant amount for supervision, was a lot less.

The other thing is that on most occasions one has to pay the department up front before it will start. Also, if the department happens to have a few hold-ups because it cannot shift plant from one spot to another or it strikes a bit of rock, and it then runs into the wet months, there are ongoing costs to the owner of the property, whether it be a developer or whoever, in relation to interest on the money that has been paid in.

If the Minister agrees to this amendment he will be doing a service not just to the property holder but also in many cases to intending purchasers of allotments. In some areas where one wants to create, say, three, four or five allotments in a subdivision that is already mainly developed, the department asks for very high fees.

For example, a few years ago the amount involved to do a small extension in MacNamara Road, Coromandel Valley, was something like $30 000. That was to go past six homes; there was an existing road; and this was not bad country to dig in—it was tough, but not bad. Nowadays, if that owner went along it would be something like $8 000 an allotment. Some poor individual might hope to build a home on such an allotment and, with interest rates like they are, the price of the allotment is immediately pushed up into a higher category, as one has to pay not only the costs of the Engineering and Water Supply Department but also the high costs of purchasing the money to either build the house or buy the allotment.

Surely we Parliamentarians believe that we should give individuals every opportunity to have services connected to existing or intended home sites at the lowest possible price, while conforming to the standards that are required to guarantee public safety for health, flooding and other reasons. That should be our prime objective. Forget whether it is private or public enterprise, or whether we are socialists or nonsocialists, and let us think about what our goal should be. If the Minister says that the department can do this as well as private enterprise, what is wrong with this amendment? I am not arguing about that. If the Minister says that the department can do it cheaper than, or as cheap as, private enterprise (and I say that they cannot), or as fast as private enterprise, then what is wrong with the amendment? If the department can do it under those conditions the individual will not be able to do any better by going to private enterprise. That has to be the logical conclusion that we as Parliamentarians must come to.

We must be strong in our convictions before we change old policies or practices. I know that people in some departments will want to protect what is around them: I understand that. If they do that efficiently, this amendment will not take anything away from what they already have: it cannot do that, because, as the member for Victoria made the point in his speech, the amendment does not go quite far enough, as it still leaves a loophole for a department to say that the cost of supervising and producing plans is quite substantial. So that is it.

Also, there is still an opportunity within the Parliament to look at regulations that come through at any time. I expect the same answer as I got in 1974-75. I can give the Minister the other examples of Hills towns that are entitled to have water and, particularly, sewerage connected, but where costs are stopping people going on with them. I ask the Minister to think this through and to say that, if the department can do this efficiently and up to required standards, and if it is cheaper than private enterprise, then neither he nor his department need be afraid of this amendment. There is nothing in it which is sinister or which will deny the department the right to do the work.

If that is the case, we as Parliamentarians should be confident about accepting it and passing it so that at last, and jointly, we will do a service for those people who are attempting to buy a block of land at the lowest possible price while conforming to all the standards, in the hope that one day they can say not only that they have the title but also that they have it completely freehold. This is a great amendment, and everybody should be thrilled to support it.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: I presume, Mr Acting Chairman, that we are exercising some latitude here in respect of the fact that although there are two Bills that I have introduced to be debated this afternoon, they both encompass the same principles so far as the amendment raised by the member for Chaffey is concerned. Just as the member for Davenport and others have adverted to sewerage, which is mentioned specifically in the next Bill, I presume that I am also in order talking about sewerage as well as water services. I think that that is reasonable.

In formulating our attitude to the honourable member's amendment we must make absolutely sure that we are all talking about the one thing, because it seems to me that there are at least three broad sets of circumstances to which the honourable member may be addressing himself. I think that the applicability of the amendment, and the cogency of his explanations, and that of his colleagues' explanations, varies somewhat according to the set of circumstances to which we are referring.

The first set of circumstances which I raise is that where there is a large, probably metropolitan subdivision proceeding under approval under the Planning Act, with the requirement, of course, that water supply and sewerage be connected to the blocks as they come on the market. Usually, of course, that cost is passed on through the cost of the block. Whether it is passed on fully or not would depend on how competitive the land market happened to be at the time. The current arrangement is that if, in fact, an applicant developer is providing the majority of funds for a particular service, it is usual that that is done by contract labour.

On the other hand, if the Government is providing the majority of the funds, for whatever reason—headworks, or something like that—then that is done by the E&WS day labour force. That is the normal provision which applies in those subdivisions nowadays, except that from time to time requests may be received from the applicant developer that the E&WS day labour force proceed with the work.

The Hon. P.B. Arnold interjecting:

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: All right—as long as we have it clear that the honourable member's amendment does not really refer to that area. There are enormous sums of money involved, and in some ways the sum total of activity involved in that work probably very much exceeds the remaining two sorts of examples that I want to lay before the Committee. So, there is no argument to support honourable members in relation to the first matter, because it is one that is already, I think, understood by the Government, by private developers and by the unions involved and supported by all parties.

The second relates to those areas where the standard charges are to apply: the laying of mains and services, connections up to 50 mm for water supply and 150 mm for sewerage. The whole concept of the standard charge is that there will naturally be overs and unders and that there will be circumstances in which people will, in fact, be paying less than they would have otherwise done because of the element of subsidy which is coming from other sorts of situations.

Yesterday, in discussions on the second reading, the House put forward the whole question of the subsidy that flows between the metropolitan and country areas. It is also true that if you are to go to standard charges there will be an element of subsidy, obviously between those who are in rough country and those who are situated where it is fairly easy for the service to be provided. For the benefit of the honourable member for Davenport, for example, that very much relates to the relativities between the Hills and the plains. The member for Davenport gave us an example where I am given to understand that the requirement was a recovery of 7.5 per cent of $60 000 on the rates which is $4 300 a year.

That situation would now be subject to the standard contribution. The standard contribution in those circumstances works out on the basis of $2 300 per block or $1 300 if a septic tank is already operating. I do not think that the honourable member is suggesting that the benefits of any unders should be passed on to developers because that would destroy the overall concept of what we are trying to achieve in these circumstances. In addition, the whole point of the standard contribution is to try to assist the sort of people on whose behalf the member for Davenport was speaking a little while ago. That really only leaves the sort of cost recovery circumstances that members opposite are trying to get to on the whole question of costs.

Reference has already been made to the last portion of the amendment where it is made clear that, if the amendment is carried, the applicant will pay the Minister the prescribed fee for the supervision and inspection of the work, but is not liable for any other charge or fee under this Act in respect of the work. I do not know at this stage how that would be accounted. I do not know, once it had been accounted by whatever method for the supervision and inspection, that even if the work could be carried out more cheaply the ultimate cost would be of any benefit to the consumer. In addition, if there is no real benefit to the consumer, then nothing has really been achieved. It is assumed that in these circumstances there would be no movement from the day labour work force to private contract. If in fact there is a movement to a private contract then of course a further problem arises in that obviously I would have an underutilised blue collar work force which must be provided for all sorts of other reasons to do with the proper supply of water and the removal of sewage in these limited areas of the State where sewer services are provided.

It is quite obvious that there would have to be considerable supervision. Some contractors would be able to work effectively, but we cannot rule out the problem of inexperienced contractors who could cause major disruptions to this and other departmental systems, given that other services these days are often undergrounded, and I get back to the point I made earlier. Considerable flexibility exists in the Act as amended by my Bill, if I may for a moment be a little presumptuous and assume that the Bill in some form or other will succeed through the parliamentary process. It gets down to the fact that as Minister I would like to be able to exercise that flexibility. I can quite understand the reasons for honourable members opposite wanting to tie me down in the way that they have. I am saying that, whether or not this amendment is carried, flexibility can be exercised in certain cases although, to be fair to the Committee, in most of the sorts of cases I have raised I would prefer that the daily paid work force was involved in the work concerned.

For those reasons I ask the Committee to reject the amendment. In a broad range of cases I do not think the amendment is strictly applicable to the legislation, anyway, with the advantages that the standard contributions concept will give, particularly to those people on whom costs, although they remain relatively high, would be considerably higher but for this legislation. It finally gets down to the fact that I, as Minister, would naturally prefer to have the flexibility to determine cases as they arise, and this amendment, if carried by the Parliament, would remove from me some of that flexibility.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I am particularly disappointed in that attitude, although perhaps it is one we might expect from a Labor Government. It is a tragedy for South Australia, because we are trying to compete with the rest of the world, and this will perpetrate the disadvantages we have here in operating and will create some of the highest costs in the world. There is little hope of our being competitive on the world scene as long as we persist with this sort of attitude.

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: That is right, and numerous examples were put before me of private contractors being used where individuals were not satisfied with the quote given by the department. Unfortunately, in most instances put up in recent times it is a prolonged argument to try to get that right for the individual to go out and get a figure from a contractor. Safeguards exist in subclauses (3) and (4) to totally protect the standard of E & WS work. We are locked into the philosophy that work has to be done by the department to retain the current level of personnel that we have for doing this type of work. Natural attrition over the next couple of years in that area will enable the Minister to adjust his work force without anyone being put off or sacked, so no problem exists with that. If the work is not being done by employees of the E & WS Department it will be done by employees of a contractor; therefore, the work is still being done by South Australians.

I classify all people as South Australians, and that is what we are talking about: whether they work for the Government or a private company should have no bearing on the issue. An enormous number of examples exist where, due to the size of many housing blocks in the older suburbs of metropolitan Adelaide, people have sufficient land to provide for a subdivision and could build a second home on that land. The sewers and water mains already exist. We are making far greater use of the Government's existing capital asset in the ground and obtaining a far greater rate revenue return from the existing resource assets without having to extend countless kilometres of new mains. If we can effectively make use of the existing mains, roads and infrastructure (in other words, increasing the density within planning guidelines), we ought to be doing that.

Someone subdividing a piece of land from their existing allotment in metropolitan Adelaide can be looking down the barrel at $12 000 for a few metres of sewer and pipe connections, and that is absolutely outrageous. This situation clearly exists, as I highlighted in the example at St Marys, where the departmental estimated cost to the couple concerned was $10 625. The quote that the previous Minister allowed those people to get from the private sector was about $5 000, the rider there being supervision charges on top. It becomes a proposition for people to subdivide and make greater use of the land that already exists in metropolitan Adelaide and to make greater use of the infrastructure.

Recently, a young couple who had arranged a housing loan from the bank applied to the Electricity Trust to have the power connected to their allotment. Although the powerlines did not have to be extended, the additional service meant that the existing lines had to be upgraded and the young couple were told that this would cost them $6 000. On returning to the bank to apply for an extra $6 000 on their loan, they were told that the additional sum would not be advanced.

I then took the matter up with ETSA, which, appreciating the situation, decided to make the connection for $200-odd, not $6 000. I am grateful to the Electricity Trust for deciding that, because I do not believe that the young couple should have been responsible for the cost of upgrading all the lines in the area. We are concerned that these costs are imposing an enormous burden on the whole community and, although we do not wish to see the erosion of the high standards required by the Electricity Trust over the years, it is most disturbing when the sort of thing to which I have referred occurs.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I understand that the Minister pointed out what the Bill does in relation to part of the matter that I raised. However, the Minister has not replied to the points that I made. If the department can do the work to the standard required at a cost which is either equal to or less than the cost if the work is performed by private enterprise, the amendment means nothing. However, if it were considered that some of the work should leave the department because the departmental cost was too high or the work done by the department was inefficient, we are saying here that we are prepared to have the department do the work and to condone extra expense for the battler in the community, not the rich businessman or the silver tail. In the end, the people who must pay are the individuals who wish to establish a home and raise a family, without going to a Government agency.

We do not ask for a subsidy for such people: we merely ask for the opportunity to engage the services of a qualified person. The Builders Licensing Act has been referred to, but I point out that, although when that legislation was before the House the Minister said that earthmovers need not be licensed, we were told two months later, after the Parliament had risen, that the earthmover would have to be licensed and that the Government had not realised what I was getting at when the legislation was before the House. In this case drainlayers may be in the same category. Indeed, there may be a licensing system that guarantees work of a certain standard. Further, plumbers need to be licensed.

By our amendment, we are seeking to give individuals the chance to occupy their own home at the lowest possible price while maintaining the standard required by the depart-

ment, and there can be no logical argument against the amendment. After all, the department can supervise the work of a contractor at any stage of the contract, before and after digging and after the mains have been laid.

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood: How much will that cost?

Mr S.G. EVANS: If the cost is too high, the work will not go to a private contractor. The department lays down the standards and there is no need to fear the amendment. After all, compaction can be tested if that is part of the deal. The Minister need not fear the amendment because, if there are doubts about its making the work too costly for private enterprise because of the requirements of departmental supervision, the department will get the work. If the Minister is not willing to accept the amendment in this place, I ask him to talk with his colleagues and departmental officers to see whether it can be accepted in another place.

Mr D.S. BAKER: I am disappointed at the attitude of the Minister, because everything that he would require is covered by the amendment. This sort of thing happens in respect of other work at present. For instance, private enterprise performs electrical work and ETSA inspects the end result. Building contractors, who must be licensed, have their work inspected by a Government agency. Considerable work is done by contractors for the Highways Department and, when it is completed, it is inspected.

The amendment merely gives an option to the consumer who must pay the bill. It depends on the efficiency of the organisation concerned, in this case, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and the Minister is given the option of seeing that his department is operating at the level of a similar private enterprise operation. It would be a tragedy if the Minister rejected the amendment. If he has an industrial relations problem, let him not hide behind it: he should come out and say that that is why he cannot accept the amendment. Every other factor in this matter, except that of day labour, is covered by the amendment.

If the Minister is prepared to allow the consumer to pay exorbitant costs because he has an industrial relations problem, it is time we had a closer look at his management of his portfolio. I still think that everything the Minister would require is covered in the amendment, and it should be followed through.

The Committee divided on the new clause:

Ayes (16)—Messrs Allison, P.B. Arnold (teller), D.S. Baker, S.J. Baker, Becker, and Blacker, Ms Cashmore, Messrs Chapman, Eastick, S.G. Evans, Goldsworthy, Lewis, Meier, Olsen, Oswald, and Wotton.

Noes (26)—Mr Abbott, Mrs Appleby, Messrs L.M.F. Arnold, Bannon, Blevins, Crafter, De Laine, Duigan, and M.J. Evans, Ms Gayler, Messrs Gregory, Groom, Hamilton, Hemmings, Hopgood (teller), Keneally, and Klunder, Ms Lenehan, Messrs Mayes, Payne, Peterson, Rann, Robertson, Slater, Trainer, and Tyler.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs Gunn and Ingerson. Noes—Messrs McRae and Plunkett.

Majority of 10 for the Noes.

New clause thus negatived.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from 10 March. Page 3292.)

Clause 2—'Commencement.'

Ms GAYLER: Can the Minister confirm that the new sewer mains extension policy and the charges it introduces via this Bill will not apply to areas presently served by common effluent drainage schemes operated by local government councils? Extensive areas of my district, in the suburbs of Tea Tree Gully, Surrey Downs, Fairview Park, Redwood Park, Banksia Park and Vista, are currently served by a common effluent drainage scheme. Under that scheme householders pay for their septic tank and in addition an annual levy of up to $111 to the Tea Tree Gully council. As common effluent schemes were progressively replaced by deep drainage, the costs were funded by the Government out of capital works funds as and when those schemes were installed. I would like to be able to reassure my constituents that this will continue to be the case and that they will not be asked to pay in excess of $20 million for deep drainage, having already paid for common effluent drainage schemes.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: The honourable member has that assurance. The matter was considered closely by the Government and the department during the compilation of the legislation. The position is as the honourable member has outlined to the Committee. I cannot cite a definite timetable for the upgrading, in respect of which there would be enormous costs if certain policies were to apply, but I can certainly indicate that the normal capital works program will be applied to this work if and when it is approved.

Clause passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 passed.

Clause 5—'Repeal of ss. 46, 47 and 48.'

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I move:

Page 2, line 5—After 'repealed' insert 'and the following section is substituted:

46. (1) Where a person, who has applied to the Minister for the extension of a sewer, the connection of land to a sewer or any other work for which the amount payable under this Act is the cost estimated by the Minister, is dissatisfied with the Minister's estimate, that person may, subject to this section, arrange for the work to be carried out by a competent person of his or her choice.

(2) The work must be carried out under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the Minister.

(3) The Minister will, at the request of the applicant, provide the applicant with plans and specifications of the proposed work.

(4) The applicant will pay the Minister the prescribed fee for the supervision and inspection of the work but is not liable for any other charge or fee under this Act in respect of the work.'

It is not my intention to canvass the arguments in the way that I did in relation to a similar amendment to the Waterworks Act Amendment Bill. The arguments are exactly the same and I believe that this amendment should be viewed in the same way. I can only suggest to the Minister that we believe strongly in the amendment and we hope to pursue it further.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Remaining clauses (6 and 7) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL TRAINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 24 February. Page 3064.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): Obviously, the Opposition supports the Bill, which merely makes the change that the Director of the Office of Employment and Training shall be substituted for the Director of the Department of Labour on the Industrial and Commercial Training Board. Given the change in portfolios, this is an infinitely sensible proposal. I do not intend to canvass the various challenges

facing South Australia in respect of training and training opportunities, the role of the ICTC and the role of the various education institutions, because it is not appropriate in this Bill. The Opposition supports the legislation.

The Hon. LYNN ARNOLD (Minister of Employment and Further Education): I thank the honourable member for his indication of the Opposition's support of this measure. As he quite rightly pointed out, it is logical and necessary given the change of Ministries and I am certain that there will be many other occasions when we can debate in other forums the appropriate role of the ICTC and all related matters.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

LIFTS AND CRANES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 25 February. Page 3147.)

Mr S.J. BAKER (Mitcham): This Bill has the general support of the Opposition, although some questions will be asked during the Committee stage. No doubt the Minister has received the amendments that are on file relating to codes of practice. Basically, the Bill canvasses three subjects. The first relates to an introduction of a certification scheme for dogmen and it provides for other certification to take place should the need arise. We believe that training is a very important component not only for increasing skill levels, but also for increasing safety levels on what could be a dangerous occupation. I am not aware of any dogmen being lost from building sites in recent years, but the Minister may be able to provide further information. A skill is involved in passing directions between the crane driver and the dogmen and it is appropriate that people who are involved in that occupation should receive some element of formal training rather than on-the-job training and, to that degree, we support the legislation.

The second subject relates to the transfer of responsibility for the management of lifts and cranes from the inspectorial section of the Department of Labour to the manufacturers and to those people responsible for the erection and maintenance of the various pieces of equipment mentioned. The Opposition supports that change. Members of the Opposition realise that resources are relatively scarce within the Department of Labour. We believe that industry should be self-regulatory, provided that there are enough checks and balances within the system to ensure that it works. During my overseas travels I noted that a number of Governments operate under this very system, which seems to work reasonably well, although on occasions they have noted that, after a period of time, some degree of slackness has developed within the industry. They then have had to prosecute the responsible bodies and, in fact, I believe that in the process one or two licences have been revoked.

I think that the Minister would be aware of the challenge in that regard. We feel that in many areas of industry there should not be the requirement for consistent and constant attention by inspectors from the Department of Labour. The Bill still allows inspectors to inspect sites. That can be done either on an *ad hoc* basis or when there is a report that something may be at risk, and I presume that, whatever resources are available to the department looking after this area, it will do just that; it will make spot checks not only looking at newer equipment and recognising that technology changes and that it has to upgrade its understanding of technology in the process, but also realising that, once the equipment ages, there is a risk, due to deterioration, of breakdown which could cause loss of life or injury.

Some lifts and cranes reach up to 20 or 30 storeys in a building so, if something small fails, a serious accident could occur. It is important that everybody recognises that this matter is being taken seriously. It could involve a drastic accident. There has already been a crane crash on the ASER site and there have been other instances where cranes have fallen down because of poor erection.

Having said that, we believe that this change is in the best interests of the industry. Also, we believe that they should pay for their own performance and look after their own affairs while acting under the umbrella of the public interest. We believe that this is a healthy change and that it is in keeping with the philosophy that members of the Opposition adopt.

The one area that represents uncharted waters is the codes of practice. As the Minister would realise, the Act provides that the Minister, if he so decides, can unilaterally gazette a set of codes of practice, which may not be in keeping with the ability of the industry or which may result in over specification of standards to the extent that it is not possible to comply.

Because codes of practice are very much new in terms of transfer of power from the Government to the private sector, the Opposition believes that, in the initial stages when we are really coming to grips with the change in responsibility, they should indeed be put down by regulation. I have had discussions with various elements in the industry; they are quite comfortable with the code of practice and indeed they welcome it. However, they do have some difficulty with the concept that codes of practice could in fact be very broad and not specific like regulations, which are very specific, and it means that they have to comply with those codes of practice at the risk of penalty. There is some risk in their mind that there may well be some overall encompassing clauses which do not specifically address a duty on their behalf. To that extent, the Opposition has included in the amendments a failsafe clause which addresses the right of Parliament to scrutinise codes of practice. It may be that in five years time this scrutiny is no longer relevant or necessary because all the mechanisms of consultation will be built into the system and it will become second nature for Governments to consult and reach agreement with industry.

The codes of practice that we have in mind should bear the signatures of both the Government and the responsible bodies. The intention of the Liberal Party has been that the Government and the responsible bodies should reach agreement on those codes of practice and that they should be signatories to those codes of practice. In this case here there is no requirement to be a signatory and to agreement being reached, and to that extent I know that there is some concern in the industry. I have canvassed the issues that are contained in the Bill. I intend to ask the Minister one or two questions about the Bill, particularly as to when the original Bill of 1985 will be proclaimed and come into operation and further questions relating to the codes of practice.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Labour): I thank the Opposition for its general support of the Bill. I indicate that I will oppose all the amendments. There is certainly no intention to have through this Bill any diminution whatsoever in the safety standards in this area. In fact, the Bill strengthens the safety standards by ensuring that people are properly trained. As regards the codes of

practice, I am sure that this matter will be debated in Committee, but can I say that the proposal for the codes of practice has to my knowledge the full support of the industry and the unions. The Bill has been developed in consultation with IRAC. IRAC has given the Bill its unanimous blessing. Most of the amendments incorporated in this Bill were requested by the industry itself, and for those reasons I ask the House to support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—'Commencement.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Opposition notes, from its records at least, that the 1985 Bill has yet to be proclaimed. What is the Minister's intention in this regard? Obviously, when it is proclaimed it will contain these measures as well as the existing ones.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: The answer is that the Act will be proclaimed as soon as possible. The first draft of the regulations will be available in two weeks. They will be available to the industry for comment. We certainly do not see it as being any great length of time.

Clause passed.

Clause 3—'Interpretation.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Opposition opposes clause 3. For the reasons that were outlined in the second reading debate, the Opposition has some concern about what will be contained within the codes of practice, and this concern has also been expressed by industry representatives. I have noted a number of questions that have been put to me by a certain body that is involved. I will use this clause as the test clause, as indeed all the other areas follow from this. They will be formally opposed, but the Opposition will certainly not take them any further.

The approved codes of practice (which occur later in the Act) involve proper standards of care, and the Opposition wants to know how the Minister intends to put together these codes of practice and what liaison will occur with industry representatives themselves. For example, with cranes the Master Builders Association could be the major entity, as could be the Lift Manufacturers Association in terms of lifts. How does the Minister intend to couch the codes of practice? I remind the Minister that in terms of when an offence is brought before the courts the onus will be placed on the employer, the manufacturer or whoever is involved in this to prove their innocence, rather than the normal means of justice which apply and which assumes that one is innocent until proven guilty. There is some concern that they may be very wide in their application; they may be just a general 'You shall have a standard of care', and that would not be suitable for this industry which, of course, has been highly regulated in the past. Could the Minister respond to this?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Certainly the industry has expressed no reservations whatsoever to me. Quite the contrary: there has been an enthusiastic response to this measure. The Master Builders Association is represented directly on IRAC. At no time have members of the association queried the words of this Bill—and it has been before them for many weeks, if not months. It has been developed with them, in fact; they are part authors of this Bill—and that is a desirable thing. As regards the codes of practice, they will be developed in consultation with the industry, both with the lift manufacturers, with whom we have excellent relations, and also in IRAC. I will just give one example of a code of practice that will be suitable for this purpose. It is Australian Standard 2550—SAA Cranes: Selection and Operation of Mobile Tower and Derrick. That is one example of a code of practice which gives a good practical guidance on operational aspects and safe use of mobile cranes. It is not an area that I feel will give any problem at all to the industry. It is not an area that the industry thinks will present a problem, and it is certainly not an area that the unions think will present a problem.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I accept that there are some terms which will go into the code of practice and which will be totally acceptable to everyone concerned. The Minister in his second reading explanation spoke of the Standards Association of Australia and the fact that codes are laid down. Is the Minister willing, given the concerns that exist out there (and perhaps the Minister has talked to different people from those to whom I have talked), to give an undertaking to this Committee, and to write into this Bill, that no code of practice will be gazetted until it has the signatures of the bodies standing thereon?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Certainly not. In the last analysis, the Government makes the decision and the regulations will come before the Parliament, if indeed they are regulations. This Government does not abrogate its responsibility in that line and will certainly not hand over ultimate authority in this area to employers, unions, or anybody else. I repeat that I am not quite sure to whom in the industry the member for Mitcham has been speaking, but I can only repeat that the Lift Manufacturers Association was, I think, the initiator (and, if not the initiator, then pretty close to it) of the measure. The measure has for a considerable time been before IRAC, on which the Master Builders Association is represented. The employers have on the committee a representative who is from the Master Builders Association. There has been full agreement: not just total agreement, but they have requested that the measure be brought into force as soon as possible.

In summary, I cannot see a problem: the industry does not see a problem; the unions do not see a problem; it is only the member for Mitcham who appears to see a problem. Given the high degree of consensus among the important players concerned, I will certainly not give the kind of undertaking that the member requests.

Mr S.J. BAKER: They obviously place far more trust in the Minister than I do, but that is unkind. There are some words which can be added by the Minister in a unilateral fashion, without any reference being made to the industry, and which may not be in the best interests of everybody concerned, including South Australia. They may well be put there because of some misguided impression that certain standards are required when they are not required. As the Minister would appreciate, we are not all experts in this area, and the technical changes taking place in this world of ours are far beyond the comprehension of most of us. This is certainly the case with lifts and cranes.

I do not accept the Minister's explanation. There are members of the Master Builders Association and lift manufacturers who would like to see a fail safe or some other sort of mechanism placed in the Bill which will allow them a second chance if the standards of care laid down in the code of practice are inconsistent with the needs of the industry and the public good. I oppose clause 3, but I will not divide on the matter, because the Opposition agrees with codes of practice, which were one of the initiatives that we followed in the 1979 to 1982 Tonkin Government when we pressed ahead in this area.

The Minister would appreciate that it takes a long time to get these things into legislative form. I oppose the clause and express the Opposition's desire that these codes of practice be put by way of regulation. I will not speak to the other clauses because it is no longer appropriate.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: If I were not in such a good mood I would be inclined to adjourn the Bill at this stage and refer the member for Mitcham to the Lift Manufacturers Association. Would he be happy for me to delay the Bill until he has got his act together with the Lift Manufacturers Association? As I have said before, the principal part of this Bill was initiated by the Lift Manufacturers Association. However, if they are having second thoughts and do not want the Bill after all they have said, cajoled and pressured, then perhaps we may need to have a second look at the matter. It is, after all, the member for Mitcham and not somebody of more substance who is making these claims for these unknown industry sources. I am prepared to do that. The fact remains that the Bill has the complete support of the industry, the complete support of the trade union movement and the complete support of the Government. Therefore, to put the member for Mitcham out of his misery, we support the clause.

Clause passed.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I have amendments standing in my name to clauses 4, 8 and 9 which will no longer be proceeded with.

Clauses 4 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—'Approved codes of practice.'

Mr S.J. BAKER: The second reading speech confused me in relation to the role of Government inspectors. In relation to clause 8, which talks of inspections and codes of practice, it states:

> The Act's provisions for the regular inspection of lifts are based on annual inspections by Government inspectors but because of the long standing difficulty in meeting the demand for inspectors' time under the current annual inspection requirements, provision was made in the Act to extend the inspection period by an additional 12 months.

I cannot find that reference in the Act. Clause 5 repeals section 17 of the principal Act, and that removes all regular inspections. Will the Minister clarify this matter?

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I take the point made by the member for Mitcham. The requirement is totally deleted from the Act for inspections to be made by the Department of Labour on a regular basis. What will happen is that there will be provision in the regulations that the owner must have inspections made not less than annually.

Clause passed.

Clause 9 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS (Minister of Labour): I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): The point I wish to bring to the notice of the House in this grievance debate is the way in which the Government is administering certain aspects of its responsibility. One of the biggest problem areas involves the Residential Tenancies Act. I have had numerous complaints from constituents and persons who have provided and are providing rental accommodation for those who, unfortunately, are dependent on the open sector for that type of housing. I will record a letter typical of the remarks I have received. It is from one of my constituents and states:

> In reference to your segment on TV and radio, also the article in today's *Advertiser*, 14 February 1987, about Housing Trust tenants and conditions thereof when moving out, it has prompted me to contact you. Permit me to suggest to you a review of the present law of the Residential Tenancies Act which leaves a lot to be desired. We (my sister and self) are victims of the private sector who have leased a family home in the country from time to time with disastrous results. The present rules and regulations of the Residential Tenancies Act appear to favour the tenants, who have more rights to the premises than the owners. The contracts that are signed by both parties are not worth the paper they are written upon. We have recently had a tribunal hearing (19 January 1987), and to hear the tenant take an oath on the Bible and then tell a pack of lies, one questions the principles of the laws of the Government.
>
> Permit me further to suggest that a school be available to educate young people who are permitted to live in a communal way of life and be taught how to manage a home and respect other people's property. The permissive society . . and the present welfare system must feel guilty if they have a conscience to permit and favour children to leave home before they are old enough to understand what life and living is all about; irresponsible parents who are the delinquents no doubt add to the confusion. Another request on behalf of country folk, who we all are dependent upon for our bread and butter—they never cease to supply our needs, in spite of the many adversities the irresponsible Government bestows on these folk . . .

The letter goes on to refer to daylight saving, electricity, and so on. The point is that the letter is written by someone aggrieved by the Residential Tenancies Tribunal and by the fact that tenants come in and are normally assisted by the Emergency Housing Office to pay a bond. About 95 to 98 per cent of tenants look after a property, keep it neat and clean and tidy. If it needs a bit of maintenance they do it themselves and nobody objects to that. Unfortunately, there seems to be the 3 to 5 per cent who do not care about people's property. They damage it, get in arrears with their rent and are then advised to leave as the bond will cover the amount of rent owing, and not to worry about any damage or whether the place needs painting or repairing because, after all, the landlord is a capitalist and that is what he does.

Landlords tell me that they are lucky to make 5 per cent on their capital investment, so there is no incentive currently to purchase, acquire or lease rental housing accommodation. The market is made solely for the Housing Trust, and the pressures being put on private landlords today are such that they are virtually being forced out of that market. I have made mention before of a person with 40 such properties who, as soon as the market is right, will quit the rental property market.

This year is the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. One would expect the Government to pick up responsibility for the homeless in South Australia, estimated to be about 10 000 people, although I do not know how they ascertain that number. The other night I went along to a meeting at a shelter, and we were told in no uncertain terms—certainly the Minister was told—that several Aboriginal families are living out in the open by the West Terrace Cemetery. They are fortunate enough to have found an electric light pole with a 3 point plug on it so they are able to plug in their portable television set. A number of people are forced to live out in the open near the West Terrace Cemetery. Nobody is prepared to offer them any assistance or accommodation. The behaviour of some of those people leaves a lot to be desired. The women want shelter and assistance but cannot get it.

In this the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless we are appealing to the United Nations to do something about the poor standard of living in Third World countries when, in our own backyard, we are doing very little. The Commonwealth Government has come up with a grant of $600 000 for the whole of Australia for the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. That works out at about $6 per head. About 100 000 people are estimated to be homeless in Australia and are living in caravans, tents, on park benches, under bridges, in culverts and elsewhere. We have the example of this group living near the West Terrace

Cemetery. The Commonwealth Government gave the South Australian Government $15 000—$1.50 per head in this State. Either that was a poorly negotiated figure by the Minister of Housing and Construction or it is a poor deal from the Federal Government.

The State Government is putting up $80 000, or is prepared to earmark that amount, as its contribution, to second four people to run the secretariat of the international year office. That is a reasonable contribution but it irks me and the majority of landlords and tenants in South Australia that the State Government proposes to pinch $1.4 million from the residential tenancies funds. It is $1.4 million surplus earnt on the bond money placed in the fund since it commenced operation. It is money that belongs to those covered by the fund. Many of the landlords are complaining that, as regards the bond money that they get back for expenses or when making claims for damages to their property, they are not given any consideration. The money is put in the fund for the betterment and assistance of tenants and of landlords who contribute to the fund. I cannot see how a Government can take out that money and use it for some unknown purpose at this stage. We are a third of the way through the international year, yet we have no idea for what purpose the money will be used, how or where it will be spent or what proportion of it can be used or successfully taken out. We do not know what will be spent in the country or the metropolitan area or who will be the recipients of that money.

So, we have lost almost four months of the year before we know exactly where everybody stands on this issue. From my previous experience with international years we know between one and two years in advance what international year is coming up, what it will be all about, and it gives the Government plenty of time for planning. With the International Year of the Disabled we had stacks of warning—something like 15 months—so that we were able to plan and coordinate our ideas, thoughts and opinions from our correspondence with overseas organisations and other kindred voluntary organisations.

No doubt, representatives of the voluntary organisations that attended the shelter meeting the other evening wondered what was happening. The real crunch came when we heard that about 20 Aborigines had to doss near the West Terrace Cemetery each night. It is a tragedy to think that we are doing so little for people in this community irrespective of their origin, colour or creed. We cannot boast that we are doing all that we should be if we have no plans, ideas or guidelines. Such guidelines should have been set down as at 1 January so that the committee could get under way. We would then have known where we stood and we could be monitoring the progress rather than, as now, waiting until April before we know what is happening.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER (Gilles): I never cease to wonder at what I might describe as the lack of political acumen or nous of the Opposition in this House and in particular of the shadow Minister of Recreation and Sport, the member for Bragg. Yesterday we heard from that honourable member a speech in which he made some outlandish and rather unusual claims and allegations about members of the Trotting Control Board.

Mr Duigan: He said they were all crook.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: At any rate, he went as far as to say that some were crook and, in saying that, he did not do the sport of harness racing in this State any good. To me, his contribution only proved his political and personal immaturity. Over a long period, and especially during my term as Minister of Recreation and Sport, I have had (and still have to some extent) a relationship with the harness racing industry and with members of the Trotting Control Board. I have no doubt that, acting in the best interests of the industry, members of the board spoke to the member for Bragg, as he said, in his office following public comments that he had made during the previous week alleging corruption in the harness racing industry.

His comments cast grave aspersions on those administering the sport. There is no doubt that Mr Zerella, Mr Jones, and other administrators of the sport were alarmed by the allegations of corruption in the sport and asked the member for Bragg not to indulge publicly in such derogatory remarks that cast aspersions on everyone involved in the sport, unless he could produce conclusive evidence of his allegations. The honourable member's interpretation of the conversation, as recorded in yesterday's *Hansard* report, is as follows:

> Mr Zerella and Mr Jones came to my office last week and threatened to finish me once and for all in a political sense.

I do not believe that Mr Zerella or Mr Jones need worry about that very much because the member for Bragg, as he has proved during his time in this place, is capable of doing that on his own behalf. From my experience as Minister of Recreation and Sport, I know Messrs Zerella and Jones, and I am sure that both those gentlemen are honourable men. True, on occasion we have agreed to differ on various aspects of the harness racing code but, without equivocation, I say that both these gentlemen, who have given many years service to the trotting industry, are honourable. No doubt, they were moved to discuss with the member for Bragg the comments that he had made because they considered that such comments had cast grave aspersions on the industry generally.

However, what does the member for Bragg choose to do? He surprises me by using this House, under parliamentary privilege, to accuse Messrs Zerella and Jones and other members of the Trotting Control Board of behaving unethically and, indeed, of being crooks. In doing so, he cast a cloud over the entire racing industry and failed to understand that the very nature of the industry, in which large sums are involved, means that all sorts of racecourse rumours and accusations are being made from time to time.

There was a time when I went to Globe Derby Park and occasionally took the opportunity to walk around the enclosure where the trainers and others connected with the industry attend the horses. Sometimes a person would stop me or the Chairman of the Trotting Control Board, who accompanied me, and make a complaint concerning something or other relating to the industry. Admittedly, there is much division and perhaps a little infighting among those involved in the trotting code, but the persons who were referred to by the member for Bragg in this House are above suspicion and, knowing those gentlemen personally, I can say that without equivocation.

It is bad when a member of Parliament uses the cloak of parliamentary privilege to reflect on the character of people as the member for Bragg did yesterday, and it does neither him nor his Party any credit; nor does it reflect any credit on the persons to whom he referred or on the trotting industry generally. The honourable member based his case on certain instances that have occurred in the trotting industry over the past 12 months. I do not say that the industry is completely squeaky clean but, nevertheless, I am sure that all the administrators, the stewards, and the members of the Trotting Control Board do their best to ensure as far as is practicable that the situation in the industry is satisfactory.

Occasionally, certain people in the industry seek to advantage themselves, but everything possible is done to eliminate any untoward practice. In this regard, in 99.9 per cent of the cases, the administrators, the stewards and the board succeed in eliminating such practices. Occasionally in the racing industry, we have such instances as that involving the racehorse Fine Cotton in Queensland and the press gives it much space with the idea of getting front page cover. Similarly, yesterday's comments by the member for Bragg got front page cover, yet he does not realise that his comments reflected on the racing industry generally.

I never cease to be amazed and to wonder because, obviously, members opposite have not learnt from their experience of 1985, when they were routed at the election. I would have thought that they would learn a little lesson from that, but they continue to do what they did previously—knocking every practical proposal and trying to find ways to bring down the Government and the Minister. I might give them some advice (although I know I should not): they should be a bit more constructive in their criticism. Indeed, it is the Opposition's job to be constructive and to make proposals, not to oppose anything that takes place in the community or in this House. The member for Bragg must improve his act. There have been other similar occasions. His criticism of 5AA did not add to the situation at all.

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

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I refer to a matter of considerable importance to a large number of my constituents, and that is the Government's strategy for the Mount Lofty Ranges. I was approached by one of the councils in my district last week to bring this matter before the House, because people are concerned that the Government is dragging its heels. A lot of concern has been expressed by Hills dwellers about the controls that continue to be imposed by the Government. If the Government was prepared to explain in a little more detail the evidence that has led to the imposition of these controls, my constituents would be much happier. Trying to get reports from the Government is like trying to draw teeth. It is virtually impossible to get hold of a report commissioned by the E&WS Department, for instance, which has led to a whole raft of new controls on which, it is claimed, these controls are based. It is just not good enough. If ever we needed a freedom of information law in this State, it is in trying to extract from this Government reports on which it makes decisions.

Those decisions radically affect a large number of people, and in this case the people in my district are affected as are the constituents of my colleagues who represent other Hills areas. The Government agreed to a Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Strategy Review and local government was to be involved. The Minister agreed to that review on 26 June last year, and in fact he announced it in June, but the councils and the Local Government Association are concerned that it is not under way, at least to the extent that they have yet to become involved.

There has been a lot of questioning of these reports, which the E&WS Department is keeping secret and which officers tenaciously clutch to their breast and will not make public. Some of the premises on which the controls have been based have been questioned and, indeed, some of the councils banded together and commissioned consultants to undertake a review of the situation. There have been renewed requests for the report, and that led to a letter from the Minister. It is not fair for me to indicate to whom the letter was sent, but it was signed by the Minister and refers to the reports relating to water quality which led to the controls that were subsequently imposed. The letter states, in part:

> These reports were prepared for the Engineering and Water Supply Department by consultants in order to consolidate water quality data for reservoirs and catchment runoff within the Mount Lofty Ranges watershed. The consultants also undertook some preliminary assessment of the data. I am advised by the Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief that errors have recently been found in these reports.

Some of my constituents have been claiming that for more than a year. The letter continues:

> I am sure you will appreciate that the integrity of the data is of fundamental importance. Therefore, while those errors are being corrected it is considered imprudent to make the reports available.

That indicates a fairly unsatisfactory state of affairs. The public become aware that something is going on only when a whole host of new controls are imposed. But when the evidence upon which those controls were based is requested, there is a flat refusal to release the reports. On further probing by councils, which have gone so far as to engage their own consultants, the department will not make the reports available but will say that there are errors in them, which was the contention initially. That throws a question mark over the validity of those controls.

I stress that the only way in which the Government will gain a degree of support for the controls it proposes is to take the public and the local representatives of the public, in this case district councils, into its confidence. I understood that at least part of the purpose of the Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Strategy Review was to involve local people. I have been provided with a letter that was sent to the Minister by the Secretary-General of the Local Government Association, who makes the following point (which I also make):

> The councils in the Mount Lofty Ranges study area have accepted the opportunity to become involved in the study as partners in that very important undertaking. However, they have expressed to me their concern that no meaningful start appears to have been made. All members were pleased by your appointment of Arthur Tideman as the project manager. He is known to us as a reliable person of action. We therefore find it strange that no movement seems to have occurred.

I repeat that councils and local residents have been most unhappy with these controls being imposed without their being privy to the evidence on which the controls were based. The evidence is now suspect. A strategy review has been announced, but nothing much seems to have happened. My colleague the member for Heysen today gave me a letter that he had received from the Minister in relation to the Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Strategy Review. In that letter the Minister said:

> I announced this review on 26 June 1986.

That is a long time ago. The letter continues:

> Since that time the various Government agencies involved, as well as local government, have been examining the structure and organisation that would be most appropriate to undertake the review. In the meantime the collection and processing of essential data has been initiated.
>
> The study is being carried out as a joint project between several key Government departments and is proposed to be integrated with an advisory committee representative of community interests. Consultative committees, as appropriate, are also proposed to be established to support the advisory committee. In addition, a representative of local government will be a member of the steering committee, convened to provide oversight for the study. The Director-General, Department of Environment and Planning, is responsible for the study.

That is all fine and dandy, but that reply (which the honourable member received on 10 February) does not really tell us when it will get cracking. Mr Hullick suggests in his letter that perhaps the reporting date should be brought

forward into this financial year to expedite matters, and I certainly believe that that should be considered. We all know that the wheels of government move slowly, unfortunately, particularly with some Administrations, and they appear to be moving at a snail's pace in this case under this Administration. I certainly hope that the Deputy Premier (the Minister in charge of these matters) can get the ball rolling.

In my remaining two minutes I refer to the remarks of the honourable member who spoke prior to me in relation to the member for Bragg, and attacked the member for Bragg for raising in Parliament queries about the Trotting Control Board.

It is perfectly apparent from the evasive way in which the Government approached this matter that it is engaged in some sort of a cover-up. The Minister has not been prepared to answer any of the questions that have been put to him; the Government has not been prepared to answer any of the questions that have been put to it and, in its usual way, it is trying to turn this around to suggest that the member for Bragg should come up with more evidence. I would have thought that the evidence and the questions to be addressed are as plain as a pikestaff.

The Trotting Control Board found that in relation to one of its major races there was a positive swab, but it chose to take no action. Certain people were not present at the board meeting. Even at this late stage the Minister does not know whether or not any minutes were taken or, if he does, he will not say. A whole host of legitimate questions have been put before the Government in relation to this matter, but the Government is not prepared to answer them: it is engaged in a cover-up. The member for Bragg and the Opposition have not attacked the trotting industry; they have talked about one specific matter and the Government is not prepared to answer questions relating to that one specific matter.

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

Motion carried.

At 5.21 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 12 March at 11 a.m.