HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 8 August 1990

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

PETITION: FREE STUDENT TRAVEL

A petition signed by 16 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to extend free student travel on public transport to all students and allow private bus operators to participate in the scheme was presented by the Hon. P.B. Arnold.

Petition received.

PETITION: WALLAROO PUBLIC HOSPITAL

A petition signed by 35 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to provide a dialysis machine at the Wallaroo public hospital was presented by Mr Meier.

Petition received.

PETITION: ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

A petition signed by 351 residents of South Australia praying that the House urge the Government to actively address the environmental problems of the State was presented by Mr Meier.

Petition received.

DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS

The SPEAKER: I lay on the table two letters dated 12 July and 7 August forwarded to me by the honourable Attorney-General. They relate to defamation proceedings in the case of *Mr Peter Lewis, MP v Stephen Wright and Advertiser Newspapers Limited.* The letter of 7 August advises that the Attorney-General intends to withdraw his appeal to the High Court.

Mr S.J. BAKER: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, will you advise the House as to the disposition of the letter given under my hand this day?

The SPEAKER: As a matter of privilege is involved here, the honourable member may not comment. The only way it can be handled is by substantive motion. The letter was written to me personally. If I were to receive 47 letters and read each one of them to the House, I would be here all day. The honourable member's letter has no relevance in this situation. If there were a substantive motion, the Chair would recognise it.

Mr S.J. BAKER: If it be proper, Sir, I ask for a suspension of Standing Orders to enable the letter to be read to the House.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has the ability to read that letter if he wishes to proceed with a substantive motion in the House. The Chair will not read the letter.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I seek leave to read my letter to the House.

The SPEAKER: No, leave is not granted. It must be by substantive motion. If the honourable member wishes to move—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Let me finish. I make it very clear that this matter can be handled only by a substantive motion from the honourable member.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, you indicated that leave was not granted but never did you ask the House whether leave should be granted.

The SPEAKER: I take the point made by the honourable member, although I really have trouble quantifying what he is saying. The honourable member has not moved a substantive motion.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: By way of explanation, the Deputy Leader rose and asked for leave of the House to read his letter. You denied him leave without asking the House whether or not leave should be granted. I am not seeking in any way to derogate from your authority, but it is the House that determines leave, not the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I refuse leave.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to allow the member for Mitcham to read the letter.

The SPEAKER: No, permission is denied.

QUESTION TIME

STATE BANK OF VICTORIA

Mr D.S. BAKER (Leader of the Opposition): Did the Treasurer, through the South Australian Finance Trust, purchase from the State Bank of Victoria $300 million of extendable floating rate stock in three tranches termed series A, B and C which was issued by the State Bank of Victoria on 22 December 1989, that is, after that bank was technically bankrupt?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: There are so many transactions of various kinds which pass my desk and which are referred to me that I am not sure whether that is the case, but it may well be. I will certainly check this. I will comment on this without notice, if you like, so I qualify what I am about to say by pointing out that in these financial matters, as the Leader of the Opposition would well know, it is as well to carefully check all the facts and circumstances before making comment. However, I would have thought that a transaction such as this would have been in the normal course of business. Whatever the particular results that the State Bank of Victoria declared in a particular year, that bank is not bankrupt or out of business. Indeed, the bank is continuing very strongly in business and the guarantees and securities that attach to that bank are still firmly in place and, therefore, any business done with it by SAFA or, indeed, by members of the public is legitimate banking business.

I imagine that whatever was done in this particular instance would have been based purely on the nature of the banking business concerned and the securities attached to it. That would be the case and I suspect, if the Leader of the Opposition has details of a transaction, he would know that to be the case. However, I will doubly check that. I repeat: I am not aware of the State Bank of Victoria's being bankrupt, not trading or being out of business. The bank's assets are guaranteed in the normal way and I would imagine that financial institutions here in Australia and probably overseas are still doing business with the State Bank of Victoria on that basis.

MULTIFUNCTION POLIS

Mr De LAINE (Price): Will the Premier outline the program of community consultation and public information

on the proposed multifunction polis for Adelaide? The Gillman site proposed for the development of the MFP is in my electorate of Price. While many of my constituents are excited about the possibilities that the MFP holds for South Australia's future, they are anxious to find out more about the project in terms of how it will affect their local community and what is proposed for the Gillman site.

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: I appreciate the honourable member's question. I notice among other things, for instance, in this morning's paper, that reference was made to the desire of the local government body that operates in a large part of the honourable member's electorate to be actively involved in this project, and that is something we welcome. In fact, I have already met the mayors of Port Adelaide, Salisbury and Enfield, together with their officers, to discuss how consultation and local government participation and involvement might take place in the course of this project. So, I can assure the honourable member that community consultation and involvement is absolutely fundamental to this whole proposal.

A number of mechanisms are being set in place for that. Obviously, briefings, responses to letters and things of that nature are taking place constantly. I do not think many other projects have had as much public space in terms of debate, and that has been a very good thing. For instance, I welcomed the fact that the *Advertiser* newspaper, a few weeks ago, made available a whole page on which the most commonly asked questions on the MFP could be answered. And there is a wealth of other material available. It has been a significant fact that, once these briefings take place, a number of the concerns or suspicions are immediately allayed and the exciting possibilities in this project are revealed.

If it comes to fruition it will be very significant not only for South Australia but also internationally. It will develop for us new ways of dealing with degraded and polluted environments. It will establish for us new communications systems and a whole series of other things that have enormous possibilities for this State and this country—and, quite frankly, if we do not get into these things, we will render ourselves irrelevant to the world of today, and there is a very real danger that that will happen to Australia as events taking place in Europe and overseas at the moment indicate.

To come back to the question of consultation, I point out that it is a national project but obviously the close involvement and understanding of our community is important. The State Government has a responsibility in doing that, and in fact those involved with the State Government's task force, in particular the Director, Mr Neave, have already spoken to numerous organisations and community groups. The advisory committee of local governments involved in the project to which I referred has been established. University vice-chancellors have met, and their officers are continuing to clarify and develop ideas for a world university. In fact, the Minister of Employment and Further Education headed a major one day exercise on that very question only last week. So, a considerable amount of discussion is going on with those who will be involved in putting the proposal into operation. Thousands of pamphlets have been produced giving a brief outline of the MFP project to date, and they will be progressively distributed.

At the Commonwealth level there is a Commonwealth Adviser on Community Consultation and a desire by the Commonwealth to put resources into that consultation process. Mr Lansdowne, who has been identified by the Commonwealth as being the person who will embark on this exercise, has visited Adelaide and has met with a range of community interest groups such as Sacoss, the Conservation Council, the Port Adelaide council, the Port Adelaide Chamber of Commerce and others. He is due again in Adelaide this week to develop ideas about how best to undertake community consultation. He is meeting with a range of organisations with a view on, or concerns about, the MFP, those groups including the RSL, youth organisations, the Council of Churches, professional organisations involved in planning such as the Institute of Architects, the Institute of Engineers, the UTLC, ethnic groups and so on.

When—and I say 'when', although strictly it is 'if'—the Commonwealth determines that the full scale feasibility study can commence, that Commonwealth advisory group on community consultation will go into major action. I can assure the honourable member that good, clear and timely information will be provided at all stages of this project. Indeed, that is an exciting aspect of it: it will be a project in which we can involve our community, not looking backwards but looking forwards in a very positive way to what sort of future this State can have.

HOMESURE SCHEME

Mr OSWALD (Morphett): My question is to the Minister of Housing and Construction. Will the Homesure scheme remain available until interest rates fall below 15 per cent?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: When the scheme was first announced the Government said that it would be reviewed at the end of 12 months. That is the current position by which the Government stands. As I indicated yesterday in my ministerial statement—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: 'Mr Don't Know' is piping up again, but it is fair to say, based on the ministerial statement made yesterday, that it is clear that we will be reviewing the scheme in the period indicated when the scheme was first announced. That will be at the end of this year. We will examine the impact of the scheme and how effective it has been in helping people in stress because of their home mortgage repayments.

RUNAWAY CHILDREN

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): My question is directed to the Minister of Family and Community Services. What legal obligations exist or are incumbent upon the Department for Family and Community Services to advise parents of runaway children of the whereabouts of those children if the department has that information? If there is no legal obligation, will the Minister seek to have one put in place? Recently a parent contacted me in circumstances of extreme anxiety because her 13 year old daughter had run away. When that parent contacted the Department of Family and Community Services in the city, she was advised that she would be kept informed of developments.

Once the child made contact with the department in Mount Barker the parent was advised that contact had been made. However, when the parent contacted the Mount Barker office in person, she found that the department would give little additional information; in fact, the officer refused point-blank to tell the parent where the child was staying because, allegedly, it might damage the client relationship existing between the child and the department.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD: We have to distinguish between policy and law in this matter. The honourable member's specific question related to law, but I think I

should talk about policy as well. As far as legal obligation is concerned, there is none. Clearly, the policy of the department in these circumstances is to work towards the reunion of that family unit as quickly as possible. The honourable member's reference to Mount Barker suggests to me that he is referring to a case which has been drawn to my attention. The social worker involved is an extremely experienced and well regarded person within the department.

I understand that the social worker's concern in this matter was two-fold. First, were he immediately to inform the parents as to the child's whereabouts and tell the child, that would almost certainly, in his judgment, lead to a further absconding. Secondly, if he were, on the quiet as it were, to inform the parents and the parents were to come and take the child, it would simply mean that within 24 hours of the child having returned to the home the child would abscond. In other words, it was the judgment of the social worker that the situation was at that stage not right for the reunion of the family, although he accepted a prime responsibility to work with his client to ensure that such a reunion took place and that once it took place it would be on a permanent rather than an extremely temporary basis.

I must say that the overwhelming majority of circumstances are that the parents are informed in these situations. The professional judgment of that particular social worker was that that was not the appropriate thing to do at that time in those circumstances, and I can do no more than say that I respect that professional judgment. In brief, there is no legal obligation but, clearly, there is a very strong presumption by the department that, in these sorts of circumstances, the parents should be informed.

HOMESURE SCHEME

Mr SUCH (Fisher): I direct my question to the Minister of Housing and Construction. To ensure that many more home buyers qualify for the full amount of Homesure assistance they were promised by the Premier at the election, will the Government immediately provide the assistance at the promised flat rate of $86 a month for all those eligible, rather than on a sliding scale, and withdraw the requirement that first home buyers must be paying more than 30 per cent of household income on loan repayments, as neither restriction was mentioned in the Premier's policy statements, and, if not, why not?

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Yesterday in my statement to the House I made quite clear the Government's position with regard to Homesure and the impact that it is having in the community. I suppose it is fair to say that there was none more surprised than I when we began to realise the actual take-up of Homesure, given the statistics, which it is obvious the Liberal Party based its scheme on when proposing its platform for the electorate. As I indicated in my statement, a review of those figures was undertaken from figures provided on an anonymous basis by the State Bank, and came up with a figure, which although roughly half that of the original estimate from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures, was something like 12 to 15 times more than the take-up rate of applications that we have received from the community. As I said in my statement, it is obvious that what has happened is that other schemes being offered by financial institutions, in particular, and by the State Government have assisted people much more effectively than we thought.

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The Leader of the Opposition sniggers; that is all he seems able to do these days. The Opposition was very critical of HomeStart, yet I have just had the opportunity of talking with a number of people in the building industry who sing its praises, heralding HomeStart and its success. About 40 per cent to 45 per cent of new home or domestic commencements are attributed to the finance package that is being offered by HomeStart. It has been a great success and it is a credit to this Government for putting it in place. The Leader might snigger, but he knows that it has been a terrific success that has helped a lot of people in the community.

When comparing the number of new home commencements over the past 12 months in South Australia with the figure in other States, a senior building industry representative said today that we were the pinnacle, that we were the light on the hill, for the rest of the country.

Mr D.S. Baker interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: The Leader sniggers.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Again.

The Hon. M.K. MAYES: Yes, again. The figures for South Australia show that our domestic building program has been a great success over the past 12 months, with a trend that is quite the opposite of that of the rest of Australia. In Western Australia, in the previous year there were 23 000 new commencements and, in the financial year just completed, the number is back to about 12 000. Our figure is about 1.2 per cent above that of the previous year, so South Australia is a success.

Along with other schemes being offered by financial institutions, such as fixed term interest payments, the scheme has offered an alternative which the community has taken up. The financial institutions have also offered the community the opportunity to reschedule payments. Given the distress caused by mortgage repayments, the community has jumped at those schemes. As a consequence, it is quite clear from what is happening in the community and from the advertising effort we have made that people are not taking up the Homesure invitation. In due course we will need to review our offer and it may be that, as I indicated yesterday, we will need to look at those resources. I will be advocating to Cabinet that we put available funds into other forms of housing in order to assist people in the community who might be looking for other forms of accommodation.

So, it is important that we keep that in mind, and certainly the Government has to take into account how the market reacts to what is being offered. The scheme will continue and obviously people are predicting which way interest rates will go, but I am still fairly conservative in my estimates about that. I am sure that we will continue to keep Homesure in place until we conduct that review.

NEWSPAPER RECYCLING

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): Is the Minister for Environment and Planning satisfied with the percentage of newspapers that South Australia will be allowed to return to the new plant to be built in Albury/Wodonga for the recycling of newspapers?

Although Australia runs in the top 10 per capita in the use of recycled waste paper and newspapers, the problem is becoming more acute. I understand that News Limited has agreed to take a percentage of the newspapers from South Australia, although it would be cheaper for that organisation to take newspapers from Melbourne and Sydney in totality. The News Limited offer to take a percentage of South Australian newspapers will not totally solve the problem of disposal.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: Certainly, I am most interested in the proposal for the Albury recycling newsprint plant. The Australian Newsprint Mills (ANM) proposal envisages a plant which will use some 130 000 tonnes of newspapers for recycling and reuse. This will be the first plant in this country that will have a de-inking process, and that makes it quite unique.

The honourable member is correct when he states that it would be much more economically viable for Australian Newsprint Mills to take all of its supply from the eastern seaboard because of the proximity in terms of transportation and distance. However, I can assure the honourable member and the House that the Government has been negotiating with ANM, and I am delighted to tell him they will take newsprint not only from South Australia but also in the proportion in which we use it on a national level. That means that in South Australia we use some 50 000 tonnes of newsprint a year, and about half of that is returned for recycling.

Australian Newsprint Mills will not be able to take the full amount—in other words, the 25 000 tonnes—but it will be able to take a significant percentage of that. This means that we will still need to find markets for some of our recycled paper in terms of the manufacture of cardboard, making egg cartons and a whole range of other areas. What is significant is that this will be a major step forward in using the vast majority of the paper that is and will be collected from South Australia.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I have to acknowledge the interest of the honourable member opposite in this matter. Wearing my other hat as Minister of Water Resources, I am having negotiations with the company with respect to the quality of effluent that will be entering the Murray River as a result of this new facility in production. I believe that negotiations are ongoing with the Murray-Darling ministerial council and commission, and with the New South Wales Government, and that, in fact, this is one of the major issues that the company is addressing. I feel very positive that the quality of effluent entering the Murray River will in fact not be detrimental in any way to the quality of water that will come into South Australia.

So, I believe that the company is genuine. I believe that not only is it prepared to have a clean recycling de-inking plant in Albury but also that it will take a significant amount of newspaper from South Australia. This will move our whole recycling program ahead, and it will ensure that by the end of 1992, when I believe the plant will be onstream, we will look at the vast majority of paper in South Australia going across to Albury and being recycled.

BENEFICIAL FINANCE

Dr ARMITAGE (Adelaide): Will the Treasurer assure the House that all major loans and financial dealings of Beneficial Finance have been approved by the board of Beneficial Finance?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: The procedures under which Beneficial Finance operates and the relationship of Beneficial Finance and its board are not matters for my purview or direction. I suggest that it would be appropriate for the honourable member to raise that question directly with the board itself. I am sure it would respond.

ETSA REVIEW

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): Will the Minister of Mines and Energy outline the outcome of a review conducted by the Electricity Trust of South Australia into the buy-back rates it pays for electricity purchased from private generators? I recall reading some time ago that the Government was seeking to encourage more co-generation as a means of achieving greater energy efficiency and, as part of this, ETSA was reviewing its buy-back rates to see what encouragement could be given to potential co-generators.

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: I am happy to report to the House that the ETSA review has led to a quite extensive revision of the buy-back rates that it is willing to offer to co-generators. I need not remind the House that this is a very important step towards enabling a greater level of co-generation to be undertaken economically in the State's private sector. Co-generation, for the benefit of members (although I would imagine that everyone here would know this), is the joint production of electricity and thermal energy from the same fuel source or by using waste heat from industrial processes. In itself it is not a new process, having been around for at least 50 years that I am aware of, but it is a concept whose time has come because of the rising cost of energy and the need for improved energy efficiency.

Companies involved in co-generation can benefit themselves by, first, using between 10 to 30 per cent less fuel than is required to produce the same power and heat separately and, secondly, by using heat that would otherwise be wasted to produce electricity either for their own use or for sale to ETSA. The community also stands to benefit quite considerably through, first, the more efficient use of fuel, thereby conserving non-renewable resources; secondly, by gaining additional generating capacity for the State without the need for expensive capital investment and the long lead time required to install new power stations; and, thirdly, through a reduction in combustion products, including greenhouse gases.

Following the ETSA review of buy-back rates, I have approved a significant range of changes which basically offer a premium price for privately generated electricity supplied with a high degree of reliability during times of peak demand. Standard buy-back rates of 2.35c per kilowatt hour for off-peak periods and 2.65c for peak hours will apply to any co-generation plant with a capacity factor of less than 75 per cent.

In the case of plants with a capacity factor between 75 per cent and 95 per cent and able to supply power during Monday to Friday peak hours, sliding scales will apply. During summer (December to March), the buy-back rate will range from six to 10c per kilowatt hour. During winter (June to August), the rate will range from five to eight cents. Within these scales, the highest rates apply when the capacity factor is at least 95 per cent and will involve the negotiation of long-term contracts between the supplier and ETSA. To date, about 10 companies are discussing co-generation with ETSA, with potential projects ranging in size from a couple of hundred kilowatts up to a maximum of 70 megawatts, a very considerable amount of co-generation potential and capacity. ETSA has formed an Industrial Marketing Group which focuses principally on the State's business sector. One of this group's objectives is to pursue mutually beneficial co-generation projects.

STATE BANK

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE (Coles): In the light of the Premier's statement to the House yesterday that he

holds 'regular meetings with the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer of the State Bank' at which he is kept 'advised of the major issues concerning the bank', will he tell the House whether, as a result of these meetings, he has questioned the extent of the State Bank group's involvement in property dealings in other States; whether he is satisfied that the group has been prudent in these dealings; whether he has sought to encourage or otherwise influence the bank's involvement as lead financier for the Remm project; and whether its exposure to this project includes extending financing facilities to cover any escalation in its cost caused by delays in the completion of construction?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: That is what one might call an omnibus question which raises a lot of issues. Yes, it is true that I have regular briefings from the State Bank by meeting with the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer, and the Under Treasurer is also present at those briefings. The issues that concern me mainly are, of course, the bank's economic assessment, progress in its home lending program and the overall performance of the State Bank group. Any major issues that come up are, of course, advised to me but, as I made the point yesterday—and I am really not doing this for the honourable member's benefit because she knows the answer (the question, of course, was rhetorical in her case)—and, just for the record, it is not my role to direct the bank. That is precluded by the Act and it would be most inappropriate for me to do so.

I have confidence in the way in which the bank has carried out a very successful commercial charter. In recent months, as we all know, banks and financial institutions generally have gone through a very difficult period indeed, but that does not shake my underlying confidence in the way our own State Bank group has performed in those circumstances.

In relation to the Remm project, the only thing I can say is that, to the extent that our financial institutions—whether it be the State Bank, SGIC, or any other locally based financial institution—are investing in South Australian based projects, I certainly encourage it very fully and I was delighted when the bank took a lead role in getting together a financing package for that very important project. Quite frankly, South Australia could not have afforded to see that project fail. It would have been a very black mark upon us if we could not get that project together and get it financed. It has been financed in extreme difficulties, not the least of which has been the way the project was made a political football in this place by Opposition members.

Despite all those difficulties, and much no doubt to the dismay of some members opposite, the project has proceeded and the financing is in place. I am delighted—and I have said this before in this place—when I hear that our institutions are finding investment opportunities here in our State rather than having to go interstate in order to try to maintain their profit and investment activity. I will always be there encouraging them to do so. However, I have one important proviso, and that is that it must be based on their commercial judgment, it must be commercially sound and it must be something they see as being appropriate business to support their activities and their customer base in this State. Provided that is the criteria and they are doing it, I am absolutely delighted and all the encouragement I can give will continue to be given. I resent a single cent of money raised in this State having to be used to generate activity elsewhere. I would like to see the lot of it spent here in South Australia, but we know that is not possible.

If businesses grow, the State will be prosperous, but examples such as the honourable member brings up, I think are admirable examples of the reason why we must have the headquarters of financial institutions in this State. That terrible vacuum that was created after the previous Liberal Government bungled the Bank of Adelaide activity and the resultant total drying up of investment, particularly in the CBD of Adelaide, is a very strong lesson to us all. We must never forget it and we must ensure that we have the headquarters of financial institutions here, and in particular a strong State Bank group, and we must support them to the hilt, otherwise South Australia will be in big economic trouble.

OOLDEA SOAK

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS (Napier): Will the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs explain to the House what moves, if any, are being taken to return the area around Ooldea Soak to Aboriginal ownership? Members will be aware that in 1984 an area of more than 75 000 square kilometres, known as the Maralinga lands, was returned to Aboriginal ownership. The Ooldea area was not included in this. However, it has enormous spiritual and historical significance for Aborigines.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I would like to thank my predecessor as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for this very important question. Most members would be aware of the Ooldea Soak as the site of Daisy Bates's famous camp in the early years of this century, but for Aborigines the significance of the Ooldea area goes back many thousands of years. Indeed, anthropologists in a major report from ANU recently described Ooldea as an ancient metropolis—as the largest Aboriginal camp of its kind in Australia.

In fact, I am sure members opposite would be particularly interested to know that Aborigines from many thousands of kilometres away—as far as Queensland and Western Australia—travelled to Ooldea for sacred ceremonies. It was both a religious as well as a trading centre. It was also a major site for Aborigines in terms of relief during droughts; it was a source of pure water and a source of water with various curative properties. So, I was very pleased recently to visit the Maralinga lands and to meet with Aborigines concerning the significance of that area, having visited the Ooldea area with another predecessor, the present Minister of Education.

The parliamentary committee visited the Maralinga Tjarutja people a couple of months ago and the clear and unanimous recommendation of this bipartisan committee was that the Ooldea area be returned to the Maralinga Tjarutja people because of its archaeological and spiritual significance. This committee's recommendation is being taken very seriously by the Government. Both my officers and officers of the Department of Lands are currently undertaking survey work and are preparing the documentation to define the land, hopefully to facilitate a transfer of that land at the end of the year or next year.

If that was the outcome of our investigations it would be necessary to amend the Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act to redefine the schedule of land titles, and the parliamentary committee has totally endorsed this approach. So, we are taking the recommendation seriously. It is of enormous significance to South Australia in terms of both European history and, most particularly, Aboriginal history.

WILLIAMSTOWN TIMBER MILL

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): Will the Minister of Forests order an immediate investigation into the

recent financial management of the Timber Corporation mill at Williamstown to determine whether its trading losses of more than $500 000 over the past three years were caused in large part by extravagant, wasteful and irregular spending including: $14 295 claimed in expenses, other than air fares, for an overseas trip undertaken by the mill's General Manager to purchase new equipment, which was never used; $688 039 in purchase, freight and insurance costs and $82 000 in storage costs for this imported equipment, which was never used; $48 000 for the purchase of a debarker, which was never used; $65 000 for a moulder and chipper bin, which were never used; $354 000 for a kiln, which was never used; $63 000 to settle legal action over other equipment ordered by the mill but not subsequently required; donations at $300 a time to country racing clubs with which the General Manager was associated; and the General Manager, since January this year, working only part time from his holiday home at Port Vincent but being paid full wages, having a housing loan at 4 per cent courtesy of the Timber Corporation, having a new Nissan sedan purchased for him in May this year through Satco and converted to LPG at an additional cost of $1 850, and being provided with other extras worth $600?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: It is rather typical of the Opposition that it waits until something is sold before it wants an inquiry into it. That is fairly typical of people who are behind the times in that way.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: Oddly enough, the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition is yelling at me for rationalising an organisation which for years the Opposition told us we had to rationalise and from which we had to get rid of people. It is that typical and nasty little rubbish—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: My colleague describes it very well: the mealy-mouthed hypocrisy of an Opposition that does not want to get involved in things until they are nice and safe and they are finished. It sounds to me as though—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: The honourable member asks his question and then wants five or six other goes later. That is also pretty typical of the Opposition—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: It sounds as though we are hearing a lot of sour grapes from people who, unfortunately, came out at the sad end of this, people who had to be taken off the Satco payroll because Satco needs to survive as an organisation. I feel very sorry for those people, but I have not heard much sorrow expressed by the Opposition for such people. All I hear from the Opposition is that the organisation has to get rid of more people. As to the sour grapes situation, I will look at those matters where there are clear accusations that people have misused funds belonging to Satco for their own purposes. I must say that accusations by the Opposition do not really turn me on, because far too often I have heard such accusations and found that there was nothing to them.

SAND-DUNES

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): Mr Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON: Thank you, Sir; I like the quietness. Will the Minister for Environment and Planning call for an urgent report on a rehabilitation program in respect of erosion of sand-dune areas in Semaphore Park, specifically, in the Third Avenue to Marini Court region? Will the Minister also seek an urgent response as to which policies recommended in a September 1989 report will be adopted by this Government? In recent correspondence that I have received from a number of constituents in the aforementioned region, many questions were asked, and I refer to one letter from a constituent, as follows:

> I have been fortunate in being able to read a report prepared by the Coastal Management Branch in which the theories of sand movement in the area were explained and a proposed policy for protection of the sand-dunes and the adjoining properties were put forward.
>
> It would be most appreciated if you were able to ascertain:
>
> (1) Whether the policies recommended in the above report have been adopted as the policies of the Government?
>
> (2) If they have not, when can that be anticipated?
>
> In the report it was recommended that when the sand-dune erosion came within 20 metres of private property boundaries a sand replenishment program would be instituted. As the erosion is now approximately 22 metres from the property boundaries in an area adjacent to Noora Place and the September/November gales are still to come, it would be reasonable to expect further erosion to occur. Accordingly, I would be grateful if you could ascertain:
>
> (3) Is provision being made in the 1990-91 budget for sand replenishment to take place in this area during the summer period?
>
> The answers to these questions are of vital interest to all who live on or adjacent to the foreshore, and we will wait for any information you may be able to obtain.

I am aware that the Minister is not in a position to advise me about what is in the 1990-91 budget, but I would certainly appreciate any information and assistance that the Minister could provide to my constituent concerning this matter.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I thank the honourable member for his continuing interest in this complex issue. Before answering the specific aspects of the honourable member's question, I will briefly explain to him exactly what is causing the problem at this part of the coastline at Semaphore Park. Recent investigations have shown that the erosion of this area is due to what could be described as a sand wave. In other words, this is a type of sand movement that has been moving northward along the coast. It is like a wave, it moves on, and there is replenishment in the natural way in the area which it has just left.

The honourable member referred to the report prepared by the Coast Protection Board in September 1989. The report recommends that there be close monitoring of the area to ensure that the sand wave theory is the most appropriate one and will not result in ongoing and permanent erosion of the area. The report recommends that the main protective strategy should be one of sand replenishment as opposed to what is determined or called a hard protection strategy, that is, permanent rock walls, seawalls, etc. It is important to recognise the point in the letter from the honourable member's constituents about a 20 metre zone. What is referred to in the report is a buffer zone of 20 metres, and that has been closely monitored by the Coast Protection Board.

Recently, the whole area was inspected by officers of the branch and by the Woodville council engineer. It was looked at in terms of explaining why this is happening and what further action might be taken. It is now a matter for the Woodville council to decide on the board's advice which action is to be taken, with the likelihood that some money will be made available from the Coast Protection Board. The honourable member is correct in saying that I cannot make any comment about the forthcoming budget except to say that I understand and appreciate the problem that he and his constituents are facing and I will certainly take action on it.

GRAND PRIX BOARD

Mr INGERSON (Bragg): In view of the reported current financial position of the Grand Prix Board, which has an accumulated deficit of $4.5 million, has almost eroded its capital funds and has liabilities exceeding assets by $1 million, and the statement by the Auditor-General in the annual report tabled yesterday that unless the board can generate sufficient profits in the coming year, it will need to seek additional capital funds to avoid being faced with a funds deficiency and a qualified audit certificate with respect to its ability to continue functioning as a going concern, what action is the Government taking to restore the board's financial position? In particular, has the grant requested from the Commonwealth been forthcoming? If not, does the Premier intend to inject capital funds from State sources?

The Hon. J.C. BANNON: This matter has been addressed in discussions with the Government, involving Treasury, and I think it needs to be put into context. When the event was secured, the concept of the Government was that it would have to be a subsidised activity, that because of the needs and demands of the Grand Prix, particularly the cost of setting up and taking down the street circuit every year, it would be unrealistic to expect any cash surplus on the event itself but, as with many other events, including the Adelaide Festival of Arts, it would attract an ongoing subsidy.

The crucial thing about that is that any subsidy applied to an activity such as this—any underlying budget support such as that given to the Convention Centre, the Exhibition Hall, the Adelaide Festival of Arts and a number of other things—must be justified by the revenue and activity generated by that event. At the time, that is, 1984-85, I said that anything of the order of $1.5 million to $2 million per annum in 1984-85 dollars would be pretty reasonable—very reasonable, in fact—for the benefit we would get from the Grand Prix. If one looks at the economic analysis made of the economic impact of the Grand Prix, that amount is extremely modest.

The latest Price Waterhouse figures, based on the 1988 event, showed that $26.6 million, after direct economic costs had been taken into account, was the benefit. So it can be seen that we are vastly in surplus on the event. To come to the point that I am about to make, the fact is that, apart from an amount of $1 million which was provided through the Jubilee 150 Board, which had been earmarked for that purpose, and the $5 million capital establishment grant from the Commonwealth Government, until this year we have not had to provide to the Grand Prix any injection of the kind about which I spoke. That has been a remarkable result.

If, in fact, we had decided that from 1984-85, whatever the financial outcome, we would be making an allocation of an amount of, say, $2 million indexed, then obviously the capital deficiency that is referred to here would not even have arisen. However, we chose to require the board to raise borrowings in order to fund its activities—and that has been justified. It has, in fact, meant that we have had, effectively, a cost-free event over that period. However, the point has been reached, as I indicated in releasing the Grand Prix annual report, where that will not go on. Last year exceptional circumstances—the weather, the pilots dispute and so on—readily accounted for the result. In fact, that $1.3 million deficit recorded was, indeed, very good in the circumstances.

I acknowledge the problem the board has in dealing with its capital in the long term and, indeed, in dealing with its recurrent expenditure. At the moment my view is that the cleanest way to do that is for those deficiencies to be met from general revenue, bearing in mind, of course, the return that general revenue is getting through the activity generated. I repeat again: there must come a point at which a level of subsidy is not justified against the economic benefit. We are way, way below that at the moment. Obviously, an examination of Grand Prix accounts suggest that, barring unforeseen problems in the future, we will take a long while to get to that point. So, the matter is being actively addressed as we enter the new contracting period. At this stage we are adopting an approach we adopted last year—we will cover the deficit incurred by the Grand Prix. However, I would like to see the long-term arrangements set in place.

In relation to the Commonwealth contribution, we have been required to make further major capital outlays in this second stage contract, and I have made a number of detailed submissions to the Federal Government without any success at all. We have been able to establish that, by reason of the event being staged, the Commonwealth gets a direct return of about $8 million or $9 million through income tax and other Commonwealth levies. I would have thought that it would be a good investment for it to put in a few million dollars on a capital support basis. That has been the case we have established, but it has fallen on deaf ears to date. The application is still alive, but at the moment there is no expectation of getting money from the Commonwealth.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN POLICE BAND

Mrs HUTCHISON (Stuart): Is the Minister of Emergency Services aware of the great success of the South Australian Police Band at the Forty-first Edinburgh Military Tattoo? If so, is it envisaged that there will be a recognition of this on its return to South Australia?

The Hon. J.H.C. KLUNDER: Those of us who have seen the Police Band and the Australian Drill Team perform here in South Australia are not surprised that the performance in Edinburgh was one of excellent standard. I guess the most praiseworthy comment one can make about them is that they lived up to their own exacting standards over there.

As the honourable member mentioned in her speech yesterday, I noticed in newspaper reports that seasoned observers rated the performance by the two groups as being amongst the best that have been seen in Edinburgh for many years. Like most people, I look forward to seeing the videotape of the performance when it returns to South Australia.

In relation to the welcome back and the recognition of their performance, I would clearly want to take the advice of the Commissioner of Police, because, after all, this is an operational matter as far as the police are concerned. Knowing the way the police look after their own, I have no doubt that there will be some small recognition for the effort.

SOUTHERN MARINA SITE

Mr MATTHEW (Bright): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Planning. Which site does the Government now support for a southern metropolitan marina—the Westcliff Estate site, which has been the subject of successive proposals from four groups and which the Minister promised in September last year featuring 'one of the most exciting marina developments in Australia', just before a Government report identified significant geological problems with this site, or a site just to the north of the Westcliff Estate now favoured by a group associated with

the Burlock companies? Does the Government consider two marinas will be viable in this area given the continuing difficulties it has had getting just one off the ground? If the Burlock companies are still involved in negotiations with the Government, has their prudential background been investigated as the Government promised last year?

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: The simple answer to the question is that the Government will not be favouring either site. The Government will conduct itself in the way it has conducted itself from the very beginning. When the Premier announced the proposal brought forward by Mintern at that stage, and now by the Burlock group of companies, he clearly spelled out last October three specific conditions that would have to be met by any marina proposal if it were to be successful. First, the owner and proponent of such a development would have to have unencumbered access to the site; secondly, the project would have to be both economically and environmentally sustainable; and, thirdly, the company would have to prove that it was financially viable.

I remind the honourable member that those conditions would apply to any marina proposal brought to the Government. As the member has pointed out, there are now a number of proposals. In fact, so correct was the marina site suitability study in identifying Marino Rocks as an environmentally sound area to have such a development—and let me remind the honourable member that last year, before his time in this House, I released that site suitability study on behalf of my department—that we now have a number of proposals apparently and a number of developers who wish to bring proposals to Government for the establishment of a marina development and, in some cases, housing.

I make it very clear that my department will thoroughly and appropriately assess all proposals brought to us, and we will then make a decision about the most appropriate form of planning mechanism that should apply. The Government will then make its decision. We will not be preempted by the honourable member or anybody else suggesting that we should support one proposal over another. It is important to note that the Government has always intended that any proposal would go through the processes of public display and community consultation—

Mr Matthew: What about an EIS?

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I am very happy to discuss that matter. I note that the Burlock proposal includes an offer to do an EIS. Let me make it very clear that, in the original proposal, I called for a very stringent statement of environmental factors in the supplementary development plan to the extent that the conservation movement itself indicated publicly that it was happy that all environmental issues were covered.

Mr Matthew: That's not what they tell me.

The Hon. S.M. LENEHAN: I am telling the honourable member that that is exactly what the environmental movement said at the time. We will look very closely at the Burlock group's new proposal which, I remind the House, is significantly different from its original proposal. As a department and Government we will look very closely at this proposal and make the correct and appropriate assessment as to the planning process and in terms of which proposal should be selected.

I remind the honourable member of the redevelopment of the Patawalonga, for which there are four proposals, each quite different in the scope, amenity and facility they provide. The Government has determined an appropriate method by which the four proposals will be assessed. We are working constructively and positively with the Glenelg council. That will probably be a model for the future in the way we proceed when there are multiple proposals for a particular area. I certainly will bring these matters to my Cabinet colleagues in the future, should there be more than one proposal. At this stage I have no intention of suggesting that one proposal will have favour over another, particularly as my department has not had the opportunity to assess fully the current proposals.

WORLD UNIVERSITY

Mr HOLLOWAY (Mitchell): Will the Minister of Employment and Further Education outline to the House how a world university in Adelaide will operate and the effect it will have on further education in South Australia?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I thank the honourable member for his interest in university issues. I know of his involvement in the Flinders University. As the Premier mentioned at the beginning of Question Time, a world university is a critical and crucial part of the MFP project. It will certainly provide the knowledge and skills base to underpin the technological advances that will be developed as a result of the MFP. May I stress one point from the start: following recent publicity in the *Advertiser*, the world university will not be a fourth university campus. It will not be a campus in the traditional sense of competing with the three existing universities. It will not offer, say, Psychology 1, Accountancy 1 or History 1: it will be quite different in concept.

Essentially, it will be a high technology hub for both existing universities and also with links to universities overseas. That is very important. We see it not as competing with the existing universities but in fact for the existing universities to play an important part in driving the world university. We are interested in seeing the three universities involved in a consortium approach to the world university in much the same way as they are currently involved in a consortium approach to international education and the recruitment of overseas students. Indeed, we hope that, rather than competing with the existing universities, the world university will attract new resources for South Australia's higher education sector, including students, teachers, research contracts, grants and new centres of excellence. We hope it will act as a catalyst for shared resources and will enhance the role of the tertiary sector in South Australia.

First, we have to shake off traditional notions of what is a university. Basically, we have to look at a new idea, one that is not imprisoned by walls or confined by restrictive thinking. In South Australia we are already exploring high tech learning delivery methods. Indeed, TAFE is leading the charge in this area which obviously will be central to the teaching and research role of the new university. We see it being a centre for distance education internationally, delivering education and exporting education services around the world, particularly in the Pacific rim.

I envisage that it will offer master courses, courses for specialists in fields such as ecological studies, information technologies, electronics, environmental studies and postgraduate management courses. I also envisage international symposia, intensive leading edge short courses, specialised training, joint courses with overseas universities and educational teleconferences. The world university is a sound concept in its own right. We could achieve the world university without the MFP, but the MFP cannot exist without the world university concept. Certainly the MFP will give the world university concept, which is being strongly endorsed by academics in this city, a flying start.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: EXPENDITURE REQUESTS

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr MEIER: I was very concerned, offended and apalled to receive a mention in respect of the specific expenditure requests that the Premier put out on Sunday 5 August in relation to the $1.8 billion budget variation. Of the two particular items of concern, the first is the operating of the Port Wakefield/Kadina Road. In fact, the Premier's list simply mentions upgrading of Wakefield Road, which does not make any sense at all—he would know that that road is in the city.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member knows that a personal explanation may not be debated.

Mr MEIER: The second item is—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MEIER:—the establishment of a community-run broadcasting station to service Gawler, Balaklava, Gulf St Vincent and the Barossa. The Premier said in his statement:

It is about time the Opposition showed some responsibility.

That is a totally disgraceful and untrue statement, and the Premier is aware of that. The two specific issues first arose in a letter to the Minister of Transport about the Port Wakefield/Kadina/Wallaroo Road, where I said:

Once again I have been approached by a constituent concerning the [in his words] 'disgraceful' state of the road between Port Wakefield and Kadina/Wallaroo.

I have taken this matter up with your predecessor on three occasions, in fact as far back as 1986, including a personal inspection with the then Minister and leading a deputation from the District Council of Northern Yorke Peninsula and the Corporation of Wallaroo to the Minister and all to no avail.

In reply to that letter the Minister of Transport indicated that the upgrading of that section of road is currently programmed to start in the 1992-93 financial year. So the Minister of Transport acknowledges that the work is necessary and that the Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo area is a very important part of the State, yet the Premier has the audacity to come out and say that my application for funding is irresponsible.

The SPEAKER: Order! I very clearly explained to the honourable member the rules for making a personal explanation. I withdraw leave.

DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS

Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, I wish to move a motion on a matter of privilege.

The SPEAKER: Does this relate to the statement I made earlier today?

Mr S.J. BAKER: Yes, Sir. I move:

That this House expresses its dismay at receiving the advice from the Attorney-General that he has decided to withdraw his appeal to the High Court after the time has lapsed for other parties to enter any action they may wish to take in appealing the full bench of the Supreme Court decision on the question of privilege to the High Court, and reiterates its unanimous support for the motion moved by the Deputy Premier on 10 April on this matter.

In support of my motion Mr Speaker, I will read the contents of the letter that was supplied to you this day. It states:

Thank you for your letter of 7 August 1990 enclosing two letters from the Attorney-General in relation to his appeal to the High Court in *Lewis v Wright and Advertiser Newspapers Limited.* My party was disappointed to read of the Attorney-General's decision in this morning's *Advertiser* newspaper before the letters are tabled in the House of Assembly.

The Attorney-General's decision not to proceed is a serious blow to parliamentary privilege. Initially, the Attorney-General intervened in the Supreme Court appeal without reference to the House. Subsequently, the House unanimously supported that intervention as *amicus curiae* and the argument which he presented. Now, in the face of pressure from unelected members of the ALP State Convention, he has buckled under and withdraws an appeal which sought to maintain the reasonable position unanimously agreed by the House of Assembly, a position incidentally which also prevails under the Federal Parliamentary Privilege Act. In addition, he has yielded to what he claims are views of both the *News* and the *Advertiser*, one of which has a direct interest in the litigation.

The Liberal Party held the view at the time when the Attorney-General first raised this issue that it was not constitutionally proper for either House of Parliament to become a party to the proceedings and thus subject to the jurisdiction of the court. And as the Attorney-General had already intervened and was putting arguments to the Supreme Court which were consistent with the unanimous views of the House of Assembly it was not believed necessary for the House also to put the same view through counsel as *amicus curiae.* Now, by his decision to desert the House of Assembly, the Attorney-General has betrayed the confidence we had that he would endeavour to protect and support the privileges of the Parliament without fear.

On the advice which we have it is not possible for the House of Assembly to appear as *amicus curiae* before the High Court if there is no appeal. Whether or not Mr Lewis takes over the burden of the appeal at substantial personal cost to argue on behalf of all members of Parliament and the public is a matter for him. It is most unfair and unreasonable for the Attorney-General to attack Mr Lewis and blame him for the raising of the issue of privilege. He has not brought parliamentary privilege into disrepute as asserted by the Attorney-General. Such an attack is unwarranted and seeks to divert attention from the Attorney-General's own lack of action. To suggest, as he does, that this is the worst possible case to resolve the question is a nonsense and seeks only to cloud the issue.

Whether it was Mr Lewis MP or some other member of Parliament who made allegations in Parliament about any person, whether Mr Wright (a member of the ALP) or anyone else, is of no consequence. The fact is, it could have been any member who raised an issue which, if raised outside Parliament, would not have been protected by parliamentary privilege. It could have been any person so named who responded outside Parliament in terms which may have been intemperate, even defamatory. In those circumstances, the member of Parliament would only be able to sue to prevent the continuation of defamatory remarks or for damages if the member of Parliament is prepared to be cross-examined as to sources of information, motives and the truth of the allegations made in Parliament. Such a prospect may well intimidate members when in the public interest issues should be raised. Two specific issues spring immediately to mind: Mr Peter Duncan's statements, when a member of the State Parliament, in relation to Mr Saffron and questions last year relative to Mr Burlock.

My Party has no difficulty with a citizen named in Parliament responding outside Parliament in temperate terms but believe that it is prejudicial to the democratic process if abusive and defamatory terms are used in such responses. I hope that all members reflect upon the consequences of allowing the full Supreme Court judgment to stand unchallenged. It compromises the right of any member of Parliament to raise important issues whether they relate to corruption, collusion, maladministration or other areas of public concern. And the consequences apply whether one is in Government or Opposition or is an Independent.

One can appreciate some nervousness on the part of the press about the Attorney-General's appeal, but I suggest that such nervousness is unnecessary and any criticism is unfounded on closer examination of the issues. It should be remembered that the press is protected by qualified privilege to report matters raised in Parliament and that is as it should be. On many occasions the press regard a matter as one of considerable public importance but because of defamation laws won't report it unless it is raised first in Parliament. If the issue is raised by a member based on information supplied by the press and the response by the person named is abusive and defamatory, the honourable member may be discouraged from pursuing the issue or may not be able to prevent a repetition of the abuse or defamation unless he or she is ultimately prepared to disclose sources and be cross-examined on motives and substance. Even the press will ultimately be compromised by that.

I conclude by expressing again my Party's grave concern about the Attorney-General's decision. So far as your suggestion of a

motion in the House of Assembly is concerned, my Party is considering that option and currently reserves its position. I also put to the House that the honourable member concerned, Mr Lewis, was given undertakings by the Government on a number of occasions that the matter would be proceeded with in the High Court. He is now in a situation where the matter will be out of time unless the Attorney-General proceeds with it.

There are some extremely important matters of substance and extremely important issues at stake concerning the extent to which members of this Parliament can operate in South Australia without fear or favour. It is a critical issue. It does not have anything to do with one particular member of this House; it has to do with the rights of every member of this House and the right of the citizens to receive due and just consideration and protection. It goes far beyond one member, and it is one of the most important matters that this House will have to consider.

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier): It would be the Government's desire to expedite consideration of a matter of privilege at the earliest possible opportunity. However, I point out that, despite my attempts to get the text of this motion following your advice to me, Sir, I guess as Leader of the House, that such a motion was contemplated, in fact the clock showed four minutes to go in Question Time before I had the text of the motion in my hands. Therefore, I feel it is not unreasonable for the Government to indicate that it will recommend to the House that this matter be dealt with today, but later today. I have suggested to the mover of this motion that we should be in a position (and this can be negotiated) to have such debate as is appropriate and a vote taken either immediately before or immediately after the dinner adjournment. In those circumstances, I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 7 August. Page 56.)

The SPEAKER: Order! I call on the member for Custance and remind the House that this is the honourable member's maiden speech and request that the normal courtesies be extended to him.

Mr VENNING (Custance): I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. I congratulate His Excellency on his distinguished and popular term as the South Australian Governor. I first had the honour of meeting Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan when I invited them to officiate at the Crystal Brook Show in 1982. Their presence was very much appreciated. I join all Australians in congratulating His Excellency on his very fine military career, a military career that made him an excellent choice for Governor. It would appear that his term will conclude later this year. May I join others in this House in wishing Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan a long and happy retirement. We are honoured that they will continue to live in South Australia.

Over the years I have noticed that every newly elected member of Parliament, including Mr McLachlan, has claimed to represent an electorate so productive, industrious and full of potential that, were they put together, they would surely out-produce the Common Market, Japan and North America combined. I assure you, Mr Speaker, and members that my electorate is no different.

I express my gratitude to the people of Custance for giving me a comfortable victory. I thank them for their trust and I can only hope that my efforts on their behalf will enable me, in the future, to turn that comfortable victory into a solid margin. I assure all sections of the Custance community that it is my desire to assist and represent them at all times, irrespective of their political views.

As I speak in this place for the first time, I can say that I am very honoured to be here, especially when I recall the stature of the members who represented my electorate before me. It is, and has been, quite difficult for me to follow in their footsteps, particularly the footsteps of our former leader, John Olsen. I realise that the circumstances that allow me to stand here today would not have occurred if South Australia had had a more equitable voting system. As the Premier observed last Thursday, John Olsen is a very fine politician—good enough to be the Premier, and he should be in that seat now. But, that is history and to follow in his footsteps as the elected representative for Custance is daunting. I pay the highest tribute to him, his wife Julie and his family. He worked very hard; he did everything right; and he ran one of the finest campaigns we have seen in South Australia but was pipped at the post. It is sad, to say the least.

What has happened since is our loss in this place but a big gain for South Australia, as he is now in the Senate, the States' House. The people of Custance understand and support John Olsen's move to the Senate. They realise, as I do, that they are now very well served in three parliamentary Chambers—John Olsen in the Senate and Neil Andrew in the House of Representatives, and they live in hope of my serving them well in Custance.

As many members are aware, my father, Howard—Cocky from the Rocky—was the member before John Olsen. I pay tribute to the work he did, assisted by my mother, for 11 years as the member for Rocky River. Dad began under Australia's greatest Premier, Sir Thomas Playford. The period after Sir Thomas's retirement was 10 years of turbulence for conservative politics in South Australia, and we saw many realignments and changes of allegience. It was in Rocky River that the then Country Party push was halted, but it got within 35 votes in 1975. Until the recent Custance by-election the people of the Mid North had not seen so much political activity.

Howard put in much effort and he and his strong team, headed by a wily redhead in Mr Lindsay Graham, pushed the adversary back to a respectable distance. It was those years that awakened my interest in politics. What frustrated me then, as it does now, was seeing all the effort and the finances that are expended over the years when two Parties both representing similar philosophies and ideologies are toughing it out. The only reason I stand here as a Liberal and not a National—and many of my colleagues are in the same position—is that many years ago (on 1 October 1910) the farmers Party, which was then called the Farmers and Producers Political Union, merged with the Australian National League to form the Liberal Union.

I am proud to say that one of the instigators of that union was my great grandfather, William Jasper Venning, who was one of the first settlers to organise farmers into a political Party and an effective lobby group. What has occurred since is well documented in history: a further amalgamation with the Country Party formed the Liberal and Country League, and we all know how successful that merger was under Tom Playford—27 years of South Australia's most successful government.

As I stand here on the opposite end of the bench that I share with the member for Flinders, I cannot help but

highlight the fact that the background, philosophies and political desires of both of us are identical. He is a National and I am a Liberal. I know he has other thoughts, but I believe that, for the overall benefit of the right of centre politics in Australia, we should move towards a merger. The move is on all over Australia. Only two weekends ago we heard from a joint meeting in Canberra that the individual hierarchies had agreed to go further but had asked the grass roots to instigate it.

Here is a unique opportunity for our side of politics to once again lead Australia to a common goal. As the South Australian Liberal Rural Chairman, I chaired and invited to a meeting last year the Right Honourable Doug Anthony, who gave a memorable address on the virtues of a merger. Likewise, only a few weeks ago I received a paper from Mr Michael Cobb, another prominent National, on the same subject. Other people come to mind, including another great National, Mr Ralph Hunt. It is time to forget the old parochial arguments. It is petty differences, not ideologies, that separate us. The only people who are in favour of our staying as we are are those opposite, both here and in Canberra. I will do all I can to bring about discussion for an eventual merger. I have already begun by issuing an invitation to the National Party organisation here in South Australia to attend our next Rural Council meeting on 24 August. It is time for the grass roots to rise up and be the vanguard.

After that little digression, I refer again to those who were here before me. Prior to my father being the member for Rocky River, which takes in a large part of the newer District of Custance, Mr Jim Heaslip held the seat for 20 years until 1968. In his maiden speech on 26 July 1949, 40 years ago, he referred to soil erosion and said:

> Each year we lose acres—acres of what was once productive land.

He went on to speak of the value of superphospate, saying:

> We must put back in what we take out.

This was 40 years ago and, dare I say it, this is the decade of land care, the principles of which I support. Farmers over the years have been much better conservationists than many would give them credit for. Not long after this speech, South Australia introduced its Soil Conservation Act and soil boards were established. The West Broughton Soil Board and the Southern Hummocks Soil Board, the two boards in my district, are much respected Australia wide.

Only two weeks ago the Governor-General, Mr Hayden, inspected works in my electorate on the property of the Southern Hummocks Chairman, Mr Kevin Jaeschke. I am pleased with the innovative work, most of it being done before the decade of land care. I have always believed that the aims of land care would be further promoted in South Australia by an amalgamation of the soil boards and the animal and plant control boards. There is some controversy, but I believe that my proposal is well founded and is not without support.

Mr Heaslip also went on to say that he was concerned about the number of sheep in South Australia in 1949—almost 10 million. And so time highlights another problem. Our wool crisis today is blamed on over production—and so it is—but let us compare the prices in 1950 with those applying now. At that time 2½ bales of wool bought a Holden car; today one needs at least 2½ truckloads. The reason for our wool crisis has more to do with our faltering economy and our over-valued dollar. The dollar is way over valued and everyone, including the buyers, knows that.

No-one is confident that we can sustain the Australian dollar at that level. Hence wool sales are at best sluggish, even after the controversial drop of the floor price. Mr Heaslip also had wise things to say about the Leigh Creek coalfield. Once again, credit was given to Sir Thomas Playford for opening up the field at a time when Australia was critically short of Newcastle coal. He went on to say:

> It has been said that, because Leigh Creek is so far from Adelaide, its value to the State is reduced, but its remoteness may be an asset to South Australia's future.

How right he was. He goes on to say:

> The more industries we can establish away from the city, the better it will be. The metropolitan area now has two-thirds of the State population, and the country only one-third. The birth rate in the country is greater than that in the city, yet the population in the city is rising. Anything we can do to bring about a more even distribution of our population should be done. Anything to keep families in the country is all to the benefit of the country and I certainly would support anything which can be done in that respect.

They were wise words indeed. Mr Playford did just what was suggested—shipbuilding and steelworks at Whyalla, a power station at Port Augusta, smelters at Port Pirie and papermills in the South-East. South Australia had never seen such decentralisation.

What of our record since then? Over the past 20 years there has been a complete reversal. Governments have paid only lip service to the principle of decentralisation, so much so that South Australia is now the most centralised State in Australia. We cannot all live in Adelaide. Many of the problems in South Australia relate to this. Adelaide's services are continually overloaded—its housing, roads, power supplies, water, public transport and health facilities. And there is unused potential in rural areas. Empty houses are dotted across the landscape. Houses are for sale in country areas, and they are cheap. But what is the use? There is work, but no employment. The only people who can utilise this cheap available housing are retired people and disadvantaged, unemployed people.

Herein lies another problem, but I will not go on with that now. In short, many of our country towns are having problems relating to an influx of a different socio-economic group. They are people with standards that are different from those of our traditional, conservative townsfolk. There has been much conflict, especially amongst the young people. Our police have a tough task in upholding community standards and our teachers have their hands full in our schools. Social workers in our community are flat out. It is a sad fact that country communities are losing their workers to the city and those workers are replaced by the city's displaced people. It is a hard fact, but it is true. I will say more about decentralisation later.

Mr Heaslip passed away in August 1988 after giving much to the State. Time has proved many things. Briefly, other great men who have served the area I represent include the late Mr J.A. Lyons, the late Hon. A.P. Blesing, the late Mr Claude Allen (member for Frome, whom many members will recall), the late Gordon Gilfillan, MLC, and the Hons Dick Geddes, Boyd Dawkins, Ross Story and Les Kent, MLCs. I make special mention of the late Sir Lyell McEwin who lived in the Blyth-Brinkworth district. He would have been the Mid North's most respected gentleman, statesman and politician. He passed away in September 1988. He was active, supportive and concise, right to the end. He was a respected and key member of the Playford Government ministry. I often discuss his virtues and deeds with his son Roly. Indeed, the Mid North has ushered many fine people into this House and it is a challenging task for me to follow.

I have noted that there is a vast difference in representing the District of Custance in 1990 compared with 1970. I saw my father working the electorate steadily, an expectation I held when elected six weeks ago. I now realise that representation will mean dealing with issues not heard of in the

1970s. In 1970 there were 5 500 constituents in the electorate, and it had boundaries of 50 to 60 miles. Today Custance is comprised of 18 850 voters with boundaries of 350 kilometres. The electorate includes part of Port Pirie in the north, Kapunda in the south, Burra in the east and Port Broughton in the west. It is a large electorate. Certainly, I do not know how the member for Eyre handles his area of responsibility. I am finding the demands of the electorate exciting. Many people have contacted my office outlining problems the type of which were not around 20 years ago. It is a challenge, and I will do my best to meet it.

Custance: The name 'Custance' does not really have a resonant tone, but the name belonged to one Professor John Daniel Custance, a graduate of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, England. In 1879 the Parliament agreed to establish an experimental farm and agricultural college. It sought overseas a professor who could do the work and it finally chose Professor John Custance, who had recently been agricultural adviser to the Imperial Japanese Government. He arrived in South Australia in 1881 and was appalled by the farming practices in the colony, particularly concerning the growing of wheat. By July 1881 he had urged the Commissioner of Crown Lands to establish an agricultural college and experimental farm. A 728 acre property, known as Olive Hill Farm, 10 kilometres from Gawler, was purchased at six pounds an acre.

Custance took up residence as Principal in 1882 and the college was officially opened in 1885. It was not long before the successful Agricultural Bureau, which was very strong in the area, ran joint projects with the college, as did the Department of Agriculture after it started in 1915. 'Agricultural extension' were the 'in' words, as much as they are today. Custance was very involved, not only as Principal of the college but in scientific work, as well. He battled the authorities of the day and was most notable in his research and use of phosphate fertilisers. He was also interested in the matter of the depth of tillage. So, having had some initial apprehensions about the name 'Custance', as a wheatgrower I am proud that my electorate bears his name, particularly as the electorate is renowned for its ability to grow wheat of excellent quality and quantity.

My 20 year involvement with the Agricultural Bureau of South Australia has been of great value to me. I pay the highest tribute to the bureau, which has been Australia's most successful farmer education body. I also pay tribute to all those in the bureau and the Department of Agriculture whose input is appreciated by all in rural industry. I also offer my continued support to the United Farmers and Stockowners and offer my ear to South Terrace at any time. I wish Don Pfitzner and his executive well in their endeavours to keep our UF&S up to the high standard that we have expected for so many years.

Whilst discussing the wheat industry, I recall the name of another prominent South Australian who did much for that industry in Australia. I refer to Thomas Stott. A few of my colleagues will recall the said gentleman who sat briefly in your place, Mr Speaker. Tom Stott was a very energetic character who had very strong opinions and a powerful vocabulary if aroused. Mr Stott believed strongly in the stabilised marketing of wheat and it came to a head in a historic debate, man to man, with Sir John Teasdale of Western Australia. Sir John was opposed to orderly marketing and the lobbying was intense, as it was last year when we deregulated the domestic wheat market. Those who attended that memorable day said Stott was at his bullish best and won the day.

'Never again will growers in Australia have to sell wheat below the cost of production,' said Tom Stott, and he went on with the job and led the South Australian wheat and woolgrowers for some years. It is a great injustice that he was not knighted for his work and ability. Australian wheatgrowers had an unparalleled period of growth and stability during a very difficult time because of the foresight and ability of the late Thomas Stott. I extend to Mrs Stott the good wishes and appreciation of all those in the industry.

The electorate of Custance is a very productive region of South Australia. When it is remembered that 60 per cent of South Australia's income is derived from the agricultural sector, Custance comes to the fore. It contains the most consistent, high quality wheat growing areas of the State and exports most of its produce through the ports of Port Pirie and Wallaroo. Other cereal grains are also prominent, that is, barley and oats. Grain legumes have been introduced over the past 10 years and are now an integral part of intense cropping rotations. These include field peas, Faba beans, lupins and vetch. Australian farmers are very adaptive and nowhere is that more evident than in Custance.

There is a strong trend to organic, chemical free farming, and the Dunn family business in Tarlee is a leading Australian enterprise in this new area. The Four Leaf Mill at Tarlee is selling a premium product and receives a premium price. Other areas in the electorate are moving as well as, for example, Penwortham. The industry is generally very interested in their progress.

Machinery manufacturing industry: I must mention the perilous position of the Australian machinery manufacturing industry. In the early 1900s, Australia led the world in the design and manufacture of innovative, modern farm machinery. We had the Ridley stripper, the stump jump plough and the majestic disc. Hubert Victor McKay invented and perfected the modern grain harvester, the principles of which are still in use today. H.V. McKay-Sunshine, later Sunshine-Massey-Ferguson, sold machines throughout Australia and the world. Being an innovator and manufacturer of world standard, it put us on the map. Alas, 50 years later, Massey-Ferguson, having made countless thousands of grain harvesters, has made its last. International Harvester of Australia has gone the same way. We had up to 50 harvester manufacturers at one time. Today we have one, and that is our very own Horwood Bagshaw of Mannum. We have priced ourselves out of the market. We have lost our drive, our incentive, our creative ability and our pride in being world class.

To its credit, Horwood Bagshaw has just got itself out of receivership by designing and making medium-sized and priced machines. However, it is the day of larger holdings and tighter deadlines; it is the day of big, expensive cropeating monsters, and they are all imported. Even the local subsidy and tariff could not sustain the local industry, so it is now all but gone. Our family was a personal friend of H.V. McKay and we are still shareholders. It is a sad day. It is very bad strategically that we rely heavily on overseas machines and parts to earn our biggest income. We have Horwood Bagshaw, and I acknowledge the Government's support for that company. We need to do more than that. We need to provide the right economic climate and incentive for industries such as our own Horwood Bagshaw to take a few risks, spend up on research and develop a larger Australian harvester. We need to be positive before it is too late.

Massey-Ferguson is still tooled up in Melbourne and all efforts should be made to save the factory in the hope that the climate will change. Both Massey-Ferguson and Horwood Bagshaw made good products and had a market niche which is still there, provided they are allowed to compete. Restrictive work practices are the main trouble, but that is

another debate for another time. The Australian tractor industry went the same way. We had three big tractor manufacturers: Massey went, International went and Chamberlain John Deere closed its doors here three years ago. Now we pay through the nose for tractors designed for use in another country. Likewise with our tillage machinery, we have only one South Australian company left—John Shearer—and we all know what trouble it is having.

Big American companies are making inroads into the Australian market. Another example of Australian ingenuity in recent times is the development of the air seeder, which was first invented in Victoria by Connor Shea. American companies looked and laughed at our giant 'vacuum cleaners' but their success has been complete, with over 10 Australian manufacturers four years ago. Today, 70 per cent of Australia's crop is sown by air seeders, and we have attempted to get back at the Americans and export to that country. However, we are unable to compete and many seeders will eventually be made in America.

This season I purchased an all-Australian made and designed air seeder, made by Allfarm in Albury, New South Wales. It is a very good example of Australian made and designed machinery—strong, effective, reliable and, most importantly, surprisingly simple. A few weeks ago I learnt that Allfarm has gone into receivership. Where does that leave me, the product and the Australian machinery manufacturing industry? We must act now to save what is left. These companies are the victims of crippling work practices, total union control and very high production costs, including freight. We have seen it in South Australia with the threat of closure of John Shearer. I hope that we do not see red machinery painted green down at Kilkenny. Using Australian steel, John Shearer has made a premium product for years in Adelaide. I hope it does not revert to a paint shop for imported United States gear.

My electorate is also home to other prominent men in the industry and I speak of Mr Andrew Inglis who, amongst other things, is President of the Grains Council of Australia, and Mr Malcolm Sargent, who is a member of the wheat and barley research committee and past grain section Chairman. Both shared membership with me in the same Rural Youth club. At the time, it was a strong organisation and did much to train our leaders of today. Its demise to its present position is regrettable, but that is another debate for another day.

The wool industry: Wool is the other major industry in the electorate, and we do it in style. We have the world's premium studs at Burra, Booborowie and Mount Bryan, including Collinsville and Ashrose. We also have the world's foremost *in vitro* fertilisation program, embryo transplant and semen distribution centres. Our stud men are world authorities in their chosen fields. Burra has a just claim to be the wool capital of the world.

Also on the subject of wool, I am alarmed to learn of the impending failure of the South Australian-based robot shearing venture. It is a reality, and for the sake of a further $800 000 to support a year of field trials in the manufacturing of the unit, surely, after a $6 million research and development budget, what is the remaining $800 000 to get it on the road? Surely, we do not want to see yet another Australian invention go overseas, with us having to buy it back from them. So many private individuals have expressed alarm. Even my local dressmaker is distressed and offered to make a personal financial commitment toward its completion in Australia. We do not seem to be able to develop anything technical in Australia these days, and I am wondering what a multifunction polis will do to help.

Tourism: On a more positive note I point out that another very important and increasing industry in Custance is tourism. Coupled to a very strong wine industry in the Clare Valley, this industry is booming. The towns of Burra, Clare, Kapunda, Mintaro, as well as many others, are so rich in heritage.

This very building of Parliament House is built of stone from Kapunda. So much of the early country settlement is still there to be appreciated. Thorn Park at Sevenhill—recent regional and State award winner—is the epitome of early Australian hospitality. As my colleague the shadow Minister of Tourism (Di Laidlaw) would agree, the place just oozes atmosphere. It is professionalism at its best, and I urge all members when they visit this lovely area soon to be guests at Thorn Park.

The list of attractions in my electorate reads like the who's who in South Australian tourism, and includes Bungaree Homestead (another award winner), Geralka Farm, Bowman Park, Paxton Square Cottages and the other heritage towns of Clare, Kapunda, and Auburn—the home of C.J. Dennis, the Sentimental Bloke.

The Clare Valley and its regions are Australia's best kept secret. The many boutique wineries in the area produce world class beverages, and the hospitality at the cellar doors has to be seen to be appreciated. Australians, and many overseas visitors—including Americans—who appreciate specialist and unique wines are just snapping up complete vintages. The Saint Aloysius winery, run by the Jesuits at Sevenhill, is renowned for its sacramental wines which are sent all over the world.

The Clare gourmet weekend—a food and wine festival held in May—draws up to 20 000 people, and the facilities are taxed to the limit. Each year we see a big increase in the attendance. Museums and galleries are common right across the electorate—some quite renowned. The Medica is one such at Blyth, and an exhibition of the lovely bird and wildlife paintings sold out in Japan. Custance, nestling at the foot of Flinders Ranges, is a very attractive, enjoyable and memorable place to visit. More and more overseas visitors are finding that out, too. As the member for this electorate I am very impressed by the tourist potential.

Industries in Custance: Other key industries we have in Custance include meat production—mutton, beef, pork and poultry. The only major abattoir is in Port Pirie: most other regional centres have their own killing works. Fat lambs are very important in the mid and lower regions of the area, while beef cattle are evenly spread. Piggeries and poultry houses are abundant. We have extensive lot feeding of cattle projects in Snowtown and other areas. Copper is mined at Burra, as well as refining raw product brought in. Salt is also mined at Lochiel and large amounts have been sold all over Australia. The issues confronting the people in Custance were widely canvassed in the recent by-election, but I recall them now. There are three key areas which are of great concern: education, health, and roads.

Education: In relation to education and curriculum choice, many schools in the electorate (and this applies to most rural electorates) are not able to provide the curriculum guarantee that is offered in the urban and regional centres.

The subject choice in years 11 and 12 in many schools is very basic, and often incomplete. Even base subjects, such as Maths I and II, are not offered in some schools. Many tertiary institutions now require a language, and this can be taught only in the larger schools. This is an immense problem and, coupled with the population drain from the more isolated areas, the problem is compounded. Those parents who cannot afford to send their children to board, either

in the city or other regional centres, have some pretty hard decisions to make.

There are other options, as was mentioned in the Governor's speech, with distance education via the open access college. Many alternatives have been put forward, but face-to-face teaching is by far the preferred option. Therefore, I urge the Government and the Minister to give face-to-face teaching the highest priority, especially in years 11 and 12, even if it means inordinately high teacher to student ratios. The Gladstone school community is very upset with the latest proposal that it will lose face-to-face teaching in years 11 and 12. It is the largest and newest high school in the area, and has a very good record. I support the Gladstone parents in their desire to keep their year 11 and 12 face-to-face teachers. Why should country children be further disadvantaged?

City students have free travel, costing the Government $7.5 million a year. Why should our children not have face-to-face teachers—at least that would not cost $7.5 million? The Government has other options. I feel that subsidised boarding facilities should be provided at major regional high schools. Work has been done on it—I know because I was involved with it when I served on the Rural Advisory Council. The Minister of Agriculture has listened sympathetically. I think we need to move further in this direction. Also, boarding facilities could be attached to leading Adelaide high schools. It is a State-wide problem, it is very emotive and the solutions are difficult. A side issue is the very rundown condition of many of our schools. Most are dilapidated and are crying out for paint, and maintenance is at a very poor level; they have never been worse.

Health: The second and most important issue is that of health or, more particularly, the retention of country hospitals. As all members would be aware, this issue has been with us for quite some time and it, too, is proving to be very emotive. The country communities want their health services maintained at all costs. I have three hospitals in my electorate out of a total of nine that are under a cloud. Most of these hospitals are efficient, and the individual communities are very reliant on them.

Take the example of Blyth: if it were to lose its remaining acute beds, it would be the death-knell for the small community. Blyth is a top hospital—well maintained, top facilities and an excellent doctor and staff. The Health Commission has tried to remove services from several country hospitals, but the public outcry has prevented most of it. Now we will see a different tack. Through the area health plans, the relevant groups will have the odium of making the hard decision when the finances are restricted. I am annoyed that the Health Commission uses the same criteria with regard to doctor/patient ratios as it does in Adelaide. Surely an isolation factor should be used and it would assist. Also, many hospitals have strategic importance, and should be maintained. Snowtown is one such hospital in question, because of its position on the main Highway 1.

Roads: The roads in rural South Australia have never been worse. We have not seen any major works in roadmaking—and I say 'major'— in years, and now they are all wearing out at once. I have the dubious honour of having the worst road in the entire direct route from Sydney to Perth in my electorate. I talk of none other than the Morgan-Burra-Spalding road. I note that members opposite are listening. This road is the most politicised track in Australia.

The Hon. H. Allison: You're giving them credit for having something to listen with!

Mr VENNING: I agree with my colleague. It has been discussed in this place for 30 years. The late member for Frome (Mr Claude Allen) brought it up several times and led delegations to several Ministers. This is a road lost in bureaucracy. Whose jurisdiction? What priority, etc? Local politics have also been involved, with various councils over the years having a very parochial interest in leaving it the way it is. Today I can honestly say that I have the total support of all councils and their Chairmen that this road is of the highest priority to be upgraded and sealed, from Morgan right through to Spalding. It is the direct east-west route. It is the connecting road between the Riverland and the mid-North and the tourist corridor, and it is holding back development in this area. So many minor roads have been sealed, but not this major one.

You may ask, Mr Deputy Speaker, but how many use it? I ask, how many crossed the Sydney Harbour Bridge before it was built? It is a scandal that this major road is in the state that it is. I do not want to be just another member of this place who, like a drunk man, just brings it up! I will treat this project as one of the highest priority. I have a stone with me today, and I would like to present all members with a stone at the conclusion of my speech. This stone was taken from the middle of the Morgan Road.

There are many other bad roads in Custance. We lack almost any sealed east-west roads. We are well served with roads from north to south (that is, north from Adelaide), but nothing across. We have some shockers, most of them in the middle, which are being hammered to bits by the movement of grain trucks. The roads from Blyth to Brinkworth, Blyth to Snowtown, Red Hill to Brinkworth, and the Anama Lane are all major arterial roads. They are impossible to maintain as unsealed roads. Action was promised as late as six years ago, but nothing has happened.

Railways: I now turn to railways. We must get heavy haulage off our roads where there is or was a rail alternative. Governments have ignored for decades the upgrading and maintenance of our rail systems Australia wide. Rail is the most efficient and cost effective way to move heavy freight, especially over great distances. Yes, as a grain grower, I can be accused of howling down the railways because I want to move my grain by the cheapest alternative. For years the railways have been competing unfairly against road freight. Taxes collected as fuel excise on diesel were never spent on railway infrastucture. Rail has been forced to pay its way: road hauliers never have been to the same degree. Rail must be brought into the twentieth century. Private enterprise must be involved in improving its efficiency. Government always should own the track, but I feel that all facilities could be leased to private enterprise.

The TNTs of the world would love to run their own trains and we would then see trains being loaded day and night, seven days a week. We could increase the capacity of our existing system by 200 per cent by doing this. Our grain bulk handling authority would then put in new rail unloaders to facilitate quicker turn arounds. It is a disgrace that the line from Snowtown to Wallaroo is closed only because the upgrading of the Wallaroo silo did not include an upgrade to the rail unloader. We should all share the blame, but it is time for Government to seek a new direction, to halt any more rail closures and halt the removal of any disused rails and deregulate, privatise, commercialise—whatever you like—the complete rail system before it is too late. If rail is competitive, we would all use it. I am sure there would be a bipartisan approach from this side of the House.

I also support the remarks of the member for Stuart who spoke yesterday in this House of the problems of Port Pirie and the ageing rolling stock, particularly in relation to passenger services. I, too, offer my cooperation in representing

the people of Port Pirie, a city we both share. Another issue that I am confronted with is the lack of reticulated water in Watervale. It is impeding the tourist potential of this lovely spot. Imagine Watervale without water! Exhorbitant rates and buy-out figures for shack owners, many of whom are pensioners at Port Broughton, is another matter. The lack of adequate sport and recreation facilities for our young country sportspeople causes them to be disadvantaged as they cannot train on synthetic surfaces. I refer especially to hockey players, and I will push for a synthetic surface in the north, possibly at Port Pirie. Hopefully, the member for Stuart will assist in that endeavour. The youth of our country areas are providing the lion's share of our State players, yet they suffer tremendous disadvantage as they are not able to compete on the same surfaces.

A further concern is the exhorbitant freight costs and big time delays. Government is also competing unfairly against private enterprise in our electorates. An example of that is State Print in Port Pirie. An overall concern in rural South Australia is that it is all but impossible for any young person to enter our industry unless they are born into it. As my colleagues would know, I am a fourth generation farmer living on the original holdings. I was educated at Crystal Brook and Prince Alfred College until Year 11, or leaving standard. I did two years National Service before I married my wife Kay in 1968, and we now have three children. I am serving my tenth year in local government. I have been very active in the Agricultural Bureau and recently on the Advisory Board of Agriculture. In 1987 I was appointed to the South Australian Rural Advisory Council and have served three years, finishing a few weeks ago as its Deputy Chairman.

It was in those latter two organisations that I had the pleasure of working with and for the Minister of Agriculture, and I pay tribute to his diligent nature. I speak similarly of the Director-General of Agriculture, Dr John Radcliffe, a very professional, popular and effective head of the department. With both men, I appreciated being able to discuss problems of the rural industry and its communities without any political overtones. I know that has changed now, and I look forward to the future with interest. I have been active within the Liberal Party for 25 years, holding most positions open to me at State and Federal level.

In his speech, His Excellency referred to the very difficult economic times. I, too, can see our State as the 'transport hub of Australia.' Surely the Burra Road is part of it. I can only give further support to his statement '. . . development for all South Australians, whether they live in the city or the country.' I agree wholeheartedly with the major development effort to add value to our primary resources. I do support the principle of all day shop trading on Saturday, in all districts, as long as individuals have a choice whether or not to open, and the issue of penalty rates is addressed. WorkCover is out of control, and most rural people are alarmed by its inefficiencies. Small business right throughout the State is really under pressure, and I hope that the Government can come up with some real benefits and renewed incentives. Most are being taxed out of their shops.

We, as a State and as a nation, are in a very bad economic situation. I feel it is largely our own fault. We do not work and we waste. We want the Government to do it for us. Australia has been living off its primary industries for years. In this State, at least 60 per cent of the wealth is generated by 10 per cent of the people. What do all the others do? We must have essential services, but too many Australians are not involved in productive work. Australians produce more food and fibre per farmer than anybody else in the world, and we produce it cheaper. The equation just does not add up.

Australians have to go back to working harder and longer. The world is a small place and we cannot isolate ourselves against our lacklustre performance. We cannot do things in Australia and compete. Our labour costs, infrastructure costs and interest rates are all too high. How many hours a week does an average Australian work? Thirty-eight hours a week if one is lucky plus holidays for horse races and everything else; and, when one goes on holidays, legitimately, one receives a 17.5 per cent bonus. No other country affords such luxuries. Very few farmers work under these conditions; they just suffer the high costs along with everyone else. They cover themselves by working harder and wiser. What incentive is there for the rest of the community to do likewise? Absolutely none. If one works hard, makes money and owns a lovely home, one is taxed on the money made and on the interest earnt; and, the better the house, the higher the rates. There is no incentive at all to work, build, save or be proud of what you have.

The social welfare system in this country is out of control. The cost of funding it is huge and increasing. It encourages people to be recipients; not contributors. No-one should continually be given money for nothing. I cannot get young unemployed lads to work on my farm; the work is too hard and they believe they are better off on the dole. It is all very well to be sympathetic to these less fortunate people, but who is doing the paying?

Today, right now, farmers are looking down the barrel. As His Excellency said, there was a very late opening and the subsequent cold weather, coupled with the fall of the live sheep trade and continuing concern over wool prices, will create problems for many farmers, especially for those relying on wool for their income. To top it off, grain price forecasts are down at least 20 per cent. If this was not worry enough, the current Iraq/Kuwait crisis is causing even more anxiety. Fuel costs are forecast to be up at least 6c a litre in the country, and that has already occurred. I urge the Premier, as he sets about raising extra rates and taxes, to consider the ability to pay. Remember that farmers buy retail, sell wholesale and pay freight both ways.

Small business: The people who have been carrying the country are today hurting. Small business, including farmers, farm machinery agents, stock agents, rural community suppliers, delis, the bakeries and the electricians in the city and country are burdened with ever increasing costs, high interest rates and payroll tax, extra costs for power and phone, higher fees and restrictions, compulsory levies, and ever increasing paperwork. The future looks bleak. The only way individuals are coping is by laying off staff and working mercilessly long hours themselves. This has been going on for far too long. Our bankruptcy rate is the highest in Australia, and the rest of Australia is letting it happen. Australia is full of willing people: some willing to work and some willing to let them.

We are seeking a climate where people have an even chance to do what they do best and, at the same time, earn a reasonable living. We want a system that allows us to produce without being shackled by too much regulation and control; shackled as a result of undue recognition given to minority groups; and shackled by economic policies that mitigate against our very survival. Adversity makes a man wise but never rich.

I am honoured to represent the Liberal Party, a Party that allows me, as I am, to stand here to say and vote as I like. This certainly is not the case for members opposite and it gets up my nose that the media of this country do not respect this fact. If I exercise my Liberal Party privilege

and vote other than the Party line, the Party is branded as divided. It will be the media in this country that will eventually cost us this privilege. If members have any doubts about this, ask Norm Foster. Democracy is dying.

I am pleased to be a member of the Liberal team in South Australia and to serve under Dale Baker. I appreciate his style and qualities. I appreciate also that he was a performer before he got here. He has the proven grit and determination to lead us, and later the State, out of the mire it is in. He has a high expectation of himself, us and the State. Those who expect nothing are never disappointed.

Yes, Mr Acting Speaker, my electorate represents a large slice of the silent majority. It is indeed a challenging time to be entering Parliament. It is a time when this Government must make some hard decisions and reverse some bad decisions of the past. Any person gazing at the stars is at the mercy of the puddles in the road. If this Government is prepared to make tough decisions, I will be prepared to support it. If this Government cannot make tough decisions now, 3½ years before the next election, it never will.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD (Chaffey): I would like to indicate my support for the adoption of the Address in Reply and, having had the opportunity to do that on many occasions, it is obvious by the reaction of my colleagues sitting around me that this has occurred many times in the past. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new member for Custance to our midst and congratulate him on the contribution that he just made. It is a tribute to him that so many members of the Government decided to stay in the Chamber and listen to his remarks. The content of his speech was very carefully considered and put together. Any person in this State could read that speech and gain a great deal from it because many of the points that he made during his maiden speech are very pertinent to the state of the economy in this country today.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Members opposite might laugh and they might consider that it was their duty to listen in silence, but I believe that they gained a great deal in the same way that members on this side appreciated greatly the content of the honourable member's speech. I will now move to the address of His Excellency the Governor in opening Parliament and pay tribute to His Excellency and Lady Dunstan for the manner in which they have served South Australia. I believe Her Majesty the Queen made an excellent choice when she appointed Sir Donald Dunstan as the Governor of South Australia some years ago and his appointment has been widely supported throughout South Australia. His reappointment in more recent times to extend his term is an indication of the support that he has had during his period as Governor in this State. I would also like to wish both Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan all the best in their retirement and, as was said by the member for Custance, their intention to remain in South Australia during their retirement is indeed a feather in the cap of South Australia and a tribute to this State.

Members will recall that on 5 August the Premier, in one of his more desperate moves, put out a press statement which has been referred to on a number of occasions by members on this side of the House. The statement refers to a supposed spending spree on the part of—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The audible level of conversation in the House is far too high and I draw members' attention to the need to listen to the honourable member in silence.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I was just referring to the press release of the Premier, in one of his more desperate moves, which related to the so-called 'spending spree' of members on this side of the House. That document indicates that I said that the South Australian Government should spend $100 million annually on the Murray-Darling Basin. That is blatantly untrue and it indicates clearly the desperation of the Premier.

What I have said on many occasions in this House and at public meetings in South Australia and other parts of Australia is that the Murray-Darling Basin contributes somewhere between $10 000 million and $15 000 million annually to the wealth of this nation, and of that amount $100 million should go back into the resource. On numerous occasions in this Chamber I have suggested that the contribution should be shared between the three States and the Commonwealth, the Federal Government contributing 70 per cent and the three States 10 per cent each, so that the Commonwealth would contribute $70 million annually with $10 million annually coming from each of the States of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.

One should note that at present approximately $43 million is spent on the Murray-Darling Basin, and that sum comes from the four Governments I have identified. Therefore, we are talking about a further contribution from South Australia of approximately $5 million. The Premier's press release states that I have requested that this Government contribute $100 million annually, but that is absolute desperation on the part of the Premier. Either he is not interested in the facts or he is not concerned about how inaccurate his statements have become. I have always regarded credibility as fairly important. Obviously when the Premier makes statements like that he is abandoning all forms of credibility.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Yes, that is quite right: desperate men make desperate statements. Another item in the press release that involves me relates to the fact that, during the election campaign, the Premier, in a desperate move once again to save the day for him and his Government, decided that he would provide 24-hour a day free travel for all school students in the metropolitan area, and that was then extended to six provincial cities throughout South Australia. What I said was that, if the Premier does not regard the remaining students in South Australia not covered by his election promise as second rate citizens of this State, all students should be treated equally. If he regards my statement as being outlandish or lavish, let him go into the country areas and tell the parents of those students that they are second rate people and do not deserve the same consideration as those who live in the metropolitan area.

Only today I placed before this House a petition from parents in the Waikerie area that stated that the Government has discriminated, first, against the families of primary and secondary students living outside the Adelaide metropolitan area and the six regional cities of Port Lincoln, Port Augusta, Port Pirie, Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge and Whyalla by confining the benefits of its 24-hour free transport scheme to a select group of students living in the Adelaide metropolitan area and the six regional cities, and, secondly, against the private bus operators who had previously carried student concession travellers by denying such operators the right to participate in the free travel scheme. If the Premier wants to go into the country and tell the parents of those students that they are second-rate citizens and do not deserve the same rights and privileges as those who live in the metropolitan area, let him do so.

I now refer to the rehabilitation of Government irrigation areas. As the House would be well aware, this program has been progressing, in one form or another, since the early 1970s when the Dunstan Government decided to proceed

with the rehabilitation of Government irrigation areas, convert the channel distribution systems to closed pipe systems and generally improve the overall manner in which water was delivered from the River Murray to South Australian irrigators. That program continued until approximately 1984 when it was terminated by the present Government, only about 60 per cent of the irrigated area having been rehabilitated.

When the rehabilitation commenced, the then Minister of Works and Deputy Premier, the Hon. Des Corcoran, stated that no irrigator in the Government irrigation areas would be financially disadvantaged as a result of the rehabilitation program. The program proceeded on that basis until 1984. The present Minister of Water Resources is now saying that, for the rehabilitation to proceed and be completed, the Government requires an additional contribution from irrigators in Government irrigation areas over and above the water rates they are currently paying. This means that irrigators in Government irrigation areas will be required to pay an additional 30 per cent on their existing water rates for the next five years; that is, the rate will be 30 per cent higher than in other comparable irrigation areas in South Australia or Australia.

The proposal put forward by the Minister of Water Resources is that the State Government will contribute 40 per cent and the Federal Government 40 per cent with the growers making up the remaining 20 per cent. Although this proposal is open for discussion amongst irrigators, that funding formula has not been approved by either the State Government or the Federal Government. So, in many respects the proposal is somewhat academic in that there is no guarantee from either the State Government or the Federal Government that it will go ahead.

I come back to the original commitment given by the Hon. Des Corcoran, that is, that no irrigator in Government irrigation areas would be financially disadvantaged as a result of the rehabilitation. A number of community and industry leaders as well as bankers in the Riverland attended a meeting at which the proposal was put forward by the E&WS Department, and I asked one of the bankers what would be the financial implications for their customers of a 30 per cent increase in water rates. I asked would they be able to carry it, or would it be the final straw that broke the camel's back, forcing many of them off their property.

His immediate response was that in his estimation about 70 per cent of the irrigators could not afford to pay that sum. Where do we go from there? Does the Government proceed along these lines and force this provision onto the irrigators in Government irrigation areas when a leading Riverland banker has already indicated that up to 70 per cent of his customers could be so adversely affected by the additional charge that they would not be able to carry on?

What we are talking about is an irrigator who presently pays water rates of about $4 000 per annum and who would be looking at an increase to about $5 500 per annum. To get that additional $1 500, the irrigator would have to increased productivity from the property by at least $10 000. Anyone involved in the industry knows that the likelihood of that increase being achieved is indeed slight. What the Government is arguing is that, as a result of the improved irrigation distribution system, growers will be able to upgrade their irrigation systems, increase their productivity and all will be well. Unless there is a financial means by which the irrigators can upgrade their internal irrigation systems, they cannot take advantage of the new and improved distribution system being put in place by the Government.

The Government should honour its original undertaking and complete the rehabilitation because other private irrigation areas have been rehabilitated within their rate structure, and the rate structure in the private irrigation areas is similar to that in Government irrigation areas. Moreover, the irrigators are not responsible for the decisions taken by the Government some years ago to carry out the rehabilitation by Government day labour: they have had absolutely no say to date as to the way in which that work would be done. Therefore, for the Government now to turn around and say that $50 million or $60 million has already been spent and that that debt has been accumulated for and on behalf of growers, when the growers had absolutely no say in how this work would be undertaken, is outrageous.

There were numerous instances during the rehabilitation process when growers objected to the speed at which the work was proceeding and were told by the department, 'Do not worry; it is none of your concern. This is being done by the Government and it is being done at the Government's cost. Therefore, mind your own business and keep out of it.' I will be very surprised if, when the Minister puts this issue to a poll of growers, they support it, because I do not believe that they can support it in financial terms.

The next matter to which I refer is the state of the citrus industry at present. I refer to a document dated 7 May 1990 issued by the Minister of Agriculture as a review of the Citrus Industry Organisation Act, the legislation controlling the citrus industry in South Australia. Generally, the paper has the acceptance in one form or another of the majority of citrus growers. The main sticking point is the requirement by the Minister to do away with minimum pricing of factory citrus and the ability of the industry to set a minimum price. There are differing views by various organisations such as the UF & S, Murray Citrus Growers and the Growers Unity Association on many aspects of the white paper. The main sticking point is the present minimum price and the ability of the industry to apply that price.

The other aspect relates to the formation of the Growers Unity Association and its move into direct selling to the public. That has shown, without doubt, a need for that activity: there is a market niche that currently is not being filled by the present regulated marketing system. I have always supported orderly marketing of all our primary products, and I continue to do so, but I believe that there is a means by which a form of direct marketing to the public can be achieved within the orderly marketing system. The Minister believes exactly the same because, in my discussions with him, he has referred to the motion he moved in this House about 10 years ago. The Minister, as the then member for Salisbury, on 5 November 1980 (page 1809 of *Hansard*) moved as follows:

> That this House calls on the Government to provide financial and planning assistance to enable the formation of growers' markets for the retail sale of fruit and vegetables in various parts of the metropolitan area and in the larger regional centres of the State.

The Minister appreciates that there is a potential market out there that is not being serviced by the existing arrangements. His 1980 motion highlighted his then concern. At that time I was a member of the Tonkin Government, and I would be the first to admit that I did not take the necessary action to ensure that those sentiments were pursued. Be that as it may, the motion indicates that the Minister and I have similar thoughts in many respects about what needs to happen in the industry. In his speech in support of the motion, the Minister, as a then member of the Opposition, said:

> I have spoken with many growers about this matter and have had many instances cited of how little they receive from the price the consumer ultimately pays over the supermarket counter or over the fruit and vegetable store counter. Just one example I had given to me recently was that of a grower who said that he

had sold his tomatoes last year for about $1 a case, and that those same tomatoes were being sold later for 70c a kilogram (a very substantial mark-up). In another situation, a grower informed me that he had sold one case of 35 cucumbers for $2.50 for that case. Those same cucumbers were retailing at 70c each, or a return of $24.50. The grower received $2.50, whereas the final point of sale netted $24.50. So, somewhere in between, other people made $22 out of a product for which the grower received only $2.50 and for which much effort had been taken in the growing.

That is exactly the point that is being made by the growers unity group and I believe that the matter can be resolved. I prevail on the Minister because I believe that he is the only person who can bring together the three groups representing the citrus industry and resolve this matter.

I turn now to the subject of Lake Bonney. Recently the Minister issued a press release saying that the trial last year in lowering lock 3 to remove water from Lake Bonney proved that there was no point in doing it in future. That exercise was carried out as a result of pressure from people in Barmera, from the Barmera District Council and from representations and public statements that I made on numerous occasions. In 1973 or 1974, the river was dropped substantially for a considerable period and a large amount of water was removed and replaced. As a result of last year's operation, a certain amount of valuable information was gathered relating to the flow of water within the creek system that feeds Lake Bonney.

I am pleased to note that the Engineering and Water Supply Department and the council will make a joint approach to the Minister for Environment and Planning because it was concluded in a general discussion with interested groups from the Barmera area that the Department of Environment and Planning can make a major contribution to resolving the problems of Lake Bonney by looking at the environmental, tourism, recreational and ecological aspects of the area. I hope that the Minister for Environment and Planning, in her dual role as Minister of Water Resources, will take up the proposal to be put forward by the Barmera council and the E&WS in the Riverland and that progress will be made.

I refer now to the massive increase in fees for private irrigators. On numerous occasions the Minister and the Premier have made statements indicating that the Government would limit any increases in taxes and charges to the inflation rate. In the case of the increased charge for diversion from the Murray River, the increase has been approximately 100 per cent. I have received letters from private irrigators in the Loxton and Berri areas which indicate clearly their outrage at having their meter charges increased by approximately 100 per cent. I will read from a letter, signed by 50 or 60 private Riverland irrigators, which was written to the Minister of Water Resources, as follows:

> We, the undersigned, wish to protest most vigorously about the exorbitant increase in the cost of our water removal licences. We understood from your election platform that State charges were to rise by no more than the cost of living increase, that is, about 7 per cent. Our rises were closer to 100 per cent, for example, $107 to $200. We realise that we are but a small group with little political power but this is no reason for such harsh treatment by an elected Government. We would appreciate it if you would review these drastic rises as soon as possible.

The other matter that I wish to raise briefly relates to war widow concessions. For some reason, war widows in South Australia do not receive concessions for water rates and so forth as they do in Victoria and New South Wales. Mrs Fromm of Barmera, in a letter that I suggested she write to the Premier, raised this matter, saying:

> I am writing to you to ask you for fair treatment of war widows in this State in regard to concessions on water rates and council rates. There is a great discrepancy against war widows in this State; why, I cannot understand. Both New South Wales and Victoria allow a concession on water and council rates.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr De Laine): Order! The honourable member's time has expired. The honourable member for Henley Beach.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): I support the motion before the House and I congratulate His Excellency the Governor on his speech to Parliament outlining the Government's program for the coming year. I understand that this was Sir Donald Dunstan's last speech delivering the Government's program, so it is in order for me to congratulate him on the way in which he has handled his term of office. I also congratulate Lady Dunstan on her support of the Governor over the years. Not many people realise the constitutional position in which the Governor is placed from time to time and Sir Donald has conducted his duties with dignity, efficiency and in a very low key way, which has been in keeping with his term as Governor. I wish him and Lady Dunstan well in their retirement, hoping that it is a long and happy retirement and everything they wish.

During the recess, the main event from a parliamentary point of view was the Custance by-election, and I extend my congratulations to Mr Venning, who is the newly elected member for Custance. I wish him well in his parliamentary career and I hope that he finds his life as a parliamentarian to be a satisfying and fulfilling one. I campaigned in Custance for the Australian Labor Party, doorknocking homes in the township of Kapunda. My experience in this campaign was satisfying to the extent that it extended my knowledge of the thoughts and aspirations of country people. It is with some pride that I note that the vote for the Australian Labor Party increased in Kapunda in absolute terms, although I am not sure whether there was an increase in actual percentage terms.

One of the things that impressed me was the commonality that people had in this township with people in my own electorate. It was my impression that the average wage in this township and the average income would not be particularly high, and many of the problems which relate to the people in Kapunda also relate to the general run-of-the-mill problems in my own electorate. Basically people are concerned with local problems, with health and education topping the list, followed by transport and then a whole variety of problems that one would associate with people in general, no matter where they come from within the State. People within the electorate spoke with some affection of past members who represented them, including the Hon. Bruce Eastick and Mr Freebairn. They were, however, critical of the former incumbent, to the extent that very little political activity had taken place within the township during the past four or five years. I was not surprised to see a swing to the Labor Party, albeit very small when the results came through; suffice to say that I enjoyed the exercise, that I enjoyed talking to the people in the township of Kapunda, and that I thought the town itself was very attractive and the people within it were extremely friendly.

I would like to turn to some of the problems which have arisen within my electorate during the time since the last Address in Reply debate. I would like to mention specifically the transport concession cards which are made available to students so that they can identify themselves to gain concessions on public transport and other services. The student concession card is used not only to gain concessions on public transport but also it is accepted as a method of identification for private enterprise, for students to gain concessions in other areas such as entry into the cinema, etc. Quite extensive investment in capital has been expended in providing for photographs which are part and parcel of the student concession card. The new concession cards,

which contain a photograph, have been necessary because of the practice of some people swapping cards with other people who are not entitled to concessions, so the new concession cards provided by the schools with a photograph attached were a necessary device to prevent swapping of concession cards and therefore people getting something for which they were not entitled.

I was somewhat alarmed when I received a visit from one of my constituents who pointed out to me that people seeking student concessions from the Australian National Railways Commission needed a separate card which is produced by ANR and that ANR is not prepared to accept the student concession pass which has been provided by the schools. It is not well known by my constituents (and it was not known by me) that ANR required a completely separate concession card and that it was not prepared to accept the concession card produced by the schools. Apparently what usually happens is that when students arrive at the railway station and are ready to buy a ticket and board a train, they are then informed that they need a separate concession card. This leaves them in the dilemma that they have not had time to apply for the ANR concession card, and if they want to complete the journey they have to then pay full fare. This appears to be an anomalous situation where it would be far better for ANR to accept the card which is provided to the students through their schools, or for the card provided by the schools to be so designed that it is acceptable to both the State Transport Authority and to Australian National Railways.

It appears to me that the card provided to the students from their schools is superior to the one sought by ANR because the card provided by the schools must contain a photograph of the person seeking the concession. In any event, if the present card is not acceptable to ANR it would seem to me that a little bit of consultation between the two bodies concerned would overcome whatever the problem might be. I would hope that some consideration could be given by the State Transport Authority and Australian National in order to overcome the impasse that appears to have developed. It seems that money could be saved, both from the point of view of administration and from time and effort on the students' part, where one concession card could be used for both railway systems. I most certainly hope that the two bodies concerned are prepared to have a look at this situation.

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 1990 as International Literacy Year. I was extremely pleased to see an expenditure of additional Commonwealth money on the discovery and teaching of those people within our community who have a difficulty in reading, writing and numeracy. The Port Adelaide College of TAFE and local community organisations—and one of them was the Henley and Grange Community Centre—were provided with additional money to be able to assist in the teaching of literacy to people who needed it. I was intrigued by the fact that many of the people concerned were young people, and I had a visit from a tutor who was engaged in the literacy program, a former schoolteacher, who said that she could not understand why students were able to reach the second and third year of high school and were still unable to read and write.

I took up this matter with the principal of one of my local high schools, and I asked him whether it was a fact that students reach the second and third year of high school without being detected to have a trouble with literacy and numeracy. He admitted that, in fact, there are students who get to high school who have a problem with literacy. He mentioned to me that it was very difficult to detect some of these people in the early stages. The research into the causes are many and varied, but usually people do not fall into this category unless they have been involved in some sort of trauma—usually at home. People become very adept at covering up. Students sometimes get away with it because of being able to copy. Moreover, our methods of teaching have changed to the extent that teachers are loath to single out people who then think that they are failures.

Literacy and numeracy have been particular projects in the high school in my electorate, and it has been pointed out that literacy is a priority project for the staff and that all are responsible for it: it is not just a problem for the English teachers. Because of the concern of parents in recent years, there has been an effort to identify the people with problems in the school. A program of volunteers has been used, particularly involving the mothers, to come to the school to listen to the students reading. I then had a long conversation on the merits of present-day teaching methods as against methods used in the past, and that particular school principal with whom I spoke was adamant that the problem has not increased, but everybody concedes that it is still a problem.

I was disappointed in recent announcements by the TAFE colleges that the literacy program is to be reduced and, in some cases, eliminated. I understand that the original increase in funding came from the Federal Government, but that funding has now ceased. This has thrown back on to the State Government a responsibility that it ought not have. However, the literacy program is such an important program on the western side of Adelaide, with so many people suffering from past problems at school and who, in some cases, by-passed the school system altogether, that it leaves me with no alternative but to try to increase funding through the State budget for programs of this kind.

I have had occasion to write to the Minister of Employment and Further Education seeking a continuance of the program as it is or at least a softening of the blow so far as the reduction of the program is concerned. I am indebted to the December 1989 issue of the magazine *Family Matters*, in which this question is raised on pages 29 to 31. I have no intention of reading this article to the Parliament, but suffice to say it adequately describes the effect of the handicap of being illiterate on the social life, within family relationships, and the need for consumer rights and health, and even goes so far as to suggest that illiteracy adds to the crime rate.

The whole series of text books on this subject makes interesting reading for those who are at all concerned with this subject. I make a plea that we, as a Parliament, look at this problem and take note of the misery which is being caused to certain people who are not able to read or write and those who lack numeracy skills. As time goes by, I hope that we will be able to provide more funds to be of assistance to people in this predicament. The provision of more funds in this area will go some way to solving not only the social problems of these people but also a whole raft of problems which beset our society as a whole.

If it is not possible for Governments to produce funding inside TAFE colleges for this activity, it is certainly my wish that funds be provided to those organisations that are prepared to provide literacy courses on a voluntary basis so we will be able to continue the good work which has occurred during the early part of 1990.

During recent months, I have been distressed about the announcements of new projects which will add to our problems and the pollution of the Murray River. The Murray River is our lifeline and provides large amounts of our drinking water. I have been distressed to learn of the devel-

opments occurring at Albury-Wodonga that will add to the salt content and the pollution of our waters. There seems to be an uncaring attitude by some other States that use the Murray River to conveniently rid themselves of their effluent without giving much thought to the people who are further downstream and who rely on the Murray River for their drinking water.

It was much to my chagrin that I read about the proposal relating to the provision of a new subdivision on the outskirts of Wodonga to provide housing for 2 500 people. However, that will later be expanded to house up to 10 000 inhabitants. The Corowa Shire Council recently rejected a proposal for the provision of a temporary sewerage works to service the new subdivision. Sewage and effluent from the subdivision would go through a series of treatment ponds before being used for irrigation. The winter run off, however, would still find its way into the Murray River.

I agree with the remarks which were made by the then acting Minister for Environment and Planning that the question of the disposal of effluent should be properly addressed before any further subdivision took place. The acting Minister quite rightly pointed out that, if the levels of salt and bacteria in effluent are within acceptable standards (and I am not sure that there ought to be any acceptable standards), South Australia could not afford to have the additional nitrogen and phosphorus pumped into the river system. I also agree with the statement made by the Minister that in many ways the Murray River is almost at breaking point and we simply cannot afford the luxury of continuing to use it as a sewer for the convenience of every community along its banks.

Very shortly afterwards, we had the announcement that the Australian Newsprint Mills at Albury in New South Wales proposed a $750 million expansion in the form of a bleaching plant, recycling plant and increased paper production. I am indebted to the *Environment Conservation News* No. 5 of 1990 which has distributed the information that the bleaching plant alone will dump an extra 1 030 tonnes of salt into the Murray River, whilst salt waste is expected to quadruple the present level of 745 tonnes per annum overall.

A desalination plant would cost some $26 million, which would represent a very small investment of the $750 million total cost, but the company's preferred option is a plant at Morgan to remove only 580 tonnes per annum and costing $280 000. The *Environment Conservation News* raises the question of whether a bleaching plant is necessary when it is entirely for cosmetic purposes, and it also raises the question of how the company can seriously argue against a waste desalination plant costing a mere 3.5 per cent of the overall expansion.

The *Environment Conservation News* also makes the observation that a private company should not be allowed to pollute our already seriously degraded aquatic environment and water resource for private profit. It states that in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia a letter-writing campaign to Federal and State Ministers and MPs is being conducted to demand that the desalination plant be included. I might explain to the Conservation Council that it has no need to send correspondence to me, because I am already convinced that the new project should have a desalination plant. I make a plea to other members of Parliament that they ought to make representations to the various newspaper companies involved to make sure that our environment and the Murray River are protected.

I realise that a recycling plant is necessary, and I know the problems that we have at the moment relating to the disposal of used newspapers. However, I am also aware that News Corporation has agreed to take a certain percentage of the newspapers from South Australia to use in the recycling plant. However, I am very concerned that, in partially solving the problem of recycling newspapers throughout Australia, a further, more serious pollution problem is occurring or is about to occur in South Australia. I believe that we should be careful about trading off further deterioration of the Murray River against a possible partial solution to the problem of recycling newspapers.

I also believe that the other States, which will have an absolute benefit in this regard—that is, the more populous States of New South Wales and Victoria which will see an advantage in solving their recycling problems—ought to pay their portion of the debt which will be needed to completely solve the problem of desalination and which will provide South Australia, in due course, with polluted drinking water. I suppose it can be seen as being churlish in not being prepared to accept a proposition that will partially resolve the problem of recycling newspapers by accepting this proposal, but I believe that we owe a debt in this Parliament to those people who will follow us and, in due course, when they properly examine what has happened, they will not agree that we were prudent in accepting a proposition that was less than perfect as far as the pollution of our own drinking water is concerned.

In the two minutes left to me I would like to refer to what I believe is the need for a change in policy from the organisation known as Foundation South Australia. I have mentioned in this House that it is my belief that this organisation, which has a unique taxing situation, has an obligation, especially from a social justice point of view, to provide to local sporting clubs some of the benefits that it receives from that taxing power. I mentioned this in a grievance debate during the last session, and during that time Foundation South Australia delivered a policy paper that was, I believe, in rebuttal of the things that I put to Parliament. Basically, the paper says that it is too expensive to distribute money to local sporting clubs. I reject that proposition. I believe that there are people on the board of that organisation who are clever enough to devise ways and means of distributing to local sporting clubs at least some of the money that that organisation receives.

Mr BECKER (Hanson): I take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the Governor, Sir Donald Dunstan, on the way that he opened the second session of the 47th Parliament. I, like all other members, regret that it is necessary now for Sir Donald to retire. He and Lady Dunstan have served South Australia extremely well and we have been very fortunate to have such a wonderful couple in this position. I first met Sir Donald at the Holdfast Bay Yacht Club, the oldest sailing club in the State, located in my electorate. Sir Donald is the patron of the club and it was on the occasion when the Governor was first appointed that he opened that sailing season. We had a delightful afternoon, and that is when we exchanged many pleasantries and I found that Sir Donald had quite a good sense of humour, as you have already found, Mr Speaker, when we have been over to Government House. I wish Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan a very long, happy and healthy retirement. They have served South Australia well and we are very proud of their contribution.

I, too, welcome the new member for Custance, although two Vennings in two decades is a bit much! I thank him for giving us all a rock from the Burra to Morgan road as a reminder that his father represented Rocky River and also as a reminder that the road needs to be repaired. I just hope that it is not going to be the Rock of Ages. I wish him well

in representing that electorate and I hope that he carries on the tradition of bringing to the attention of Government and Parliament the problems of his constituents. It is a very wide and large constituency and one that can enjoy very good seasons, but, as he said, is now also enjoying the profits and benefits of tourism.

It was also significant during the break that five members completed 20 years of service to the State in Parliament. I pay tribute to the Deputy Premier. I do not always pay tribute to him; I often refer to him as 'Sleepy'. I first met him when we were members of the Industries Development Committee. The poor old Deputy Premier had trouble reading balance sheets in those days, but I used to help him.

Members interjecting:

Mr BECKER: At least we did not lose any money for the State. It was a pretty good committee in those days. However, when Jack Slater became Chairman we had a bit of trouble with Max Basheer who barged in one day and demanded a Government guarantee to complete Football Park, but that is another story and I wish Port Adelaide the best of luck. I also pay tribute to the work done by the member for Kavel who was Deputy Leader of our Party for so many years and also Deputy Premier.

I pay tribute to the member for Light who, according to the media, is one of the best speakers this State has seen in many a decade. Also, I pay tribute to the member for Eyre who works extremely hard in representing his electorate and makes no bones about the fact that he is on his twenty-third electorate motor vehicle in 20 years. Members can imagine the tireless effort that he puts into representing his electorate. He has done well and has built up an excellent following. And, lastly, I have survived for 20 years in this institution.

I was interested in some of the points that were raised in His Excellency's speech, which, it seems to me, is the theme of this debate. In paragraph 2 he states:

> South Australia is entering one of the most innovative phases of its development, and in the immediate future we should all witness advances which will set this State on an exciting course. However, these initiatives must be set against a pattern of difficult national and international economic conditions.

And, of course, this will be the difficulty that South Australia will experience. The South Australian economy is not all that bad, but unfortunately it will be influenced by national difficulties and the world-wide implications of the trouble in the Middle East. However, if we set to the task South Australia is tackling, we will get through.

I sincerely hope that the economic reports I have been reading are not correct when they indicate that we will witness history repeating itself and that the crash of the 1890s will be repeated. However, indications are that Australia is in exactly the same phase as it was in during the early 1890s when the banks crashed. The financial institutions let down the young colony as a result of the difficulties experienced in Western Australia. Nobody would have thought that Victoria would let down Australia in the 1990s. Collins Street has always regarded itself as the financial hub of the Commonwealth of Australia and has always considered that it is the elite establishment of this country. It did not like intruders from the west—the Holmes a Courts, the Bonds, the Connells and a few others. They might have been smart alec entrepreneurs, but at least they were triers and employed a lot of people. But Collins Street kept them out, and it is also keeping out one of Victoria's favourite sons, John Elliott; he is in for a difficult period as well.

The people should be reminded time and time again that it was the entrepreneurs, those who got out there and took a punt, who got this country going in many areas. The rewards will be spread around once those who have taken the initiative establish themselves. However, greed overtakes many people, and that is what has happened in many companies—they have fallen because of greed. Also, there has been a lack of initiative and proper supervision by the various State and Federal Governments regarding the methodology of using inflated property values to provide loans. The history books of the future will be full of examples of developers buying a building for $20 million, revamping it and placing a theoretical value of $50 million on it so that they could borrow that amount before the building was fully let. These false values, with high inflation and the stupidity and greed of many people and companies, have caused a tremendous amount of economic hardship in Geelong and other parts of the country. It is a disappointment.

We in South Australia are fortunate in that we can be reasonably pleased that we are insulated against some of these problems. Our building societies must lend 85 per cent of their deposits for the purchase of homes, so that 85 per cent of their loans are related to bricks and mortar. As we know, most people will do anything to defend, protect and keep their little piece of real estate. The best asset one can have is a house. It is difficult for young people; they are struggling against high interest rates to maintain their properties, and we should do whatever we can to ease the interest burden.

That is the responsibility and challenge that the Federal Treasurer has given to the States. It is no good the Premier crying that he is $180 million short—it is up to the States. The States have been letting down the Federal Government by going their own merry way and borrowing outside the guidelines of the loans authority. This has been happening for some years and the weak Federal Treasurer and Federal Government have not taken harsher action against the States to stop them from setting up financing authorities and using their own State banking organisations to borrow huge sums of money from overseas. There is little benefit to the State in that, but there is a hell of a risk when one considers that the State Bank has a $3.5 billion overseas loan portfolio. It takes skill to handle money that is borrowed and lent overseas. There is a very fine margin, but the profits do come back to the State. At the same time the States are borrowing very heavily overseas to carry out their works programs, and that is not in their best long-term interests.

Another difficulty is that the State will soon need to replace many of its assets, including buildings, pipelines and sewerage lines, which are deteriorating because of age. Every time a water main blows out in King William Street it costs between $200 000 and $300 000 to repair. The whole of the water pipeline through King William Street and most of our major city areas should be replaced because it is so old. All we are doing is replacing parts as accidents occur. It is a false economy.

We also had the ludicrous situation on the weekend of the Premier remonstrating that the Opposition had advocated the expenditure of about $1.8 billion of taxpayers' money on various projects. Of that, $1.5 billion was for the dual highway system linking South Australia to the other States. I proposed this almost 15 years ago. Anyone considering use of the road system as against the rail system should be advocating that we start preparing for the duplication of our interstate highways. A matter we can debate later is Australian National's wanting to close all our country railway lines. We will need them in 30 or 40 years as the State grows and as we encounter difficulties in road transportation given the cost of fuel. The war in the Middle East only has to escalate causing the price of fuel to become prohibitive and we will have to go back to rail transport.

Madam Acting Speaker, your electorate depends on the railways; they are vital to the future growth and development of your electorate. Every cent per litre increase in the price of petrol adds to inflation not only in the metropolitan area but also in the rural sector. We cannot afford to let inflation be fed by high fuel prices. Let us consider the Premier's criticism of some Opposition members for their requests of the Government. I am on the list. All I wanted was $20 000 for a school crossing on Burbridge Road at West Beach to save children's lives, to protect them as they go to school.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings interjecting:

Mr BECKER: As the honourable member says, a lousy $20 000 out of $1 800 million. The Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee could save that amount for the Government in the next few weeks. It could take over the Public Works Committee's role and would save that amount.

Let us look at some of the waste under the previous Government which was led by the current Premier. He did not mention to the people of South Australia that he is $180 million down the drain because of, among other things, the implementation of the Justice Information System, the original estimate for which was $21 million in 1985 but which by 1989 had blown out to something like $75 million—an extra cost of $54 million. The Government has failed to control sick leave abuses in the public sector, and that has been reported on by the Auditor-General. The estimated lost productivity in that regard is at least $10 million a year. We will put down provision for the loss of the investment in the New Zealand timber mill as $10 million: we will be conservative. That involves the South Australian Timber Corporation. There has been the blowout in the cost of the scrimber project involving the South Australian Timber Corporation. The original cost estimate was $12 million and the current estimate is $34 million plus. We will put that down at $10.5 million. We will put the loss on the Marineland fiasco at West Beach at $7.5 million. Already we are at $91.5 million before we have even started to get really serious about the Government's waste and mismanagement.

I refer to the introduction of the Crouzet ticketing system by the State Transport Authority. The original cost was $5 million, but it blew out to $11 million plus. There is another $6 million down the drain. I refer to the construction of the *Island Seaway* by the Department of Marine and Harbors. The original cost of $10 million in 1985 increased to nearly $21 million. We will be conservative and accept an $11 million loss on that. There is then the introduction of a new computing system by the Motor Registration Division of the Department of Transport. The original cost for the new computer was $4.5 million, but the actual cost was $11 million—a $6.5 million blow-out. The list goes on, but that is already $115 million without even trying.

I now refer to the Engineering and Water Supply Department's expenditure of $152 000 for the provision of tea and coffee for staff. The $5.7 million contract with the Ethiopian Government, involving services and supply to help alleviate the effects of drought in that country, was lost. I well remember the Premier announcing this contract and saying that it would be the greatest thing since sliced bread, that it would be of tremendous benefit to a third world country, and that the State would lead the nation. However, we lost $5.7 million because of the incompetency of the department in not advising the Ethiopian Government that it had accepted the contract. Instead of operating a fax machine on a Friday afternoon at 4.45 p.m., someone said, 'Let's do it on Monday.' We lost the contract.

There is then the Government's subsidy of the ASER project and the lease of the Convention Centre carpark and common areas. The original estimate was $1.25 million but the revised estimate was $4.3 million—another $3 million lost per year. Also, there was the failure to implement promised cuts in employment of public servants in administrative and executive officer classifications, and that involved $4 million a year.

The payment of rent for vacant teacher houses totalled $367 000 for one year, but over many years the cost is even more than that. For many years the Public Accounts Committee has reported on that. There is then the introduction of a central sterilisation system at the Royal Adelaide Hospital which surgeons say is unnecessary but which involves $1 million. The blow-out in the cost of fitting out the new Health Commission offices in CitiCentre Building was well in excess of $1 million.

When we talk of wasting and spending money, when we talk of financial hardship, let us remind the State Treasurer that these are the areas we should consider. I refer repeatedly to the blow-outs, the overruns and the waste of taxpayers' funds, all of which is unnecessary. Good government and good management could have saved the taxpayers tens and tens of millions of dollars. It could have saved much hardship. It could protect the people and give them what they really want from this Government, that is, leadership, help, assistance and encouragement. As I have said repeatedly, curing the problem with the economy is like going to the dentist: there will be a little pain but there is no point in putting it off for ever and a day. Let us get it over and done with. Let us get back to the basics of what government is all about—helping the people and providing what the people expect of us, within reason.

Members know as well as I do that the ALP policy in respect of the economy is to increase taxes, charges and services rather than to reduce services. It is all very well for people to have a philosophy such as that but, in times of economic hardship, we should remember who pays. Government members should recognise what their Government and the Government in Canberra have done: they have created three classes—the poor, the struggling middle class and the elite rich. And the poverty-stricken group in the community is growing every week. No Government can be proud of that record, and no Government should ever be proud of it. It is up to each and every one of us to assist and to provide the initiative and the incentive to stop the rot that is occurring not only federally but in the rest of the nation. His Excellency went on to state:

> In recent years the citrus industry has experienced falling juice prices, requiring greater emphasis on the marketing of fresh fruit. New legislation will restructure the Citrus Board to better meet current industry needs and allow the board to undertake initiatives to develop new markets for South Australian citrus.

I am a consumer. Every time I buy a bag of oranges, I find that one of them is rotten, and that really annoys me. I get furious, and I keep asking my colleague the member for Chaffey how that can happen. What is going on? In this State we have the greatest citrus area—the Riverland. It should be one of the greatest benefits to the State. Why can we not sell all our oranges? Why does the Federal Government allow the importation of oranges from America for juice? At the markets Californian oranges are sold, but I do not want to buy Californian oranges: I want Riverland oranges that are fresh and edible. I hate buying bags of oranges, mandarins or grapefruit and finding that one of them is rotten. When I push the trolley around the markets—

Members interjecting:

Mr BECKER: That is the very reason: I want to get out there and find out what the average person is having to put up with. Members should get out there and experience what the people are having to put up with, to battle and struggle with. How do the poor single supporting parents get on when they go to the markets or supermarkets, buy a bag of citrus and find that a certain percentage of it has to be thrown out because it is rotten? I have complained to the Citrus Board about that in the past, and I make no bones about it. It should lift its game and I hope that this legislation achieves that. I hope that growers benefit and get the rewards they seek. Certainly, I hope that this Government does not prosecute growers for selling their oranges in the city from the back of their trucks. Good luck to them. Something certainly has to be done because, as I said, some of the best fresh fruit and vegetables in the world are grown in South Australia. People work jolly hard to build and look after those blocks, and they deserve to get a reasonable income. His Excellency also stated:

> The Marine Environment Protection Bill will be re-introduced this session. The re-drafted Bill will impose stringent standards and regulations governing pollution control of the coastal waters.

I am pleased to see that, because I have been complaining for 20 years about the pollution at Glenelg and the millions of dollars that we have had to spend on restoring and saving the beach down there. Year after year the then Minister of Works (Des Corcoran) denied that the Glenelg raw sewage treatment works was causing any problems. However the E&WS Department lied and misled this Parliament year after year. It intimidated members of Parliament who questioned it publicly over the damage that it was causing to the environment. Now we are seeing this legislation, which will suddenly rectify the situation. All of a sudden something has gone wrong and the department is admitting to it. His Excellency further stated:

> My Government will again move this session for the introduction of all day shop trading on Saturdays . . .

Perhaps the Government does not mind putting one-third of small business people out of business. The Government should look at what it did to service station proprietors. How many of them did it bankrupt? How many butchers will go bankrupt through being forced to open on Saturday afternoon? How many other small businesses which employ one or two people in small shopping centres will go broke while the big Westfields and the major shopping centres will benefit at the expense of the little person? The Government does not care. All that Coles, Woolworths and the supermarkets want is to increase their percentage each year. To them that is progress and they do not care at whose expense. I warn the Government: be careful about that.

I note that the Government will introduce legislation to place controls on the funding arrangements of retirement villages. I believe that step has become necessary as more and more of us get older and look to secure accommodation. Retirement villages have been a wonderful boon to many people, but their interests need to be protected. It is interesting to note that there will be further legislation to look after those people.

Although it is not stated, the Government proposes to amend the Building Societies Act. I thought that there was a pretty poor contribution by some Ministers in what was presented. However, the Building Societies Act will be strengthened. At present, the New South Wales Government is looking at the South Australian draft legislation to see whether it can pinch any ideas. It would have been better to introduce the legislation so that we could reinforce to those in the community who deposit with building societies that they have no problems. The Governor went on to say:

> My Government's Crime Prevention Strategy continues to expand its work throughout the South Australian community, with particular emphasis on the relationship between alcohol, drugs and crime and the allocation of police resources to areas of increased crime activity.

Several Neighbourhood Watch groups have begun in my electorate and we have had public meetings expressing concern over the behaviour of people who are addicted to drugs. Alcohol is always a problem but, when I brought back a report from overseas, I foresaw that Neighbourhood Watch branches could be expanded to monitor the drug situation. It has been done in Penang for some years and we would welcome that role in South Australia. Neighbourhood Watch branches overseas are used for the rehabilitation of drug addicts. After they pay their debt to society people come back into the community and local Neighbourhood Watch branch supervisors advise these people and counsel them regularly so that they do not fall back into their old habits. A lot of work can be done in the community with Neighbourhood Watch as its role expands in time. It will be a benefit to society, providing the security that people want.

Paragraph 37 in the Governor's speech reads:

> Provisions will be made in the Water Works and Sewerage Acts for a new and more equitable rating system, and a more commercial approach to charging. This will result in the majority of South Australian households paying the same or less in real terms for these services.

This follows the Hudson inquiry into water rating methods and systems in South Australia. All it has done in a very sneaky, devious way is to introduce land tax. There will be a water allocation for a certain amount, which will be a bit like the telephone bill where we pay a certain amount in rent. On property valuation, for every $10 000 or part thereof over $100 000, a person will pay $7.80. It is nothing else but a disguised land tax. It is a tax on wealth and against incentive. I think it is unfair and I hope that my Party will protest strongly at this new, sneaky little land tax. It will not mean less in water rates because more and more people will be taxed by this land tax method. Once again, the Government will take away from individuals the incentive to improve and develop their own property.

The Governor commented on the important role of tourism in South Australia and, yes, it is a benefit to South Australia when the airlines fly and, yes, it is a benefit when we can get our act together. The proposed expansion of the international airport in the next few years is very interesting. It is proposed that, in 20 years, about $200 million will be spent at the Adelaide Airport in upgrading the international facilities and the domestic terminal facilities, etc.

Nothing has been said in South Australia about the deregulation of the airlines. I understand that there will be four new airlines. At least one—Compass Airlines—will be up and running on 1 November, with its headquarters in Brisbane. Another company—Southern Cross Airlines—is having discussions with the Government (I hope it is well handled) and hopes to establish its head office at Export Park at West Beach where there are plenty of buildings and plenty of facilities. I hope the Government gets it right this time and does not do a Marineland on this particular project. If the management of Southern Cross Airlines can get its act together and it is a credible venture. I hope that the Government will ensure that South Australia has an airline with its headquarters in Adelaide. What a wonderful boon it would be for tourism.

In November this year direct flights will be introduced to Kuala Lumpur through Malaysian Airlines and, by April next year, Cathay Pacific and Thai Airways International will also fly to Adelaide. A couple of years ago I went to Cathay Pacific's office in Hong Kong and asked whether it would come to Adelaide. We are finally wearing down

Qantas, allowing it to give up certain of its reciprocal rights so that other international airlines can come here. It augurs well for the future. The icing on the cake could well come on the weekend when the Premier, the Minister of Sport and Recreation and I go to Sydney to try to win for Adelaide the chance to represent Australia in hosting the 1998 Commonwealth Games. If successful, we would challenge the 65 nations in the Commonwealth for the right to hold those games in Adelaide, and I know that each and every member will join with us in being proud to represent our country.

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): This is the second opportunity this year to make an Address in Reply to His Excellency's speech, and it is legitimate and appropriate to review the performance of the Government since that first opportunity. A point not lost on most members of this place—indeed, one hopes not lost on anyone anywhere in South Australia—is that the Governor of the day delivers in his or her address, for the benefit of members of Parliament, the words of the Government and not of the Governor. It is tradition that His Excellency, as head of State, performs that duty and provides to Parliament the statement of the Government's intention. As head of State, the Governor presides over the execution of the statement of intent made by that Government to see that it is in compliance with the terms of the State's Constitution.

Most of us take for granted the fact that, almost without exception, month by month, year by year, decade after decade, everything that a Government does, regardless of its political persuasion, is in keeping with and inside the framework of the Constitution. In my judgment, taking that for granted is not wise or sensible. From time to time we all need to remember that, if there were no umpire on the football field, pretty soon there would be so many brawls that there would be bound to be serious injury, if not homicide. None of us carrying that analogy into the political arena wants to see that kind of thing happening in the decision-making processes which we adopted in this country from the Westminster system and which have been in place since the foundation of this province and its early rise to the status of self government over 130 years ago.

So, it is not legitimate for us to presume, or to assume, that without an umpire sitting there a government would necessarily observe the rules laid down for it in the Constitution. We do need to have a head of State quite separate and apart from the head of Government. To that extent I thank Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan for what they have done throughout the period they have been in office together, whilst Sir Donald has been Governor, for the people of South Australia and the institution of head of State. If ever there had been a necessity to restore the respect with which the public regard that office, and understand not only its ceremonial role but also its benefits or otherwise to the process of government, then certainly Sir Donald provided us with a fine example of how to go about that.

Indeed, I believe that the Government has, as its responsibility now, the necessity to engage in some discussion with all Parties that may be affected in the political process in obtaining a consensus about who the next Governor of South Australia ought to be. It ought not be an office to which an appointment is made for selfish or political motives of any description; it ought to be an office about which there is no doubt in the mind of any members of the general public as to its probity and integrity.

Members know of the disquiet and concern that has been expressed from time to time in the past about the necessity to ensure that the office of Governor is not brought into question at any time. I will not pursue that matter any further. I have made plain my reason for adverting to it, and again I place on record my heartfelt thanks, and the thanks of my constituents, to Sir Donald and Lady Dunstan for their work.

The Murrayville Secondary College is a matter to which I draw the attention of the House, and the way in which it is juxtaposed by the position of the Lameroo Area School in providing a secondary school facility to which children of families living along our State border with Victoria might have the option of deciding to attend. We are all Australians. However, a line on a map defines jurisdiction and Victoria takes precedence on one side of that line, and South Australia takes precedence on the other. That is no reason why the citizens of this country should be denied access to any of the services and facilities on one side of the line as opposed to the other. I will not go into the constitutional guarantees of that right.

However, I am on public record as having said that it was foolish of the Minister of Education in the State of Victoria (Hon. Joan Kirner) and the Minister of Education (Hon. Greg Crafter) to have decided between them, in support of any decision that might have been taken as a consequence of a discussion between members of their staff and/or departmental officers, to, as it were, quarantine the option for people living at Pinnaroo to enrol at Murrayville. I first drew attention to this problem on 20 February this year, and I tried to get the two Ministers to reverse their decision, which was totally obnoxious, in conflict with the national Constitution and opposed the basic right guaranteed in that document of the right of all citizens to be free to choose.

You would know, Madam Acting Speaker, as with other members of this House, that the ban on South Australian students attending Murrayville was lifted on 10 July. It ended six months of protest, and a couple of days when the citizens of Pinnaroo decided to close the State border and to travel along Highway 12 just to demonstrate to the people using that highway how the Government's decision had impacted on their own lives and the educational options available to their children.

I commend the work which was done by the committee called 'Focus' (Freedom of Choice While You Are Under Seige) and, before that, the work of the organisation called 'Care', and particularly the work of Mr Dennis Heintze, the Chairman of Focus. I make the point that he made, which I support, when he said on 11 July:

> We have strong legal opinion to say that our Constitutional challenge to the action of the Government would stand a good chance in court.

I hope, as the people of Pinnaroo hope, that this is just not a temporary reprieve for the year. I find quite distressing the comments that have been made by the Director-General of Education—obviously endorsed by the Minister of Education in this State—about the possibility that the matter might not yet be fully resolved.

I call on the Minister to make absolutely plain that the freedom to choose is available to those children and those families. In the *Advertiser* on 11 July comments made by the then Director-General of Education, Dr Boston, were referred to as follows:

> Dr Boston said that the restriction had been lifted and stressed a warning—

and this is the implied threat—

> had to be sounded that the staff/student ratio of one teacher to every seven students at Lameroo meant there was a loss of an additional teacher for every seven children who crossed the border, over and above the four already identified. 'The future of the Lameroo school is very much in the community's hands', he said.

He went on to say:

But you should have freedom of choice.

I hope he sticks with that, and I hope the Minister gives an assurance that it is his intention to do so.

Another matter that has concerned me relates to the kinds of noises that have been made by the Minister of Transport in this place and publicly. I made submissions to him on behalf of the people who live in the community around Coonalpyn, in the District Council of Coonalpyn Downs, to have a deceleration lane constructed in the middle of one of the busiest roads in South Australia—the Dukes Highway, the main arterial road connecting Adelaide to Melbourne and points in between. A deceleration lane was not there. Whenever a local resident, or anyone wishing to visit someone in the district, needed to make a turn, right or left, from that highway or either side of Lameroo, they often found themselves being set upon at the tailgate end of things by heavy vehicles, or other motorists perhaps not paying as much attention as they should.

Deceleration lanes were clearly an essential part of the way in which traffic flow in those localities should have been managed. There was nowhere for anyone to go if they misjudged the intention of the motorist in front who really intended to make a right-hand turn. For that reason, I commend the Minister for having decided to install one lane, but there needs to be two, or there will be a death there. Just bangs in the tailgate will not be nearly enough to make him give that commitment. That is a pity. We need to remember that black spots, as identified by the Federal Government, are not necessarily the only places where people can be killed in this State on our roads—whether they be South Australians or people visiting from interstate.

In relation to the provision of facilities in electoral offices to enable all of us elected in this place to do our job, the Government has not yet addressed those matters to which I drew attention when I was last speaking in the Address in Reply debate earlier this year. I cannot understand why that is so; no information has been forthcoming.

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

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Murray-Mallee.

Mr LEWIS: I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS

Adjourned debate (resumed on motion).

(Continued from page 110.)

The Hon. D.J. HOPGOOD (Deputy Premier): In moving his motion, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not long detain the House; nor is it my desire to so do, so I will show my arm, as it were, right from the beginning of my continued remarks by moving the following amendment to the motion:

Leave out all words after 'House' and insert—

(a) Notes the decision of the Attorney-General to withdraw from the appeal in the matter of *Lewis v Wright* and *Advertiser Newspapers Ltd* after the time for other parties to the case to commence further action in the matter has lapsed.

(b) Notes that the view of the nature and extent of privilege taken by the Supreme Court is not in accord with the view of this House as previously expressed.

(c) Supports the establishment of a joint select committee to take evidence on and consider proposals for the codification of parliamentary privilege.

(d) That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

First, members would be aware of a move in another place which envisages a similar procedure. That in no way suggests that we should not proceed along these lines; if anything, it strengthens my arm in urging this course to members. Secondly, in a letter dated 12 July from the Attorney-General it is pointed out that, in the event (as has been made perfectly clear) that the Attorney should no longer proceed with his appeal, there is a remedy open to the member for Murray-Mallee.

I will quote from that letter in which the Attorney—after first of all making the point (which is by no means irrelevant to this debate) that the House of Assembly specifically declined to instruct the Attorney to arrange for counsel to intervene on its behalf at the hearing before the Full Supreme Court, and also making the point that apparently Liberal members of the House of Assembly were not prepared to countenance the Parliament's appearing directly in those proceedings despite there being a precedent for such a case—goes on to say:

If I were to withdraw my application for leave to appeal, I believe that Lewis could make an application himself. Lewis was a respondent to the Full Court appeal. However, following my decision to appeal, Lewis advised that he would not appeal and would not appear to my appeal. The time for seeking leave to appeal is 21 days from the date of the Full Court judgment—

The Attorney then quotes the specific portion of the High Court Rules, and he continues:

That time has now well passed. However, the court does have the power to enlarge the time—

and, again, he quotes the particular section. He then states:

The power to extend the time is discretionary; however, I consider it likely that Lewis would be granted an extension of time to file an application for leave to appeal if I determine not to proceed with my application or had discontinued it.

As the Attorney makes clear in his further letter to you, Sir, of 7 August, he believes that this is the worst possible case on its facts to use as a vehicle to test the extent of parliamentary privilege.

This seems to me to be perfectly pertinent. Obviously it would be grossly improper for this House or for the other place to seek to intervene in any way in the facts of the case, such as they may be, which originally drew this matter to our attention. What the member for Murray-Mallee may do in the courts in relation to the very specific action, what Mr Steven Wright may do, or what Advertiser Newspapers may do cannot be a matter of technical interest to members, but the matter of their privileges remains of supreme interest to members, as it should to their constituents.

The member for Mitcham, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in moving this motion made it clear that his concern was as much for the people out there, as he declared it, as it was for members. The Government shares fully the concern in that matter, although it is also concerned about some of the ramifications of this matter in relation to one of the people out there—namely, Mr Steven Wright and the way in which he has been enmeshed in this case—and, indeed, there is its continuing concern for parliamentary privilege. Parliamentary privilege must act in such a way that members should be completely unfettered as to what they say on the one hand, but at the same time there must be at least some conventions, some recognised procedures, in relation to protecting members of the public from the improper use of that privilege that is so rightly enjoined upon us.

In those circumstances the Government believes that the proper course of action is not for the courts to further determine this matter but that this matter should be determined properly where it should always be determined: in the Parliament itself. So my motion urges the House of Assembly to support the establishment of a joint select committee to take evidence and consider proposals for the codification of parliamentary privilege. We are not envisaging here that specific legislation would be put before that select committee. We would see it entirely proper that the select committee should be completely unfettered except, of course, by the general understanding that we all have as to privilege in the way in which it should address its task of determining what legislation, if any, is needed in light of the matters that are canvassed in paragraphs *(a)* and *(b)* of my amendment, which I urge on members.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK (Light): The Opposition is pleased to note the Government's attitude to this matter and to indicate that the amendment is acceptable. However, I point out that it should not be considered that the right of an individual member to take the matter further is in any way to be constrained by the action that the Parliament may take. The individual member's right to take that further action is his and his alone. There is one aspect of the matter which I hope the Government acknowledges, especially in the event that the member concerned should seek to take action and have the matter determined by the courts, and that is that a very clear indication was given over an extended period that the member and, indeed, the aggrieved parties (Mr Wright and the *Advertiser*) would have their costs met by the Government, because it was recognised that the very heart of the parliamentary system was in question.

I will not canvass that matter other than to place on the record that if the Government, over time, has made a commitment, I expect the Government to fulfil that commitment. I am pleased to note that the Deputy Premier concurs with the proposition that I am putting. The action contemplated in this motion is very similar to the action taken in another place earlier today by my colleague the Hon. Trevor Griffin. The conjunction of thought that now applies in relation to a matter that is before another place and that which we are determining here and now should, I believe, short-circuit any further debate on this matter in another place, other than to comply with a message that must now go from this place seeking the concurrence of that place and its involvement in the formation of a joint committee.

The matter of privilege is difficult for any Parliament. Indeed, I recall that in 1980, when it was my privilege to represent this Parliament at a meeting at Westminster relative to the responsibilities of the Chair and the parliamentary system generally, a very senior member of the House of Commons pointed out to the 26 persons present at the seminar that privilege has been one of the greatest problems that the House of Commons and the House of Lords have had to apply their mind to over very many years. It was generally accepted that commonsense ought to be brought to any issue that came before Parliament to circumvent the need for a privileges committee, as such, because it was fraught with all sorts of dangers and difficulties in interpretation. There is a slight variation in the position in which we find ourselves at present because we are dealing with a matter that has been before the courts and may yet go before the courts again. I congratulate the Government for taking up the challenge brought forward by my colleague the Deputy Leader and indicate the concurrence of this side of the House in supporting the amendment.

Mr S.G. EVANS (Davenport): I support the amendment, but I believe one or two things should be said in addition to what has been said by the member for Light. First, it is not our province to judge what type of case it is at the moment, and I think that this is not the place for the Deputy Premier to suggest that it is the worst possible case for a test, nor is it appropriate to prejudge. That is a personal opinion expressed by the Attorney-General. Secondly, it is not necessarily true to suggest that the honourable member who is involved in the case has an opportunity to take it further. That member relied upon statements indicating that the Attorney-General would go on with the appeal, and he relied on that to happen. That did not happen, so for the Deputy Premier to say that he now has a chance to go on with it is not necessarily the case because it is subject to the High Court giving leave to appeal, and that may not be granted.

Thirdly, the select committee as proposed by the amendment, and as was to be proposed in another place by the shadow Attorney-General, is quite appropriate for the future. However, it does not solve the problem in the intermediate terms and it has no effect on other Parliaments in Australia. If we have a select committee here to correct the problem, it does not correct the situation in relation to other Parliaments (of course, Federal Parliament has its own Act). It does not look at the situation in other States and I believe that the appeal should have gone ahead.

There have been examples in the past where people have had a matter before the court that concerns only them personally and not the Parliaments of Australia, and in particular this Parliament. However, expenses have been found to meet the costs of such cases. I will not refer to them, but there are examples of that occurring.

I believe it is important for members of Parliament, from now until when the select committee completes its deliberations or until the High Court looks at the situation, to have the opportunity unchallenged with a clear conscience and without fear of abuse to raise matters of public concern. While that is not the case it is dangerous, so I believe we must find a way of continuing with an appeal. The Attorney promised to do it.

In other cases the State has paid the legal costs, and I believe that in this case it should pay the costs of an appeal to the High Court—not the legal costs of the other action—and do as was promised by the Attorney on behalf of the Government for some weeks until it was withdrawn yesterday.

The Hon. H. Allison interjecting:

Mr S.G. EVANS: As my colleague said, this matter has Commonwealth implications and, as I said, it has implications for all Parliaments. I believe that other Parliaments will involve themselves if we can get the matter before the High Court, and the only way that can be done for sure is through the Attorney. There is a remote chance of obtaining leave from the High Court so that the member for Murray-Mallee can take up the case and have it settled so that all members know where they stand. I still support the amendment but believe the other matter should go ahead and that the Government should make up its mind that there is justice in doing what it has done in the past, and more so to do it in this case.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): We are in this situation because in recent years we have seen many abuses of parliamentary privilege. During the previous Parliament union officials were slandered in this Chamber (and I will not aggravate the situation by mentioning those involved in these particular incidents), the Secretary of the Labor

Party was slandered in this Parliament and a marina developer was accused of murdering his business partner. This has given rise to a lot of public concern about the existence of parliamentary privilege. People in the community do not like to see members abusing one another in this place, and they like even less to see members under parliamentary privilege abusing members of the public.

It is very difficult for someone who is slandered in those circumstances to be able to respond. Somehow or other we, as a Parliament, must provide an avenue for members of the public to obtain that form of redress. Most cases can be handled by the traditional redress of another member responding, under parliamentary privilege, on behalf of the member of the public. Other Legislatures, for those occasions where somebody does not have a friend in the world to respond on their behalf, allow the presiding officer to read a statement from the member of the public—that provides redress in that manner.

We must act in such a way as to preserve parliamentary privilege. It is one of the basic foundation stones of our parliamentary system. There has to be somewhere in the community where the rich and powerful cannot hide behind their legal resources; where the truth, or the perceived truth, can be spoken without fear, without the member having to worry about a particular powerful businessman with corporate resources being able to attack the member of Parliament who has spoken what he or she believes to be the truth and who, in doing so, has acted in the public interest.

However, in taking action under the cover of parliamentary privilege, all members have to use this tremendous power that is put in their hands responsibly. If parliamentary privilege is abused, in the end public pressure will weaken it. We cannot and must not allow abuses. Somehow or other we must set up mechanisms that will minimise any abuses that, in the end, could result in a public that does not understand the fine nuances of parliamentary conduct, calling for the weakening of parliamentary privilege.

Unfortunately, as was stated by the Deputy Premier earlier today, this situation may well be the worst possible case on which to have to defend parliamentary privilege because it involves not a member of this Parliament being the defendant in a legal action but the member of Parliament himself launching that legal action. At the time of the incident that gave rise to this discussion I was the occupant of the Chair and I consciously endeavoured to handle the situation straight down the middle as honestly and fairly as I could.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: Members opposite may choose to scoff, but I happen to put some degree of value on my personal integrity, on my integrity as a member of this Parliament and on my integrity when I was the occupant of the Chair, regardless of what some members opposite may choose to do now by way of scoffing. At that time I am sure that the member for Murray-Mallee himself can bear witness that I tried to handle his side of the situation as fairly and as reasonably as possible. I was determined that his right to use parliamentary privilege had to be upheld, even though I personally believed that he was wrong in the way he applied that parliamentary privilege.

Furthermore, when I was approached by the particular member of the public who believed that he had been abused, I believed that I was carrying out my role on behalf of the Parliament in answering his initial request about what course of action was available to a member of the public in those circumstances. I am disappointed that both parties in this situation have brought us to this point. In the instance referred to, the member in this place caused a great deal of distress to the member of the public whose father had a terminal brain cancer and whose wife was suffering from a uterine tumour. The person who felt defamed approached me, and I very much regret—

Mr BECKER: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: is not this issue *sub judice*? I thought it was before the courts.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order, but I ask the member to be careful in what he says.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I regret that the member of the public did not accept the advice that I gave him. He asked what avenues a member of the public has open—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I would have thought that the matter under debate was so serious that every member in this place would treat it seriously without resorting to the abuse that is being thrown at me across the Chamber.

I offered three options to the member of the public in this case. I said that there were three things that he could do. One was to appeal to the member concerned to see whether he would retract the statement that had caused him concern. Another option was to respond publicly and the third was that he could use the traditional method of redress.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: whilst I respect the right of the honourable member to publicly assuage himself of whatever feelings he may have about the matter, what he is saying is not relevant to the motion now before the House.

The SPEAKER: I tend to uphold that point. I ask the member to take the points of the amendment that are the subject under debate and keep to those points.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: The way that I was finally drawing the threads of that argument together was to indicate that there are traditional methods of redress that apparently have not proved adequate in this case. The amendment refers all this to what is in effect a privileges committee. As I understand it, this will be the first one in the history of this Parliament. Some members are under the misapprehension that we actually possess such a thing as a privileges committee, but there is no such committee.

The member for Henley Beach has a view that differs from mine about whether there ought to be a privileges committee. Certainly I would not be in support of a permanent privileges committee, but the select committee for the matter cf privilege referred to in this amendment is one that I am sure we could all support. I hope that it will come up with a good solution to the problem of maintaining parliamentary privilege and at the same time provide the opportunities for redress that are required out there in the community so that what we have does not eventually get weakened.

Finally, Mr Speaker, although the indications at the moment are that this amendment will have the unanimous support of the House and, therefore, may not proceed to a division, I believe that as a precedent for any occasion that may arise in the future you should indicate that Standing Order 170 should be applicable.

The SPEAKER: As two members of the Opposition spoke in sequence, I will give the Government the same privilege. The member for Playford.

Mr QUIRKE (Playford): I should like to congratulate the Opposition on accepting this amendment tonight. Without going into some of the details that the last speaker delved into, I think it appropriate to look at a couple of the key clauses of this amendment. Point *(b)* states—quite ably—that the view we have expressed on privilege in this House has not been supported by the Supreme Court and is not

in accord with views we have expressed here on two previous resolutions to which I have been a party.

In point *(c)* we are putting together a framework within which we can deal with this matter most effectively. We are supporting the establishment of a joint select committee to take evidence and consider proposals for the codification of parliamentary privilege. That is a very difficult, albeit necessary, task. Unfortunately, if we proceed to a court case, or if a case in the High Court moves on the question of parliamentary privilege as it now stands, I am not sure which way it will come down: whether on the side of the Supreme Court or whether they will concur in the view that has been expressed in this place (and, no doubt, in other Parliaments). I am not sure whether it will agree with the position we have adopted (which I understand, is largely although not completely in line with the Commonwealth Parliament) or whether the position of Judge Olsson (which, I understand, was a very much more restrictive definition of parliamentary privilege) will be the way the matter is handled in the High Court.

I think that we need to ensure that we do our homework first before we ask umpires to bring down verdicts on the rules which, at the end of the day, we are charged to set. I think that that is the point here: that we are charged with the responsibility of establishing the guidelines and the rules by which the courts will interpret this and other relevant questions. I think that point *(c)* of this amendment quite clearly shows that the procedure we are about to embark on will achieve goals for both sides of the House on this very important question.

At the end of the day a balance has to be reached between the two sides here—and I am talking not about the case which has brought this into sharp focus but about the much broader and, I think, much more important aspect of parliamentary privilege as such. There is a very legitimate concern in many sections of the community that Parliament has become, in many instances, a 'coward's castle', and there is also a view that has been expressed to me by others that parliamentary privilege is not something that I as a member of Parliament or that we as a Government or Opposition—some members of which have been here for a very long time—own in their own right. In fact, it is something that the people possess, because in their Parliament they want the means by which the truth can be brought out.

Sadly, in many instances the truth is abused, and parliamentary privilege as we know it is abused. I do not wish to say anything further other than that the community expects parliamentary privilege so that we as members of Parliament can go about our rightful business and protect community interests and, at the same time, not abuse parliamentary privilege in such an abominable way that it becomes an instrument of oppression.

I congratulate the Opposition on supporting this amendment, because it really gets to the crux of the matter for the first time. We have had several goes at this and it seems to me that the events we are now setting in train will bring about a satisfactory balance between, on the one hand, the legitimate purposes of Parliament, which can be carried out only if the concept of parliamentary privilege is clearly articulated in law with broad acceptance in the community and, on the other hand, the interests of the community, which perceives that it has nothing to fear by the application of parliamentary privilege. That is very important.

It seems to me that we are putting the cart before the horse if we ask a court to interpret for us the very job that we should do here ourselves. That job is to set down the proper framework under which we agree that parliamentary privilege can be ensconced and how it should be treated in law.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): The contribution from the former Speaker, the member for Walsh, was particularly disappointing in that he set himself up as the judge and jury in this case. He did not say it in as many words but he hinted strongly that there had been an abuse of parliamentary privilege by the member for Murray-Mallee. In fact, he said a little more than that, he said he had tried to do the right thing by all concerned but that the member for Murray-Mallee had abused parliamentary privilege. That is the only conclusion one could draw from his remarks.

Unfortunately, the member for Playford followed that theme and said that Parliament has become a coward's castle and that parliamentary privilege has been abused. He has also done a complete back flip, as has his Party, in relation to referring the question to the High Court. We all know the reason for that. Government members were directed to follow that course of action at the Labor Party's State Convention. Whatever they want to do, they have to do what State Convention says and the Attorney-General, after a bit of squirming and messing around, has acceded to its wishes and has broken several undertakings and commitments that he gave earlier this year.

I refer the member for Walsh and the member for Playford to the question asked in this place and the response to that question on the subject of the litigation in the *Advertiser* report. Indeed, it would be beneficial for all members of this place to have their memory refreshed on the facts. The member for Murray-Mallee asked this question in the House:

> Will the Minister for Environment and Planning arrange to have a full explanation given to the House at the earliest opportunity for the reasons why his department, last year, approved a subdivision application by Stephen Wright, a private secretary to former Premier Mr Don Dunstan?

The SPEAKER: Order! I draw the attention of the member for Kavel to the fact that I have drawn previous speakers back to the subject of the amendment. I am having trouble linking the original question with the subject of the amendment.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: This amendment is all about setting up a select committee to look at the question of parliamentary privilege. It is all about the Attorney-General's calling off a High Court challenge to which he had previously agreed. It is all about the comments and snide remarks made by the member for Walsh and the member for Playford; although those remarks are incorrect, I think they believe them. I am simply refreshing their memories so that they can perhaps revise those judgments. All I am seeking to do is to put on record the facts to refute their arguments.

The SPEAKER: I take the point the honourable member is making, but I must reiterate that the member for Walsh was called to order for referring to certain matters; the word directly related to the amendment, and I ask the member for Kavel to relate his remarks to the amendment.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: With respect, I think this is highly relevant, because I believe that members need to be acquainted with the facts and then draw their own judgments instead of taking some ideological position to try to justify a stance which the Government is now taking at the behest of the Labor Party Convention.

I happen to live in the Paracombe district and I can attest to the accuracy of the statements made by the member for Murray-Mallee, a former resident of that district, in relation to the concern of local residents who raised the matter with him initially. All I am seeking to do is to set the record

straight because the record has not been put straight tonight. It has certainly not been put straight by the member for Walsh, who has pre-judged the matter—he has made himself the judge and jury—or the member for Playford, who I do not believe has read the question and the response in the *Advertiser*. If he has read them, he has forgotten what they said. I am seeking to put the record straight so that members can make an informed judgment as to what are the rights in this case and what we ought to do about it. I contend that it is highly relevant to the argument I am seeking to advance and I have a bit more to say about it.

The SPEAKER: There is no reference at all to the question in the amendment. It is a matter of principle being applied by this House, and I ask the honourable member to relate his comments to the amendment.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It is all about the matter of *Lewis v Wright*. The first part of the motion notes the decision of the Attorney-General to withdraw from the appeal in this matter, and the matter is *Lewis v Wright* and *Advertiser Newspapers Limited.*

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, could I suggest an honourable way in which the member opposite could achieve the goals he claims he is aiming to achieve; he could simply quote the page numbers of *Hansard* on which the references he wishes to make are listed and the dates on which the articles allegedly appeared in the press, and leave it at that.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: I would very much like to get it on the record. I hope that members will read it. I refer to pages 3889-90 of *Hansard*, April 1987. The member for Murray-Mallee went on to cite the areas that were subdivided. The previous owner, Mr Jackie Clifton, had lived there all his life. I know him well: his name is John Robert Clifton. He previously owned the land and sought to subdivide it. The question was asked at the behest of local residents, and there it was. From memory, he got a tirade of abuse from the Hon. D.J. Hopgood, but I will not go into that.

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood: I have never abused anyone in my life; not even you.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: We can read the record, Mr Speaker, but that is not really germane to the point I am making. The fact is that he has been abused since. The member for Murray-Mallee was abused recently by the Attorney-General to try to justify his back flip. I thought it was a most disgraceful episode. Tonight, he has been judged by the members for Walsh and Playford while the matter is still before the court. If I were a betting man, I think I would know what the result of the court action would be. The judge and jury may have to revise the decision. But I simply say: read the question and read the letter published in the *Advertiser* and have a good hard look to see what was said.

The member for Murray-Mallee raised the concerns of citizens who know him personally in the district in which he formerly lived and in which I currently reside. I know of those concerns. He legitimately asked for an investigation. People have asked me these questions and they have asked the member for Murray-Mallee the same questions and he has raised the matter in the House.

I am on good terms with Mr Stephen Wright and I do not bear him any ill will. He is a former student of mine and a resident of the district in which I live. I get on well with him. Nonetheless, he saw fit, in what I believe was intemperate fashion, to write a letter to the *Advertiser*, which was published and in which the member for Murray-Mallee believed he was defamed. If the members opposite, who suddenly decided that they would take Wright's part and condemn the member for Murray-Mallee, who is seeking to uphold parliamentary privilege, read the letter, they might get a different slant on it. I will say no more in view of your ruling, Mr Speaker, but I ask members to read the question and the letter, and make up their own minds.

I turn to the role of the Attorney-General, the chief law officer of this State, in recent times. The member for Murray-Mallee was particularly concerned, as we all are or should be, about the question of parliamentary privilege. He asked the Attorney-General and his senior officers on numerous occasions whether the appeal would proceed. He was assured, not once but on numerous occasions, that it would definitely proceed. Now, after the time for appeal has lapsed, the chief law officer has done a back flip at the behest of his political Party. Therefore, the member for Murray-Mallee, the only one who can possibly have the carriage of this matter to the High Court, must seek special leave to appeal.

I understand that a number of Parliaments around this nation would have wished to appear at the High Court hearing if the Attorney-General had chosen to keep his word and give evidence. This is of enormous significance not only to little old South Australia but also to every Parliament in the Westminster system.

Another bit of reading that I would commend to members opposite is the Appeal Court judgment of Justices Zelling, Prior and Jacobs. I recommend that they should read their judgment in relation to parliamentary privilege in the case of *Chapman v. Chatterton* where in the lower court it was the reverse of this situation. The lower court judge found against Chapman and for Chatterton. That went to appeal. If anyone wants a strong affirmation of parliamentary privilege, they should read what Zelling, as the chairman of that appellate court said. I keep away from the courts. I am frightened of them; I am frightened of lawyers. However, I went down that day. I knew what was at stake for this Parliament, so I went down with my colleague Ted Chapman to hear the summing up. If members want to read some straight talking, they should read what was said by Zelling particularly and by Prior and Jacobs. There was a ringing affirmation, if ever I heard one, of parliamentary privilege.

It may be that we are in a grey area; it may be some people have different shades of opinion. Nevertheless, the Attorney-General gave an assurance to the member for Murray-Mallee, not once but repeatedly, that he would take the matter on appeal to the High Court. Now he has crawfished out of it after wobbling around not knowing where to jump, and he is blaming the member for Murray-Mallee for having the temerity to stick up for the rights and privileges which affect every one of us in this place, reaffirmed in terms of the resolution unanimously carried in this House not months ago.

I am not beefing about the amendment to the resolution. I think that may achieve something, and we support that. However, the attitude of the Attorney-General in this whole exercise shows extreme weakness. I also deplore the contribution particularly by the member for Walsh, a former Speaker, and by the member for Playford who followed the same line. I say, 'Read the legitimate question and the response in the *Advertiser*', and maybe, when they have refreshed their memories on that, they may come to a different conclusion. I think that to stand up now and try to justify this crawfish, weak, toadying attitude, bowing to the dictates of the political Party, where Steve Wright's former boss and mate with his oratory—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kavel will resume his seat for a point of order.

The Hon. T.H. HEMMINGS: My point of order is under Standing Order 127: that a member may not impute improper motives to any other member. I think that the member for Kavel is imputing improper motives against the Attorney-General.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The terminology being used—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The terminology being used may be a little suspect, but I do not think there has been any reference to the motives of the Attorney-General.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The final point I want to make is that the Attorney-General was prepared not only to take the case to the High Court on behalf of every member of this House, from both sides, but also to pick up the legal costs of the *Advertiser* and Mr Wright. Nobody would have cavilled or bucked at that at all. We understand that the Attorney-General has his hands tied by his Party, and he has been in a dilemma but the least that can be done in these circumstances, if the member for Murray-Mallee chooses to take this matter further and is successful in obtaining special leave to carry it further, is pick up his costs.

Mr S.G. Evans: For all Parties.

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: For all Parties. How on earth does one justify paying the costs for Wright and the *Advertiser*? I assume that that offer still stands and, if it goes to the High Court, the Government—the taxpayers of the State—will pick up the costs for Wright and the *Advertiser.*

Mr. S.G. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: Well, they offered to. He said he would previously.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWOPTHY: I assume so. If the member for Murray-Mallee is successful in carrying this further (and he will do us an enormous service if he does), the Government should pick them all up. That is the least that can be done, unless there are some further dictates from some quarters saying that it cannot be done. I remember the Government's picking up costs for a certain Mr Dunford in a court case. After he had lost, the Government paid the bill.

An honourable member: What about Cornwall?

The Hon. E.R. GOLDSWORTHY: It also picked up the tab for the former Minister of Health. There are precedents and, if this matter goes to the High Court, it will be in the interests of all members. The Government should reaffirm that offer made previously to pick up all the costs. It would be an intolerable burden to expect a member to carry it in this fashion on behalf of the Parliament. It has been a sorry episode in terms of what has transpired as a result of the decision of the ALP. We do not support it; we do not agree with it; but we understand it. However, then to try to vilify the member for Murray-Mallee suddenly in order to justify it is absolutely despicable. I understand the rest of it, but I will not accept that. It is plainly not true.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE (Coles): I support the motion as amended and I am very relieved indeed that the House apparently will see fit to be at one on this matter which is of paramount importance not only to every one of us but also to every citizen of this State, this country and, indeed, the British Commonwealth. It is imperative for our capacity to represent the people who elect us to Parliament that we should be able to do so absolutely free of external pressure and without fear of prosecution. No matter what the topic that is raised in this House, no matter on whose behalf it is raised, no matter in what form it is raised, as long as it conforms to the Standing Orders, every member who raises an issue should do so in the knowledge that we are absolutely free of any fear of prosecution.

The origin of this privilege, which is fundamental to democracy, is old indeed. It has its roots long before there were such things as elected legislatures. It has its roots in England in what was known as the king's peace. Any messenger of the monarch travelling through the kingdom on the monarch's business would do so in the knowledge that he had the protection of the Crown and without fear of attack, of prosecution, or of any kind of impediment on the king's business. Then parliamentary privilege was actually enshrined in Magna Carta in the year 1215. That was a watershed document in terms of documents expressing liberty and it is the origin of much of our law and the repository of our freedoms today.

Following Magna Carta in 1215 the House of Parliament passed an Act known as Stroud's Act which was enacted in direct response to a threat to a member of Parliament who had exercised parliamentary privilege but against whom action had been taken in the civil courts. Following Stroud's Act, the enactment of the Bill of Rights in 1668 further gave statutory form to parliamentary privilege. As far as Australia is concerned, parliamentary privilege has been given statutory form and has been enshrined in our constitution and, further still, in an Act of the Commonwealth Parliament.

In the 1940s—I believe it was in 1947—the Parliament at Westminster gave further expression to confirm absolutely the right of parliamentary privilege and the right of every member to raise any topic without fear of prosecution or defamation proceedings. So the record stands. It is steeped in antiquity; it is the absolute guarantee of freedom not just for members of Parliament, but for the citizens we represent.

There are few sections of the community that have greater reason to value this reason than the fourth estate: the media. The media would be in grave difficulty in exposing many injustices, wrongs, aspects of corruption, or anything at all which eats away at the health of democracy were it not for parliamentary privilege. So the matter of *Lewis v. Wright* and the decision of the Supreme Court as an appellate court in South Australia has potentially very serious ramifications for all of us. From recollection, the only times that I have specifically required privilege as a member of this Parliament have been occasions when I have asked questions, usually as a frontbencher in this Parliament, and have done so in the knowledge that, were such statements uttered outside, I might be liable to defamation proceedings. Never in my recollection have I had to raise a matter on behalf of a constituent that would render me liable for defamation proceedings were those statements issued outside the House.

However, during the closing weeks of the last Parliament a matter came to my attention concerning the treatment of a constituent of mine by someone in this State who was in a very powerful position. I resolved to research the matter and to raise it during this session, knowing I had the safety and security of parliamentary privilege. It so happens that the circumstances that prompted the raising of that matter have now passed, but I can assure the House that, had those circumstances not passed, I would have felt very gravely at risk had I raised that matter in light of the Supreme Court decision. I would have feared that, without parliamentary privilege, action could have been taken against me and I could have ended up in the courts.

It was the most worrying decision that I have ever encountered as a member of Parliament as to whether or

not I would raise the matter. I believe that the decision of the Supreme Court has interfered with the rights and freedoms of every one of us. I cannot stress too strongly that it is not just our rights; we should be trying to pursue the ideals of justice and the rights of every member of this community and of the nation.

I conclude by stressing that members who have such an absolute right as we enjoy should not abuse the privilege. Every right carries with it a corresponding responsibility. There is no question that the privilege has been abused over the years in this House and in all other Parliaments.

The Hon. H. Allison: Far more good has come out of it.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: As the member for Mount Gambier says, far more good has come from the exercise of parliamentary privilege than could possibly be compared to the limited harm that has without doubt been done as a result of its abuse. Not for one moment do I think that my colleague the member for Murray-Mallee abused privilege when he raised a matter that was undoubtedly a matter of public importance. However, we are not here to debate that issue. We are here to support and uphold parliamentary privilege. We are here to note the weakening of privilege that will undoubtedly result as a consequence of the judgment of the Supreme Court. We are here to support the establishment of a joint committee to take evidence and consider proposals for the codification of parliamentary privilege, and we certainly expect the support and cooperation of the other place in doing this.

I reiterate my support for the notion that, if any costs are to be incurred in any appeal that is pursued in order to ensure that the matter is taken, if necessary, to the highest court in the land, that those costs should be met by the public purse on behalf of all litigants simply because it is in the interests of the public that this action should be taken and it is in the interests of the public that the Parliament should do all in its power to uphold, for once and for all, parliamentary privilege.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): My remarks on this subject will be brief and I admit that I have not had a chance to do my homework on the matter that is under debate this evening. Therefore, I will be cautious about making remarks on the details and, particularly, on the background of this subject as it has surfaced in the Parliament. To my mind it is quite improper—in fact, playing with fire or, possibly, *sub judice*—for us to indulge in discussion about the background to the case that has led us to the situation we are in now. My remarks are not a reflection on you, Sir, as Speaker of the House, but I make them because it is a dangerous practice for us to indulge in such capers on the run. I am guessing again, but I suspect that very few members in the House have had any direct association with such subjects in their personal life. Very few members in this House have gone to the trouble of doing any homework on the *Lewis v. Wright* case, or any other description that might properly have. Therefore, as I said, it is quite improper and, I think, dangerous to pursue that line.

The specific subject that I will address is that surrounding the matter of parliamentary privilege. The member for Coles is one member of this House with whom I do not always agree, but I believe on this occasion that she has put her finger right on the very pulse of the subject. She has reminded us, as members of this place, of a privilege which, in my view (and apparently in hers), is not subject to argument, but which is very deeply entrenched. What are we doing? We are wandering around with a proposal to consider how we might preserve what is already entrenched.

What causes me more concern than anything else is that either in debate in this place, given the emotion that sometimes accompanies it, or in debate before a select committee, there is likely to be some compromise. Every time we have a so-called bipartisan discussion between members of multi persuasions, I suggest that we run the very distinct risk of entering into some compromise. In this issue, as in many other issues of tradition, there is no compromise between right and wrong. It is not only right (and I do not mean Wright who was the person cited in the case to which I have referred) as in the right thing but also proper and, in fact, our responsibility, as members of Parliament, in order to protect the position of future members of Parliament to endorse this privilege. If we accept that position, then all I believe we need to remind ourselves of are those stated and recorded precedents that support that view.

There is no question about whether or not we agree with that view. In the previous session of Parliament, the Deputy Premier, in response to an action by the Attorney-General in another place, at page 1359 of *Hansard*, moved:

> That the House of Assembly supports the proposal of the Attorney-General for South Australia to appeal to the High Court of Australia from a decision of the Full Supreme Court of South Australia in the case of *Peter Lewis MP v Steven Wright and Advertiser Newspapers Limited . . .*

That motion was moved by the Deputy Premier in response to a proposal from the Attorney-General in another place. It was not a case of our asking the Attorney in another place to pick up the matter and support the principle of absolute privilege in this place: rather, it was a response indicating our support for his desire to proceed. It is totally irrelevant whether his decision to do something else follows a direction or pressure from a union or Trades Hall. The fact is that the Attorney is out of the show for the moment, but it does not lessen our responsibility as members in this place to continue to support that principle—not to argue the merits of the matter and not to put ourselves in a compromising situation so that we may lose some of the concrete nature of that principle, but simply to go out and canvass every avenue at our disposal to endorse that position in this place.

I think that that is all that needs to be said. It is my view that, if we obtain the unanimous support of this House in that direction, we do not need a select committee. As I say, something in this procedural proposal before us may have escaped me; I may have missed something, in which case I do not make any excuses, because I believe that what happened tonight was a blemish on our practices in this place. When the amendment that is before us was presented by the Deputy Premier, in my view, we on this side of the House should have sought a temporary adjournment to consider the implications of the amendment and then we should have come back to the matter this evening on motion. I do not believe that we should have proceeded as we did, through the member for Light, albeit with good intent, and thus lock ourselves into a position before we were able to consider the matter.

What concerns me with that sort of haste and with any other procedure under the canopy of a select committee or discussion in any other place about this matter is that we might lose ground which has been there for generations. It ought not be tampered with by anyone in the community or by the courts now that the benchmarks have been set in this State; nor, in my view, should such important matters be tampered with by inexperienced people like us in this Parliament.

I conclude by endorsing the remarks made by the member for Kavel when he cited the case in which I personally was involved. I do not want to canvass the details of that matter,

except to say that in 1985 the Full Bench of the Supreme Court of South Australia upheld an appeal in a defamation case not dissimilar to the one that is before us at the moment, I believe, where absolute privilege was at the very core of the issue. In that case His Honour Justice Zelling, and his honourable colleagues, Justice Jacobs and Justice Pryor, unanimously supported the preservation of absolute privilege pertaining to a member of this Parliament.

Just for the record and for the interest of members currently in the Chamber, those three justices, through His Honour Justice Zelling, went on to refer to what they believed was meant by 'qualified privilege' to be enjoyed by a member outside the Parliament. In that particular case qualified privilege was not very different from absolute privilege, because it so happened that the words in question in that case that were spoken outside the Parliament were identical to those spoken within the Parliament; they were the subject of reporting by the media by permission of the House and, in fact, were reported by the media outside this House. Absolute privilege in that instance came very close to what otherwise would have been qualified privilege, hence the very slim difference determined between the two terms in that particular case.

But, as I say, that case or any other case is not really relevant, in my view, with respect to the core of this issue. The more one argues about something already in existence, the greater the risk, I suggest, of losing if not all then at least some of that precedent. I do not believe it is a risk that we should entertain much longer.

I feel personally disturbed, on behalf of my colleague the member for Murray-Mallee, because I know what it feels like to be injured one way or another and I know what pressures can be put on the person concerned and their family when they are at the centre of such cases. Whatever face he may put on and whatever strengths he may show to his colleagues, one can be certain that he would have felt it—and felt it very hard—over the period that he has been involved in this issue. In that context I feel for the member for Murray-Mallee and I hope that all members of this Parliament can put aside Party politics and approach this subject unanimously in the interests of preserving absolute privilege for members of Parliament in their activities and responsibilities within the Chamber, consistent with the judgment of His Honour Justice Zelling in 1985.

Mr GUNN (Eyre): Throughout the parliamentary life of members of Parliament there are occasions when they are called upon to make a judgment, whether or not that be by using what we all have accepted as the privileges of this House, to expose or bring to the attention of the Parliament and the Government matters that they believe are significant, that being the only way in which action can be taken to protect an aggrieved individual.

We have a most sophisticated Government operation in this State and elsewhere throughout the Western parliamentary world. One of the few ways in which an aggrieved citizen can have a matter drawn to the attention of the public when grave injustices have been perpetrated upon an individual or group is for their elected representative—

Mr S.G. Evans: Or if it appeared so!

Mr GUNN: Or appeared so, as my colleague says. In that situation their elected representative can rise in the Parliament and bring the matter to the attention of all members of the Chamber. Once the Parliament starts to tamper with those rights and privileges that have developed over generations purely for the benefit of enhancing our democratic system, problems will occur. That is why members of this Chamber believe in the right of privilege. It is one of the few benefits that a member of Parliament has during his or her term in this Chamber. It is the right to this stage to raise any matter under parliamentary privilege. I believe we will be taking a retrograde step if we do not demand that that right be enshrined in the procedures of this House and not be tampered with. We must ensure that one emotional action or case does not interfere with what is essential in a decent parliamentary system.

I am particularly concerned that from this time onwards other members of Parliament and I will be restricted in how we can carry out our duties. At present I have a matter before me which I intended to bring before this Chamber where I believe an individual has been treated in a disgraceful manner. The organisation that took this action is one of the most powerful financial organisations in the land. The individual concerned would have no chance whatever of taking that organisation to court because he does not have the financial resources to put his case. The organisation that has acted so disgracefully has access to as many QCs as it wants and it could deliberately delay proceedings and keep them going to deny that person any opportunity to have the case brought to a conclusion.

The only chance that person has is that either I or his Federal member raise the matter in Parliament and name not only the organisation but some of the individuals in that organisation who I believe have acted in such a disgraceful manner. The other appalling action in my judgment in respect of this most important issue is that the Attorney-General has cited in some detail in his letter to the Speaker of this House the action taken by a political Party at a convention. I have always believed that it is not only the role but also the responsibility of Her Majesty's chief law officer to act in accordance with the best interests of all citizens of this State and to uphold the traditions and privileges of this Parliament. He alone should stand out against any attempt to influence, direct or in any way impede what has been the proper traditions and practices of this Chamber.

I believe that, if Parliament does not insist that the privileges which up to this stage have been accepted are absolute and that there is no doubt that a member has that right, we will be taking one further step towards not only eroding the standards of Parliament but we will also be eroding the opportunities of members to act in the best interests of their constituents.

If one looks through all the controversy that has taken place throughout the past 50 years across Australia, one will see that, if members had not had that privilege in respect of matters which have shaken and changed Governments, those matters would never have been brought to the attention of the public. I put it to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that, if we start interfering with the privileges of Parliament, we will be interfering with the privileges of royal commissions and other organisations; and perhaps some of the revelations of such things as the Fitzgerald inquiry in Queensland would never have come out unless privilege was involved.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that, whatever conclusion the select committee reaches, under no circumstances does it take the easy way out and give a little ground, because the privilege we have is not for the benefit of the individual. In my judgment it is a privilege given to us by the electors of South Australia and of our own electorates, and we must renew that contract every three or four years. It is the right of the electorate, at each election, to censor or remove a person or take that right away from him.

I sincerely hope that all members opposite sit down and read the letter Mr Clyde Cameron wrote to all members of this House in relation to the matter which brought this topic

to the attention of the House. I believe that he explained very clearly the need for absolute privilege. I sincerely hope that no course of action is taken to deny members of Parliament the right properly to discharge their duties without fear of action being taken against them.

Mr GROOM (Hartley): I support the amendment as moved by the Deputy Premier. I have listened to the last speech and the speeches that preceded it, and the Opposition really has no case for grievance in this matter. Indeed, the amendment moved by the Deputy Premier is the proper course for this House to adopt. One thing that emerged from the judgment of the Full Court of the Supreme Court was that this matter is not a proper matter for the House to test its privilege in the High Court.

The proper course is to do exactly what the amendment says. In adopting that course, members of Parliament are simply not prejudiced, if you read the judgment of the Full Court of the Supreme Court properly. Members will not be impeded from carrying out their duties or raising matters of a contentious or doubtful nature in this Chamber in the interests of their constituents. Members will simply not be prejudiced at all.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore: Are you willing to take the risk?

Mr GROOM: Of course I am willing to take the risk and will continue to take the risk. If you are confident about your material and if you check your sources, there is no risk for members of Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley will direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr GROOM: Honestly, I have great difficulty in understanding what the Opposition is on about in relation to this motion. I moved the original motion on 21 February 1990, and it was unanimously adopted by this House. The House did not authorise the Attorney-General to instruct counsel to intervene for the House in that suit. I know it was a political resolution to the problem, but the fact of the matter is that the House itself did not authorise the Attorney-General to instruct counsel to intervene for the House. The House elected not to intervene in that suit.

Members interjecting:

Mr GROOM: You read the motion. The second part of that motion states:

> The House believes that the Attorney-General should appear in that suit as *amicus curiae* to put the following propositions in relation to the privileges of the House:

The Attorney-General did just that—he appeared as *amicus curiae* in that suit and put the position in relation to parliamentary privilege via counsel to the Full Court of the Supreme Court. Part *(b)* of the Deputy Premier's motion picks that up when it says that the House notes:

> That the view of the nature and extent of privilege taken by the Supreme Court is not in accord with the view of this House as previously expressed.

I should have thought that that is quite a clear black and white statement of the position of this House. It is this House that determines parliamentary privilege. The courts interpret what they see as parliamentary privilege, but we are elected by the people and we will determine our privileges in a legislative form, in a codified form, if necessary—and that is exactly what the Federal Parliament did in 1987.

The Federal Parliament legislated so that the courts did not have to interpret the common law or put in their own interpretations of the law different from the views of the House. Never mind what the other States want to do. It may well be that the other States wanted to intervene in this case before the High Court and put a similar position in relation to their Parliament. They have the right to legislate for parliamentary privilege in their State. What we should be concerned about is that we protect parliamentary privilege here in South Australia and leave what other Parliaments want to do to their respective legislatures.

The Attorney-General has carried out the wishes of the House in the motion that was unanimously passed in this Chamber on 21 February 1990. There can be no call on the Attorney-General to preserve that court's judgment. Because it was clearly a judgment that was not in accord with the view that was expressed by the House in that motion, the Attorney-General sought leave to appeal. However, if one studies the Full Court's judgment properly, one readily comes to the conclusion that this case is a quite inappropriate vehicle—in interpreting the common law, the Bill of Rights and whatever else has been received in South Australia—for this House to test its privilege in the High Court.

This matter is a private action between a member of Parliament and a citizen of this State. If they want to litigate and fight each other in court, let them do so. Our role as a legislature is to protect the privileges of this House, and that is the view that the Attorney-General has picked up. He is doing that in ensuring that a joint select committee is set up so that representatives of all Parties of this Parliament, be they in this Chamber or in another place, have the right to express their view on parliamentary privilege and work out a solution. The Opposition really has no basis for grievance. If two private individuals want to fight one another, that is their choice. Let them do so.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore interjecting:

Mr GROOM: The honourable member will be involved in another way, in a political way, and that is the correct way for her to be involved. She may well be a member of the joint select committee whereby she can express the views that she very forcefully put to the House this evening. I commend her for the way in which she put them, but not their content.

The Hon. D.J. Hopgood interjecting:

Mr GROOM: I think she may. She may well be the Maggie Thatcher of South Australia, but I do commend her for the way in which she put the case for her side of the House. She is a very forceful and articulate speaker, but I disagree with—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to refer to members opposite and to other members by their electorate and to direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr GROOM: I apologise to the Chair for that. I have no doubt that the member for Coles is on the path to resurrection.

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore: That suggests that I may have been crucified!

Mr GROOM: From what I have heard, I believe that may well be the case. There may well be some merit in that proposition. I do not want to delay the House unduly. The fact of the matter is that the House will arrive at a political solution, and that solution will be put to a vote in both Chambers in due course. That is the proper, responsible position for the Attorney-General to adopt to protect the privileges of this House.

I reiterate that I simply cannot see grounds for Opposition grievance. I suspect that Opposition members are trying to stir up a political debate where none really exists. If they are genuine about protecting the historic privileges of this Chamber and those of another place, they will support the motion without grizzling.

Mr SUCH (Fisher): I support the motion as proposed to be amended. Privilege is an important thing and we should

guard it jealously. However, it should be used properly. It should not be abused, and in saying that I am not speaking about the specifics of any case. It should not be used in a vindictive way, on flimsy witch-hunts or wild accusations. Personally, I believe there is a case which can be considered by the select committee to allow members of the public to have a right of reply. In particular, I support strongly the section relating to a select committee, because I think that is the appropriate place where we can calmly and rationally look at the issues involved. I am a strong supporter of that aspect of the proposed amended motion. It is up to a select committee to come up with appropriate recommendations which can be put before both Houses for consideration. So, I am happy to support the amended motion as proposed.

Mr S.J. BAKER (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I would like to address one or two matters. Principally, this debate was under control until the member for Walsh made his contribution; that did not assist the course of the debate whatsoever. I believe it is a very sad day in this Parliament when we do not hold privileges as near and dear as we should. I make the point, although it appears that the amendment will be successful, that the Attorney gave an undertaking to pursue this matter in the High Court. The member for Hartley can say what he likes. The Attorney-General gave an undertaking by approaching the Speaker of this Parliament and he gave personal commitments to the member for Murray-Mallee. No-one can take away from the fact that at one stage in his recent parliamentary life the Attorney was committed to upholding the rights of this Parliament and seeing them pursued to the highest court in the land, because the courts had somehow interpreted our right of privilege in a way that we believed was incorrect.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

Mr S.J. BAKER: The member opposite had a chance to participate in this debate. It is a little late in the day for him to comment if he did not make a contribution in the first place. It is important to understand that if the principles of privilege are lost to this Parliament we as parliamentarians will suffer in the long term. There are some problems that can arise with parliamentary committees. I believe that matter should be pursued to the highest court; namely the High Court. I believe it should be pursued and that it would be won in the High Court, because a number of essential elements of the long history of parliamentary privilege are likely to be upheld under those circumstances.

The only reason I support this motion is because it endorses the original motion of 10 April which endorsed the Attorney's desire or offer to pursue this matter to its end. So, in principle, this Parliament made a decision to pursue the matter of privilege. It is a good case. It is not a bad case, and it is not the worst case. It is a very good case because there is no such thing as bad cases in the law. The law is there; it is there on the statutes and is normally interpreted in a way that is consistent with history or with the written word. I do not believe it is a bad case in any way.

The Hon. H. Allison: That is simply a matter of opinion.

Mr S.J. BAKER: It is a matter of opinion which has been used in this House to depreciate the argument of the member for Murray-Mallee. The important point is that parliamentary privilege must be upheld under all circumstances. I also make the point with the Attorney that if an appeal to the High Court had been launched it would have assisted in the deliberations of a select committee. It would have assisted us to make up our minds about whether we had to change and whether there had to be some modifications.

I remind members that previously we agreed to some modifications, so that people were not left without a defence but with the principles of parliamentary privilege being upheld. The great strength of this motion is that it upholds the determination of 10 April which, in principle, said that we shall pursue this matter to the ends of the earth. We know that the only people who can pursue it to the highest level are the Attorney, who has now withdrawn under enormous pressure and given his previous commitments, and the member for Murray-Mallee, if he should so determine—but he may not do so. That would mean—and let us understand this—that the court would have to give him leave to appeal out of time because he was not a participant in the appeal although he was a participant in the original case. I am not overly happy with the motion before the House but, in a spirit of compromise, the Opposition will support it.

Amendment carried; motion as amended carried.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr LEWIS: During the course of the debate on the matter which has just been considered by the House, I did not participate because I am aware of the sensitivity of my position in that matter. However, the member for Walsh, in the course of his speech, chose to refer to me and to the Standing Orders, No. 170 in particular. For the benefit of members, that Standing Order provides:

> No member to vote if personally interested. A member may not vote in any division on a question in which the member has a direct pecuniary interest, and the vote of the member who has such an interest is disallowed.

Whenever this matter has been before the House on previous occasions, I have not only avoided voting but have deliberately left the Chamber. However, it has been my right to sit in the Chamber and to ensure, during the course of any of those debates, that Standing Orders, as I perceive them, were upheld. I do not question that that has been the case. I just simply put on record that at no time did I seek to influence the House as to its deliberations on the matter. In this instance I seek the understanding of the House and place on record the fact that I did not seek to do that. I thought it quite gratuitous of the member for Walsh to draw your attention, Mr Speaker, and that of the House to that Standing Order as though I might have, at some point in the past, or may in the future, the indiscretion, acting in ignorance or otherwise, to attempt to participate in a vote on the question.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER (Walsh): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I will be very brief. I wish to make clear, in case it is inferred otherwise, that I did not intend, by taking the point of order that I took, to impute any improper motive whatsoever to the member for Murray-Mallee. At that stage there was no indication that he would be making a personal explanation that would make clear to the House that he had moved towards the door in a way that was indicative of him leaving the Chamber at the time that a vote looked as if it might be imminent. The only reason for my raising that Standing Order was that occasions such as this when we debate parliamentary privilege to this extent are very few and far between. Therefore, I wanted it clearly on the record for any future occasions

so that members may refer back to see that Standing Order No. 170 was applicable in those circumstances.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption (resumed on motion).

(Continued from page 125.)

Mr LEWIS (Murray-Mallee): Just before the dinner adjournment I was in the process of drawing to the attention of the House not only the fact that the Minister of Transport on 10 April had agreed to build a deceleration lane in the Dukes Highway, but that members were given different amounts of resources with which to address the problems drawn to their attention by their constituents.

Some members have very sophisticated computer equipment to assist them in the processing of information which comes to their attention and which they wish to forward to other Government agencies, departments and ministerial offices. Other members are without any such measure of sophistication. In between, there are eight members who have oldfashioned GLAS word processors, small automatic data processing items which are very slow but, which are in some ways superior to a typewriter and in other ways inferior. It is about time that all members of this place, regardless of the electorates they represent, were given a level playing field and a fair go. Neither the former Minister of Housing and Construction nor the present Minister should be holding out against that measure of fairness which should be provided to all members.

I am not saying it has anything to do with the Party they belong to, if they belong to a Party; I am not saying it has anything to do with their seniority within this place. It is simply quite wrong for some members to be given enormous resources and others given none. When questions are raised as to when the level playing field will be provided for all of them to do their job equally and fairly, no answers are forthcoming. Neither the former Minister nor this Minister provides that information.

The next matter to which I wish to draw attention—and in doing so I want to thank the Government where it has responded positively to items of great public concern that I have drawn to its attention—is a recycled idea which I put to the public domain through my office in the Parliament about treatment of sewage effluent using iron oxide. I raised the matter on 19 March and at the time the Minister of Water Resources mocked the suggestion that effluent could be finding its way into the river. Now, of course, we know that the Minister has decided to clean up the mess at Murray Bridge and Mannum where treated effluent and, on occasions, raw effluent has been pumped into the river. In addition to that, I wish she would get on with implementing the provisions of the Gray report so that people knew where they could safely ski in the river without coming off their skis in the middle of a slick which has come out of a sewage treatment works and which has only been slushed up and not properly digested and decontaminated. Furthermore, people who go fishing do not run the risk of catching fish that are otherwise contaminated with E. coli bacteria.

Mr Such: They are getting their own back.

Mr LEWIS: Yes, getting their own back, or else some of them might have come from elsewhere and are getting someone else's back. However, in this instance, I suggested that the sewage should be treated with iron oxide dust. I believe it is our good fortune now to discover that the Minister has recycled that idea and, on 25 July, said she would have the technology, developed by Professor Worner of the Woollongong University, investigated. It involves the use of induction heating, after iron oxide is mixed with sewage slurry, to produce pig iron that is of very high quality. It is worth up to 10 times as much as ordinary pig iron because it is very low in sulphur; it is very high quality material. In my media release of 16 May this year, I stated:

> Once raw sewage has been broken up, it can be used in an industrial process which would result in a highly prized marketable commodity being produced—if only we have the wit and wisdom to apply 'state of the art technology'. . .
>
> This technology can be applied to the effluent and sewage disposal problems which are causing so much concern in the cities and towns in the Murray-Darling Basin . . .
>
> The process is simply to take raw sewage, mix it up until it is a slurry of small suspended particles and add in an appropriate quantity of iron dust from BHP's Middleback Ranges . . .

At present that dust is being dumped as landfill at Whyalla, out on samphire swamps and places like that. An immediate chemical reaction occurs.

I also stated that the iron rich dusts and the sewage settle out very rapidly. The sludge is then dewatered and allowed to dry out. It is then treated in a furnace by a process called induction heating (which is at a very much lower frequency than microwave heating with which we are so familiar in our homes) and it produces, with no risk to any of the employees involved, very high grade pig iron.

At that point, when the induction heating is undertaken, the temperature rises to between 1 400 degrees and 1 500 degrees Celcius and oils and very clean furnace gases are given off. In effect, the coal in the process has been replaced in the smelting that goes on by the solid particles from within the sewage. When it is all over there is this high quality pig iron suitable for foundry use, and it is worth $200 to $350 a tonne. We also get zinc oxide for sale. It not only deals with the sewage problem very rapidly, it also saves fossil fuels and reduces the industrial atmospheric pollution that can result from using them, as there is no increased emission of atmospheric carbon from fossil sources. The atmospheric carbon comes from food sources through the process of collection in the sewage system.

At the present time we find that sewage effluent and sludge are major polluters of our streams and our coastal waters in this State and elsewhere in this country, if not the world. Hardly a week goes by without our being given some evidence of the problem which this sewage is creating for us and, more importantly, the other creatures which share the environment with us. I believe we must stop pumping the effluent and the sludge into the environment at large and, in particular, into the Murray River and make better use of it. I note, then, that the Minister and the Government have now taken up that proposal and intend to use it. Recently I took an overseas trip, as have most members.

Members interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: Whenever, as ever, opportunities permit, members in this place know that they may do that for the sake of studying things that they believe to be relevant to their constituents. I note that the member for Playford did this early in his career, and it was an excellent exposition that he gave, in the course of his last Address in Reply contribution, of the things that he discovered and came to better understand. He is to be commended for the way in which he set about—

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: It may have been, but I agree with the member for Kavel: it was a fine report given verbally to this place.

The Hon. E.R. Goldsworthy interjecting:

Mr LEWIS: I believe so. Over the past few years I have taken it upon myself to respond to some information that

came my way about problems in the gemstone industry in Australia in general and in the opal industry in particular. They also relate to the way in which gemstone processing and the marketing of it in the Orient and from the Orient, has been related to the laundering of drug money. That involves not just a few million dollars, tens or hundreds of millions of dollars; it involves billions of dollars. The lower grade commercial stones, whether opal or anything else that are processed in considerable volume by some interests in the Orient, are being sold on world markets, principally in places such as Germany, Japan and the United States of America, at prices that are well below cost.

However, the revenue said to be derived from those sales that is brought to book is well above the income actually derived from marketing the stones. The people engaged in the market then hold the market because they are selling the material so cheaply, but then declare a revenue from the sales so obtained using false invoices and statements to back them up and ghost companies that are based outside the economies in which the sales are made to back them up. They are laundering hundreds of millions of dollars obtained from the sale of drugs within the economies in which they are selling the stones. That matter needs to be addressed.

Notwithstanding that point, I also want to see, as far as the opal industry in this State is concerned, a far greater measure of value adding taking place. Up to this point most of our rough—that is, the rough stones from the host rock from which we mine precious opal—is sold to interests overseas, and very little value adding occurs in our economy.

Notwithstanding the fact that, comparatively speaking, our labour costs are higher, in this day and age we have now developed high technology and automated processes by which we can automatically cut those stones *encabochon*, (that is, with a dome rather than with facets). Instead of exporting hundreds of millions of dollars worth of jobs, and value adding to someone else by selling the rough stones, we in this country could be processing them ourselves. That would enable us to create an enormous number of jobs compared to the number that we have presently. Not just 10 or 100 jobs but several thousand jobs could be obtained by adding that value to the economy in this country and in this State.

Arguably, this State produces in excess of 90 per cent of the world's opal. The precise value cannot be determined because much of it is smuggled out. Even the quantity that is taken out legitimately has a value that may be, for income reporting and customs and export purposes, inaccurately recorded at less than its actual value. I do not criticise anyone in particular in the industry for any of the practices to which I have referred. I know of no-one in this country who is involved in, for instance, laundering drug money through that process, but the trail can be traced.

I again focus the attention of the House to the potentially huge industry that we could have. I commend the Government for taking up the suggestion I made three years ago that we should be teaching lapidary more seriously in our TAFE colleges, if nowhere else. In response to that, the Government advertised a full-time position at TAFE for a senior lecturer in lapidary and appointed a man whom I consider to be an outstanding lapidiarist and an outstanding instructor and who had previously acted in a part-time and casual capacity. I refer to Mr Stewart Jackson, who was appointed to the Coober Pedy campus of TAFE. Mr Jackson has done an excellent job and, since he has been at the college, has increased the number of people who have lapidary skills and widened the range of the skills of those people already involved in the industry. The work undertaken by the Government through TAFE in that way needs to be commended, encouraged, continued and expanded.

Moreover, while I was then in America I had the opportunity to further examine the segmentation of the market. I believe in doing these things hands-on; I am not somebody who stands back and says, 'You can do it this way,' or 'You can do it the other way' and so on. Wherever possible I seek to demonstrate personally that what I am advocating can occur in principle and prove it by my own actions. I make no apology then for having traded in parcels of opal to ensure that I have a clear understanding of what the market is looking for and at what price it is prepared to buy these goods, whether it is small micro-carat stones or large free-form cut material. There are different segments in the market, and the time available to me tonight does not permit me to identify and define them all.

Needless to say, whilst I was in America I was able to examine closely the micro-carat market by, in one instance, interviewing the coloured stones buyer for the second largest jewellery manufacturing corporation in the United States, Miss Peggy Wedan of the Sterling Corporation in Akron, Ohio. The report of that interview and its very telling implications will be found in my study report on that trip. In addition to that, I have also studied distance education technology in America from time to time as that has a serious impact upon and relevance to the children in the families in the more isolated parts of the electorate that I represent. The two people whom I was trying to see on that occasion were not available because the principal person involved in making the arrangements had taken ill, and I was unable therefore to interview her. I did not waste my time: I took the opportunity to visit with another person who was involved in a matter that will save this State millions of dollars.

Each year schools and public buildings are burnt by arsonists. The type of transportable buildings that we have used in the past are susceptible to fire and burn like tinder boxes. They are also subject to great damage during transportation and considerable restoration costs are incurred when they arrive on a new site.

When I visited America, I spoke with the Sioux Corporation in North Dakota and, in particular, the Vice President and General Manager, Mr Robert Manning. I tracked down the owner (Mr Aaron Smith) of a patented process that would give South Australians access to a new commodity that will save us millions of dollars per year. I refer to MITI resin. Not only does it not burn, but also, when heated, it does not give off toxic gases. I have the results of the Ohio State University tests on that material. It has enormous relevance in the manufacture of bicycle helmets and in the construction of school and other public buildings. To cut a long story short, this material, which is presently manufactured by the Sioux Manufacturing Corporation under licence, is available for manufacture in Australia and the owners of the patent and the Sioux Corporation are willing to cooperate with the Government in establishing an industry of that kind, perhaps on an Aboriginal reserve here in this country, in order that that kind of housing and public buildings can be built here and that kind of commodity can be made available.

Mr HAMILTON (Albert Park): I welcome the opportunity to speak tonight in this debate. I support the motion for adopting the Address in Reply to the Governor's speech opening the second session of the Forty-seventh Parliament. I wish to address a number of issues contained in His Excellency's speech, including the importance of developing

wider economic strategies and the development of manufacturing, agriculture, defence and aerospace, tourism, and high technological industries that rely on a high level of intellectual input. The other issues that I wish to address in the time provided to me include tourism, social strategies, and law and order, to name but a few.

In 1985, the Premier launched nine principles for development to set the framework for economic development in this State over the next five years. Tangible results in terms of new investment and employment have been achieved. As the Premier has stated so often:

The State Government aims to create a competitive regional economy offering the best advantages of existing and new industry for the future into the 1990s and beyond.

Quite clearly, the goals of this Government are to create, as the Premier said, long-term employment opportunities and a sustained high level of living. Defence and aerospace projects, such as the $4.6 billion submarine program, will provide about 2 500 jobs annually in South Australia for the next five years. This is evidence that this Government's strategies are working, even in difficult economic times.

Whilst we have those knockers on the other side of the Chamber, I think it is very interesting to note an article, which appeared in the *Advertiser* of Monday 9 July this year, headed '$100 million wages cushion: defence "key to South Australian jobs" '. The article, which was written by Colin James, states:

Defence projects, such as the $4.6 billion submarine program, will provide about 2 500 jobs annually in South Australia for the next five years, according to a report to be issued today. The report, commissioned by the State Government, confirms South Australia's reputation as the defence capital of Australia. It reveals that defence-related projects are generating at least $100 million a year in wages and spending for the South Australian economy, cushioning the State from the economic decline being felt by the rest of Australia.

The report, compiled by the Centre for South Australian Economic Studies, a joint centre of the Adelaide and Flinders universities, is the first to evaluate independently the defence industry's economic impact on the State's economy. It confirms repeated claims—

and I emphasise that—

by the State Government that South Australia is benefiting heavily from its defence industry.

The State is the headquarters of several major defence companies, including AWA Defence Industries, Thomson CSF, British Aerospace Australia and the Australian Submarine Corporation. It also is the base for the huge Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), with its various research arms.

The Centre for Economic Studies report says South Australia is poised to reap long-term benefits from its defence projects, apart from direct spending and wages, such as:

A HIGHER technology and skill base.

FUTURE prospects for contracts.

A STABLE contribution to the overall economy.

AN INCREASING level of business and consumer confidence in the local economy . . . They did not include contracts for the defence forces operating in the State, such as the Edinburgh air base or the 'myriad' contracts supporting the DSTO at Salisbury.

Instead, they concentrated on South Australian contracts for the submarine replacement program, the Anzac frigates project, the commercial development of a Laser Airborne Depth Sounder (LADS) at Technology Park, a Royal Australian Navy order for four survey catamarans, wire looming for the army's Blackhawk helicopters, the Hawker de Havilland Aviation College at Parafield and the manufacture of civil aviation radar systems for Australian airports.

It is quite clear that this Government has addressed these issues and, despite those prophets of doom on the other side of the House, we have repeatedly been told by the media of this State of the benefits of this Government's activities in relation to high tech.

The *Advertiser* of Monday 6 August this year, in an article entitled 'Submarines sink Port jobless level', states:

Port Adelaide's jobless level is sinking thanks to submarines. The Australian Submarine Corporation, working with the Port Adelaide Commonwealth Employment Service office, has set its sights on recruiting long-term jobless from the Port district.

The joint scheme, called Port Skill, is directed at recruiting the unskilled long-term unemployed and will provide work for up to 80 full-time blue-collar workers by late 1992, the ASC's corporate affairs manager, Mr Ross Melton, said.

The article states later that the Port Adelaide Mayor, Mrs Julie Dearing, indicated her support for this project. It also points out that jobs were booming and that it was marvellous that a lot of people who had been out of work for a long time had benefited from this project.

Another indication of what has occurred in this State, despite what we have seen in this Parliament since its opening by His Excellency, is contained in an article which appeared on 31 July in what one could state is a very conservative newspaper—the *Advertiser.* It states:

The 1990 Adelaide Festival and Fringe attracted 100 000 people and generated an extra $10 million for the State's economy . . . More than 10 000 visitors came to Adelaide for the Festival, 6 000 from Victoria and New South Wales and 1 600 from overseas.

The article goes on to say:

These are the major conclusions from the 1990 Adelaide Festival Economic Impact Study, the first comprehensive report of its kind. It was prepared by the Centre for South Australian Economic Studies based on 1 300 responses to a survey during the Festival.

The article goes on to applaud what the State Government has done in this area. Similarly, one can point to the positive aspects of what this Government has done in terms of encouraging technological advances. I refer to the *Advertiser* of 31 July this year and an article headed 'South Australian Forensic Service Wins High Praise from the United States' as follows:

South Australia's State Forensic Science Service has won international recognition, and is now ranked as one of the world's leading forensic science institutions.

The article further states:

To win accreditation the service was subjected to a rigorous 129 point test covering the full range of operations from safety procedures to staffing arrangement and equipment.

It passed on 127 points when three United States representatives came to Adelaide in October.

The report states in relation to Dr Tilstone:

He said the service now would be better placed to vie for business from the United States. It would seek new American work after the United States Army's laboratory in Japan closed later this financial year. 'The United States is a new market for us . . . if the American military says it wants a drug monitoring of its personnel, for example, we can do it,' Dr Tilstone said.

He said overseas work accounted for only about $200 000 of the service's $4 million income last financial year. The service aimed to increase that amount by about $250 000 in the next year.

The point I am making is that South Australia is again well placed in terms of assisting not only this State but this country and also internationally.

In terms of development, one must point not just to my words but to articles appearing in the *Australian Retail Business Magazine* of March/April 1990. The magazine refers to the Myer Centre in Adelaide financed by the State Bank of South Australia with a development value, as all members are aware, of $570 million. The article goes on to state:

Brisbane Myer Centre turned over $260 million last year, with 28 million people passing through its doors. Remm expects at least the same number to visit its Adelaide project, with turnover targeted at $350 million a year.

All things being equal, the Myer centre should trigger a massive injection of development investment in the South Australian State capital. Remm expects the project to generate a 25 per cent rise in redevelopment work in the central business district alone.

One could say that in recent years South Australia has attracted a considerable amount of business, manufacturing

and industrial development. In some circles it is claimed that I am a bit of a conservative, but I fully support the multifunction polis for South Australia, and I have taken it upon myself to advise my constituents that if they have any difficulties with this proposal they should come to my electorate office where I have the submission and as much information as I could gain on the MFP proposal. I have tried to develop a file of information in my electorate office.

I believe that in the long term South Australia will benefit quite considerably. In the very conservative *Advertiser* of 30 July this year, an article headed 'MFP to "boost SA's economy" ' written by David Washington states, in part:

The multifunction polis (MFP) could add more than $2 billion a year to the nation's wealth, according to a Bureau of Industry Economics report.

The article goes on:

It said the South Australian economy would receive a bigger boost from the project than any other State. Economic output would rise by more than 8.1 per cent in South Australia and the Northern Territory if the MFP was based in South Australia . . .The MFP would house 100 000 people and less than 25 per cent would be foreign . . . the MFP would have a wide range of industries, such as education and retailing, as well as high-technology export industries. It had the potential to provide significant benefits to the Australian economy but only if there was moderate investment by foreign investors and visitors.

Similar articles appeared in the *Advertiser.* In response to many of the criticisms of the MFP, Professor Gavan McCormack, in an article of 25 July 1990 under the heading 'Scientific and economic policy' states:

The doubt that whatever Australia might need it was unlikely to be new cities, and that resources to meet Australia's needs in science, education, etc, would be better given to institutions of proved excellence, such as the CSIRO. The public resources required for the South Australian proposal are relatively small, especially given the existing public ownership of the site, in proportion to the objectives envisaged, and the project would be likely to demand a reinforcement of the existing network of scientific and technological infrastructure rather than suck resources away from it.

I know that there are many arguments for and against this proposition, but I am enough of an optimist to believe that South Australia will benefit quite considerably from this development. I believe that very strongly, despite some of the criticisms by environmentalists in South Australia—and I hasten to add that I am not one of those who knocks environmentalists. I believe that they play a very important role in our community, apart from anything else, to highlight those issues that may impact on future generations. So, I believe that in the long term South Australia will benefit quite considerably—apart from anything else, to clean up that area of the Port River and its surrounds which, as many members know, has been polluted over many years.

As I said, South Australia offers unique attractions to the national and international tourist, and the proposed Wilpena Pound tourism development, when completed, could give South Australian tourism its biggest boost since the Grand Prix. The Ophix development, together with the proposed $4.5 million upgrade of the Hawker airport, will enable international and domestic tourists to fly into our beautiful Flinders Ranges area and enjoy that area as part of an Australian wilderness circuit.

As one of those who for many years has followed very closely the debate on the proposed Wilpena Pound development, in March of this year I went up to Wilpena. I did not avail myself of the resources that are available to some members of Parliament. I took my own car, and my wife accompanied me. I did not advise anyone in the Wilpena chalet that I was going there because I wanted to determine for myself whether or not the Government and Cabinet was correct in their assessment of the Wilpena Pound development. Based on the information provided to me by a considerable number of people, I was very, very impressed by the Government's proposition.

Most members of this House who have a pragmatic approach to my views would be aware that I am not frightened to offer criticism of the Government. However, I must say that I was very impressed. I heard criticism of the Government and I relayed those comments to the two Ministers responsible. What I saw delighted me and I believe that South Australia will benefit considerably from the proposed Ophix development. Despite the member for Coles and others who went up to Wilpena and made emotive statements to the media and tied yellow ribbons around 1 000 year old gum trees, the unbiased information provided to me (I will not embarrass certain people) leads me to believe very strongly that the development will benefit South Australia from a national and international viewpoint. There is no question that Minister Wiese and Cabinet are spot on in their assessments. I understand that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, have also been to Wilpena, and I would be interested in your opinions about the development.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: So the member for Coles is up the chute—or up a gum tree.

Mr HAMILTON: Perhaps that is the more appropriate expression from the member for Napier; I do not necessarily disagree with his views. I am excited by that development. I like to walk and I am sure that you, Sir, have walked around Wilpena and had a good look. Wilpena is a beautiful site for such a magnificent development. I believe that the State Government is concerned for the environment and the delicate nature of that particular development. Indeed, everyone in this House is conscious of the environmental concerns of the development, and I do not believe that any one of us would want to do anything to damage that environment in any way. I look forward to Cabinet's decision on this particular issue. One day I hope to take my grandchildren up to Wilpena to show them that magnificent development. It is something that delights me quite considerably.

The Hon. Ted Chapman interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: I do not want to listen to the sheepherder from Kangaroo Island. I want to address the issues that concern me greatly. This is a serious debate and I do not want foolish interruptions. With respect to the Government's social justice strategies, I was interested in the release by the South Australian Health Commission of the social health atlas.

I will quote readily from notes that I have had prepared because I believe this is important to the north-western suburbs of Adelaide. The 1990 Social Health Atlas of South Australia shows the areas of lowest socio-economic status in the metropolitan area to be south-east Port Adelaide, west Enfield, north and east Woodville, Hindmarsh, Thebarton and eastern West Torrens. This catchment area for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has the highest percentage of low income families and the highest percentage of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. It has the equal highest percentage of unemployed, with the exception of Elizabeth, the lowest percentage of female labour force participation in this State, the highest percentage of Aborigines, the highest percentage of people born in non-English speaking countries, the highest percentage of dwellings with no vehicles, a high level of peri-natal risk, and the lowest use of private hospitals.

Lower socio-economic groupings in this area have been identified as having higher rates of heart disease. For example, mortality rates for people under the age of 70 years were 14 per cent higher for males and 39 per cent higher for females in lower income households in South Australia.

Overseas data indicate that trends in cardiac surgery will include an increasing proportion of patients from the low socio-economic groups. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are a group identified to be at increased risk from the development of heart disease. The highest concentration of Aboriginal population in the Adelaide metropolitan area is in the north-western suburbs.

Deaths among those under the age of 65 from heart disease indicate a marked increase in risk for the north-western suburbs in comparison with the eastern and southern suburbs. The largest absolute number of deaths occurred in the Woodville and Enfield areas. For too long in South Australia the north-western suburbs of Adelaide have missed out. Like my colleagues, I am not prepared to let this matter go unaddressed. In the Henley and Grange, Hindmarsh, Port Adelaide, Thebarton and Woodville council areas, death rates from heart disease are greater than would be expected from rates of hospital admissions. This is in distinct contrast with the southern suburbs.

Patients residing in the north-western suburbs of Adelaide have a very low rate of admission to private hospitals, while patients residing in the southern and eastern suburbs have a rate of admission to private hospitals of at least 30 per cent more than expected. Again, the low rate in the north-western suburbs is indicative of the lower socio-economic status and the fact that individuals cannot—and I emphasise 'cannot'—afford private health insurance.

This information indicates that, with the establishment of cardiac surgery at Ashford Private Hospital, a higher proportion of patients living within the Flinders Medical Centre catchment area is likely to be referred to Ashford than from within the QEH catchment area. However, for most patients living within the QEH catchment area, no alternative to public hospital treatment exists. Therefore, the best arrangement for a combined public hospital—Ashford Cardiac Surgery Unit requires that the QEH be the site for the treatment of public patients. The QEH proposal clearly falls within the Government's social justice strategy, which provides that:

Proposals which incorporate the following kinds of features will be regarded as consistent with the overall strategic direction:

- Concentration on local and/or regional areas where the effects of compounding disadvantage are most evident.
- Initiatives which impact on structural issues affecting quality of life.

Within this overall approach momentum established in the first two years of the strategy will be maintained with a continuing emphasis on:

- The needs of families, particularly low income families.
- The needs of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities, both urban and in remote areas.

I wish that the Parliament had not agreed to curtailing members' contributions in the Address in Reply debate to 30 minutes.

I could talk for two hours on matters impacting on my electorate, but there is one matter that I will address tonight before I sit down. I refer to the contribution made by the member for Bright last night, in which he attacked the Government in relation to an emotive speech that he made on law and order about a couple, for whom I feel extremely sorry, who I understand were kicked near to the casino. The stark reality is that between 1979 and 1982 there were many problems to which he did not allude. It was one of the most debased contributions I have heard in this House in many years, and I condemn him for abusing his privilege as a member of Parliament to use emotive terminology to attack this Government, not to address the problems associated with that couple. The fact that he was prepared to use and abuse his position as a member of Parliament to try to get a cheap headline will, in my opinion, ensure that he will not last any more than one term in this Parliament. In my view, he is a oncer only, and I will attack his contribution later during this session of Parliament.

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

Mr OSWALD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the House do now adjourn.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN (Alexandra): This evening I wish to place on record a message that I have received from a little mate of mine, John Mathwin, the former member for Glenelg. As only 10 minutes are available, I should like to proceed to read his letter to the House forthwith:

Dear Ted,

I am prompted to write to you following receipt of a letter the other day from the Speaker which laid down new rules regarding the Gold Pass etc.

Some months ago for me the saga started. Although the usual rumours had been about, regarding the Gold Pass, suggesting that the Government were going to recall (from retired members) their Gold Passes, which, I remind you, were given to them on the understanding that if they were 'good' members of Parliament and held their respective seat for a certain time, or a certain number of elections, they would retain 'Their' Gold Pass for ever, which would be embossed with their name.

That Gold Pass was one that anyone would be proud to show when requested. It depicted Australia, the Coat of Arms of our nation. I would add, that it was capped by the Royal Crown (on reflection, that could be one of the main factors in the Government's decision to recast the Gold Pass in an effort to make it simpler to comprehend).

I am not sure what that remark means, but it is the remark of the writer. The letter continues:

Now to get down to the 'nitty-gritty', a term I use because what I would like to say would be unprintable. To say that I am disgusted with the Bannon Government is putting it as mildly as is possible for me to do. Added to that it's a broken promise too.

Sometime ago I received a letter explaining the advantages of giving up 'my' Gold Pass, that was treated with the contempt it deserved. That was followed by a number of telephone calls ending in an appeal to me, saying that the Government, indeed the Minister, was demanding the return of 'my' Gold Pass.

I explained that I was about to go into the Royal Adelaide Hospital for heart by-passes and asked that he ask the Minister to call off the pack at least until after the operation, suggesting he contact my organisation. Retired Members of Parliament, South Australian Branch of CPA. You could say I regard it as—you know Ted, my union, as it were, knowing full well that our membership included strong fighters for members' rights—past tough men—like Jack Wright, Geoff Virgo, Roy Abbott, Gavin K, to mention a few, who would fight tooth and nail against this shocking unjust demand to replace our personal award.

During my stay in RAH, there was another telephone call stating there was now a 'deadline' of 6 June 1990 (a date I hold very dear as the invasion of France). This suggested to me that the Minister had instructed the STA to get the last two Gold Passes at any cost. I understand my 'partner in crime' was my old cobber, Jack Wright—get tough. Jan, my wife, brought this latest news to me to my sickbed, RAH, Special Recovery Ward, where I was recovering from my operation (had on 28 May 1990). I was not in the mood to face another deadline as it were, so reluctantly, not knowing what punishment the Minister had in mind for me, I told my wife, Jan, to give up 'my' Gold Pass.

I now have my—some sort of, I don't know what!! I thought at first it was some lucky charm, you know, like those you get out of a Christmas cracker or, as you would say a Christmas bon-bon. It's in the form of a shield, the words around the edge say Ex-Member of S.A. Parliament—no name on it at all . . .

There is no name on it at all, so it could belong to anyone or anybody!! Even military medals of any consequence have your name on them.

Ted wait for this one!

In the centre there is a jumble of capital letters, something like those puzzles you used to get at Christmas in lucky stockings. I would send it to you in this letter for you to see, but I would be

worried in case it got bent in the post or that you may accidently twist it when you handle it. You see it's not a strong type of medal like those that people win at sport, say for 'running' and winning a race.

Some receive medals just for being there!! I picked that sport because there are pollies who indulge in it. I'm sure you could think of at least one. Of all the medals and presentations I have made I don't think I have ever seen a more delicate one than this ex-member's Gold Pass.

Ted, when next you have the chance to raise this matter either in the Party Room or the Chamber, I would be pleased if you would register my disgust at the paltry manner the Bannon Government has treated the past members of our State Parliament.

The letter is signed 'John Mathwin, former member for Glenelg.'

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: Hear, hear! They look like alfoil!

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: Since receiving that letter, I have had a look at one of these pieces of tinfoil. I am told that they are really nine carat gold, but I do not think it matters that much what metal they are made of or, for that matter, how thick or how thin they are. However, on viewing the gold pass replica, or whatever other appropriate title it might be given, that John Mathwin has received, I can appreciate the utter disgust of that man. I really do not know how all this has arisen.

It is not my intention for one moment to reflect on any member of the staff of this Parliament or, for that matter, any particular member of the Parliament (including the Minister who was apparently required to seek, to insist, or if not to enforce the return of the original gold pass of John Mathwin). But wherever the direction came from, I hope that, along with another serious matter that was discussed in this Parliament this afternoon, all members will share the concern that is obviously held by John Mathwin.

I place on record that I am concerned for the condition that he happens to be in following his recent by-pass operation and other subsequent treatment that he has been required to undertake and, in my view, he needs like a hole in the head this sort of indignant treatment that has been served out to him in relation to his gold pass replacement. Therefore, Mr Speaker, whoever the out-of-Parliament authorities are who have indulged in this course of action, which is quite different from that which has applied over the years that I have been in this Parliament, they should return quickly to the traditional practices of overwriting or overtagging the original gold pass of a member where one qualifies to retain that gold pass. Indeed, on that overlap should be the name and the fact that they are a retired member; the holder of such a pass should not be unnamed, with the words 'ex-member' being punched into the metal.

I have no further comments to make on that subject, but it is with concern, as I said, that a man who was, and still is, a mate of a lot of members of this Parliament should in his twilight years, and certainly in his current rehabilitating condition, have to suffer that sort of indignant treatment.

An honourable member: A silvertail.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: He is not a silvertail at all; he is a respected gentleman of the community.

Mr FERGUSON (Henley Beach): The subject of this adjournment debate tonight is very important and it relates to the compulsory wearing of helmets by cyclists. Since the announcement was made by the Minister of Transport following a conference of all transport Ministers held in Western Australia that legislation would be introduced for the compulsory wearing of helmets for cyclists, a strong debate has been generated within my electorate as to the suitability or otherwise of particular helmets.

State Governments in recent years have started to promote the use of helmets for cyclists because there has been a rise in the number of bicycle accidents and serious disabilities from head injuries. A number of studies show that head injuries are the primary or contributory cause of death in 70 to 80 per cent of bicycle accidents. Two-thirds of all victims of bicycle injuries admitted to hospital have sustained head injuries. One Australian study found that cycling was the second most common cause of head injuries for which children were admitted to hospital. So it was only natural that, in the fullness of time, legislation would be introduced in Australia for the compulsory use of bicycle helmets.

Both New South Wales and Victoria are further advanced in their thinking than South Australia, and this is probably logical as both of those States are more populous and therefore more bicycle accidents are being recorded there. Some sporting officials have expressed concern at the quality of the original hard helmets which were introduced to the cycling public. I have been contacted by racing cyclists in my electorate and in particular by a Mr Les Phillips, who is a veteran road cyclist, pointing out to me the disadvantages of the original designs which were being promoted by State Governments in Australia for use as cycling helmets.

Part of the problem as far as racing cyclists are concerned is heat exhaustion, and the early designs of hard helmets have been most unsatisfactory for racing cyclists. I must point out to the House that heat exhaustion has in fact been the cause of death of some racing cyclists in most recent history. Many people might have seen the film of the death of an English rider in the Tour De France in recent times for which the primary cause was heat exhaustion. For many years cyclists have been compelled to wear helmets, but they could be described as a ribbed, leather covered helmet which allows for plenty of ventilation.

I digress a little and say that I can remember the member for Price when he was a champion cyclist at the age of 16 years. I have a photograph of him standing at the Edwardstown oval wearing one of these racing helmets. That is proof to you, Mr Speaker, of how long ago the wearing of helmets was made compulsory for racing cyclists in South Australia. The complaints that arise all over Australia with respect to the early model helmets for cyclists being sold in Australia have led to the Australian Standards Association revising its standards so that a new standard was introduced earlier this year. The original test, which was introduced earlier this year and which was developed to create a standard helmet for the approval of the Australian Standards Association, was called a penetration test. A spike-shaped impactor which was used was thought not to be representative of the shape of objects struck in bicycle accidents, for example, the edge of a kerb. The shape of the impactor also put limitations on the size of ventilation openings.

The test was design restrictive and it did not permit helmets without a stiff shell to pass the standard. Also, it was not an adequate measure of the helmet's ability to limit forces on the skull due to impact. Although it was deficient in many ways, the penetration test did provide a safeguard against helmets that were substandard in terms of integrity of their structure, and the Australian Standards Association was reluctant to delete the penetration test until it had evidence that the helmet which met the energy attenuation test alone could provide adequate protection against reasonably foreseeable impacts or that a test which adequately measured impact load distribution performance was available.

Racing cyclists are seeking from the proposed new legislation the ability to use a helmet that is adequately ventilated. There are problems with heat exhaustion, and some studies have taken place in this area, particularly from the army point of view where in certain circumstances the heat

exhaustion has been so much of a problem that the army has advocated that the harder helmet be disposed of and that members of the armed forces in certain circumstances, even in a conflict situation, have been instructed to use a soft hat. These studies, generally speaking, are classified, but I have sought information from the Australian War Memorial archives on this subject and a certain amount of this material is available for anyone who wishes to study it.

The new standards specification allows for more helmets with higher rates of ventilation, and I believe that there is a need for negotiation between the various cycling groups and the State cycling committee, which I understand is established in the Department of Transport and centred at Walkerville. I hope that the committee takes the opportunity to discuss fully with cycling associations the perceived problems that they see with the introduction of legislation of this nature, rather than just making a blanket proposition which will be unsuitable and which means that racing cyclists will be using helmets that are unsuitable. I emphasise that racing cyclists have had to wear helmets compulsorily from within their own rules from since about 1949, and they are not resisting the legislation but are seeking proper negotiations in respect of it.

I have been in contact with the New South Wales Cycling Committee and I must say that I have been rather unimpressed with its attitude in relation to the introduction of the compulsory wearing of helmets. The New South Wales committee has taken the attitude that, if the compulsory wearing of helmets will create difficulties for the police, then the standard will be set so as to make it as easy as possible for the police to ensure that people comply with the law. Therefore, there will be no exemptions to racing cyclists who will be obliged to wear standard hard hats as proposed by the New South Wales Cycling Committee.

I believe that, when the compulsory wearing of helmets is introduced, the police will face difficulties and I certainly do not want to compound those problems. However, I believe that there is room for negotiation between the South Australian Cycling Committee and the racing cyclists to ascertain whether agreement can be reached about what sort of helmet racing cyclists will be obliged to wear, taking into account the special needs of racing cyclists and the problems that they have from time to time.

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

The Hon. H. ALLISON (Mount Gambier): In about August last year I drew the attention of the State Minister of Transport to the fact that there was an internal Australian National Railways memorandum, which instructed that the passenger rail manager implement the closure of the Bluebird passenger trains. The same phrase within that memorandum said that considerable consideration had to be given to that matter but the intent was certainly there. Over recent months, the Australian National Railways spokeswoman has consistently denied that any intent to close was under way. However, I point out that a *de facto* closure is already taking place. The ANR is deliberately phasing out the Bluebird passenger rail service to Mount Gambier, which was part of the Australian National rail transfer agreement of 1975, and, also, the systems to Broken Hill, Port Pirie and Whyalla, which came in later at the Commonwealth's initiative.

Those trains are providing an uncertain, unreliable and deteriorating service. After people have booked a seat on the train, they cannot anticipate whether they will travel by train, bus or, as happened last week, by taxi. A fleet of taxis came to Mount Gambier because neither the bus nor the train was at the station. There are delays in transit; breakdowns occur while the train travels between Mount Gambier and Adelaide; and additional costs are incurred in the provision of buses and/or taxis to take staff and passengers from the train to Mount Gambier when the train breaks down. Australian National has not provided for depreciation since the transfer agreement of 1975. The trains have just worn out without any real attempt to replace them. In fact, the sleeper cars burnt out in 1975 or 1976. Those two trains were not replaced. I suggest that these actions are being taken in default of, but also aided and abetted by, clauses contained in the 1975 Railways (Transfer Agreement) Act. Clause 7 of the Railways (Transfer Agreement) Act Part II provides:

> The non-metropolitan railways shall be operated, on and after the commencement date, in accordance with standards in all respects at least equal to those obtaining at the date of this agreement, and the commission will pursue a program of improvements . . .

As I say, the service has been allowed to deteriorate in default of that clause, but that situation is aided and abetted because clause 9 of that Act provides:

> 9. (1) The Australian Minister will obtain the prior agreement of the State Minister to—
> (*a*) any proposal for the closure of a railway line of the non-metropolitan railways; or
> (*b*) the reduction in the level of effectively demanded services on the non-metropolitan railways,
> and failing agreement on any of these matters the dispute shall be determined by arbitration.

Interestingly enough, it also provides:

> The arbitrator shall . . . take into account the level of public demand and the need for the railway line and services referred to . . .

However, there is an additional clause, clause 23, which under Part V—Miscellaneous provides:

> The arbitrator shall in his deliberations take into account, amongst other things, economic, social and community factors.

Incidentally, my maiden speech in this House on 6 August 1975 was on this very Bill—the Railways (Transfer Agreement) Act. In that speech, most prophetically (at page 58), I said:

> The State Government is that much more readily accessible to Mount Gambier than is the Commonwealth Government. We would have a very small voice in Australian politics but a relatively important one, we hope, in State politics.

I also said:

> There is no guarantee that the levels of employment or the present standards of rail service will be maintained. Clause 19 of Part II of the agreement confirms this. Many railway employees are located not only at Mount Gambier but also in Adelaide. I question whether the State Government would be willing to contest the legality of the agreement against any possible future contrary action by either the Australian Government or the interstate commission.

Low and behold, as I said, the Federal Government, through ANR, is, in a *de facto* manner, winding down the service. Members on this side of the House spoke very vociferously against that rail transfer agreement and in support of my contention in 1975.

I wonder what reason the State Minister can give for not really being very vocal in his support for the retention of the Bluebird passenger rail systems to various parts of the State. As I said, the ANR has allowed the system to deteriorate; it has declined steadily and inexorably. The Bluebird cars, I believe, have been kept in reasonable working condition—and they are now going on to being 30 or more years old—by the diligence of ANR employees such as those stationed at Mount Gambier and in country centres. ANR in Adelaide appears to have been paying less and less attention to the rail-worthiness of the cars. Many major defects

have been detected in country centres rather than in the metropolitan maintenance centre where one would think the major servicing would be done.

So, I have nothing but praise for the manner in which the ANR staff at Mount Gambier have kept those ageing, decrepit, Bluebird cars on the line. For the Minister to suggest that cannibalisation of four cars out of the existing 11 might be a solution is really laughable. The Premier of the day, Don Dunstan, said that by transferring the rail service we would save a considerable amount of money. For example, the Federal Government assumed a $124 million main debt plus $16 million in sundry debts, a total of $140 million. In addition, the Federal Government would take over $400 million worth of railway assets in exchange for a $10 million down payment—it would take over this losing venture—and would pay to South Australia an additional $25 million base grant annually and indexed.

At the same time the State retained the metropolitan rail transfer system which has, during the past 15 years, I suggest, lost about $1 billion. That is a straight out loss. Last year alone it would have cost $130 million to run the system. So, there is an inequity between the metropolitan system, which was retained and runs at a great loss, and the country system, which was sold and which really sold country people down the drain because their services have deteriorated.

I would like to see the State Minister negotiating and asking ANR to be honest about the cost of running the system. The Dunstan figures show that the State gained substantially by the sale. I believe that ANR is building unfair costs into the costs of operating the Bluebird. The line has to be maintained from Adelaide to Bordertown and the railcars have been allowed to depreciate without a great deal of expenditure on them. In Queensland, the Brisbane to Rockhampton railway cars were recently replaced and opened on 1 July this year. Operating at 120 km/h, air-conditioned, carpeted and provided with recliner seats, instantly passenger use increased from about 130 to 270 per trip. This is a considerable improvement in service and in patronage.

I suggest that new cars would bring back patronage to the Bluebird system. The cost of push-me/pull-you trains through the hills and the massive repairs to deteriorating cars, the cost of buses, taxi services and the fares of staff from Adelaide to Keith or Keith to Mount Gambier are all things that AN attributes to the passenger and not its own inadequate, ineffective and mismanaged way of running the Bluebird system. I would like to see the State and Federal Ministers of Transport getting together with AN to see whether some compromise can be achieved to provide at least three or four Bluebird cars to provide a much improved system to rural South Australia to encourage patronage, and possibly to save deaths on the highways which are overcrowded and narrow, and to save the additional wear and tear on our roads.

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

Motion carried.

At 10.22 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 9 August at 11.00 a.m.